

# Posthuman Complicities



»Thought—to call it by a prouder name than it deserved—had let its line down into the stream. It swayed, minute after minute, hither and thither among the reflections and the weeds, letting the water lift it and sink in, until—you know the little tug—the sudden conglomeration of an idea at the end of one’s line: and then the cautious hauling of it in, and the careful laying of it out? Alas, laid on the grass how small, how insignificant this thought of mine looked; the sort of fish that a good fisherman puts back into the water so that it may grow fatter and be one day worth cooking and eating. I will not trouble you with that thought now, though if you look carefully you may find it for yourselves in the course of what I am going to say.«

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## Introduction

*Posthuman Complicities* presents artworks dealing with the Atlantic, the deep sea, and concepts of fluidity. The ocean features as a place of violence as well as resistance, and as an epistemological model. Colonial archives are fragmented and dislocated in terms of both language and image in order to visualize blank spaces created by historiography.

The exhibition aims at the postcolonial in the posthuman. People of Color such as queer, feminist and intersectional have radically challenged the hegemonic notion of the human. These approaches have thus paved the way for posthumanism. They thematize the complicity in the stories of *othering* that haunt the present.

The authors and artists who are part of the exhibition, as well as those who guide it, have critically dealt with these persisting histories of violence and discrimination. Their oftentimes poetic approaches shed light on the aesthetic issue of how to represent history, which has barely been written. They employ language, the movement of the body, or images as a way of understanding historical genealogies and shaping them anew.

The citation of Virginia Woolf, visible at the exhibition entrance, is taken from her literary work *A Room for One's Own*, which was originally published in 1929. In this work, Woolf highlights the need for material support in order to author creative processes. An exhibition space offers *A Room for One's Own*, which is shaped by economic, social, political, institutional, and personal structures.

This particular citation presents thought as slippery, as immature and unfinished. The aim is not to arrive at certainty or closure of thought. Rather things shall be kept in question and thought shall remain fluid. This figures a stance to be overthrown once more. We also want to quote Fred Moten in saying that »all work is collaborative« and thank for the inspiration and generous support we have received.

Andrea Popelka & Lisa Stuckey

## Accompanying Program

Hannah Black, *My Bodies*, 2015, 4 min

Larry Achiampong & David Blandy, *Finding Fanon Part Two*, 2015, 10 min

Paul Maheke, *What Flows Through and Across (As the Waters Recall)*, 2017, 14 min

Akosua Adoma Owusu, *Drexciya*, 2010, 11 min

The Otolith Group, *Hydra Decapita*, 2010, 31 min

Friday, April 21st, 2017, 4pm, xhibit  
*Fluid (Media-) Ecologies*  
Curator's tour with Lisa Stuckey

The artistic contributions are discussed as (media-) ecologies. They access colonial archives in a transformative manner. Aside being a thematic component the fluid stands for nomadic thinking of our contemporary condition.

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Wednesday, April 26th, 2017, 7pm, mumok cinema  
*Posthuman Complicities: I hear the waters' song*

»I hear the waters'song« takes place in connection with the exhibition *Posthuman Complicities* currently on show at xhibit at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna: this exhibition addresses concepts of fluidity, the Atlantic, and the deep seas, seeing the ocean as a location of violence and resistance. The focus of the accompanying program at mumok cinema is on music as a store of colonial history, with a central role taken by the Detroit techno duo Drexciya. In a series of publications and an accompanying mythology, Drexciya reformulated a speculative version of the 1781 massacre on the slave ship Zong, transferring the story to the present day. A large number of filmmakers and artists have drawn on the work of Drexciya. Spirits from the past are conjured up, allowing their voices to be heard in the rhythms of language and song, and in essayistic and simulated moving images. Audre Lorde says: »I hear the waters' song, feel the tides within the fluids of my body, hear the sea echoing my mother's voices of survival [...] I hear them resounding inside me from swish to boom – from the dark to the moon of fullness.«

Presented by Andrea Popelka and Lisa Stuckey.  
After the screening: talk with Djamila Grandits.

Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien Museumsplatz 1,  
1070 Vienna

[www.mumok.at/en/cinema/en/events/posthuman-complicities](http://www.mumok.at/en/cinema/en/events/posthuman-complicities)

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Friday, May 5th, 2017, 4pm, xhibit  
*Histories of Resistance in the Transatlantic Slave Trade*  
Curator's tour with Andrea Popelka

The transatlantic slave trade has often been told as a history of subjection and powerlessness. Besides a general introduction the focus of this tour lies on narratives of resistance and agency.

\* Publications

O. Virginia Woolf in  
*A Room of One's Own*, 1929

1. Joey Holder, *Proteus*,  
2015-ongoing, video 12 min, wall print

2. Jennifer Mattes,  
*Sea You Bye The Sea*, 2017,  
video 9 min, projection 14 min

3. Wolfgang Tillmans,  
*Pro-EU Anti-Brexit Campaign*, 2016, prints on paper

4. Paul Maheke,  
*Tropicalité, l'Île et l'Exote*, 2014,  
video 12 min

5. The Otolith Group,  
*Hydra Decapita*, 2010,  
projection 31 min

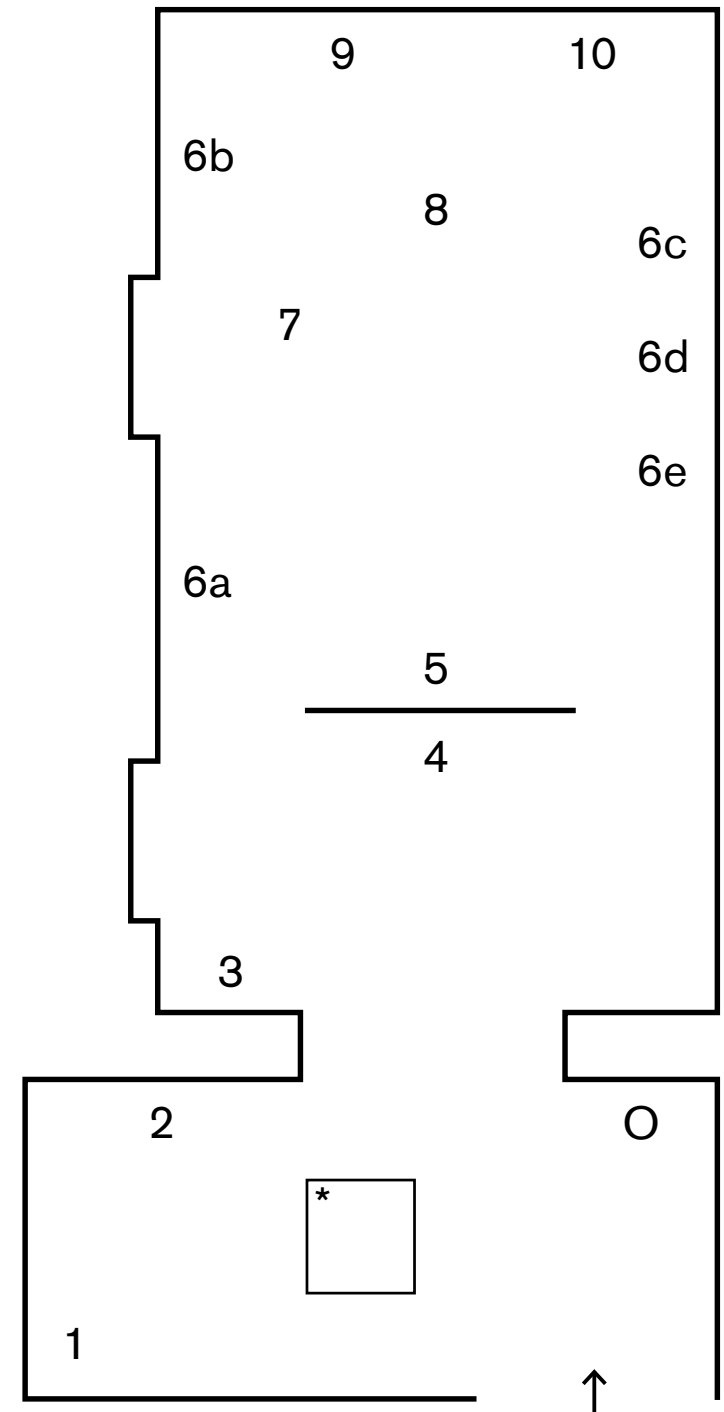
6. M. NourbeSe Philip,  
*Zong!*, 2008, excerpts, Book of poetry  
Concept for the light-installation of the poems:  
Lisa Stuckey & Manuel Carreon Lopez  
a. p.96  
b. p.157  
c. *Zong!* #12, p.21–22  
d. *Zong!* #15, p.25–26  
e. *Zong!* #16, p.27–28  
prints on paper, neon light

7. Stefanie Schwarzwimmer,  
*(Un-) Mapped (with cat paw detail)*, 2017, acrylic glass, 3D-print,  
steel, textile print

8. Stefanie Schwarzwimmer,  
*Hemispheres (with turtle shell detail)*, 2017, acrylic glass, 3D-print,  
textile print

9. Stefanie Schwarzwimmer,  
*Globe Maps*, 2017, textile print

10. Viltė Bražiūnaitė & Tomas Sinkevičius,  
*A Romance of Many Dimensions*,  
2017, 3D-rendered video-loop



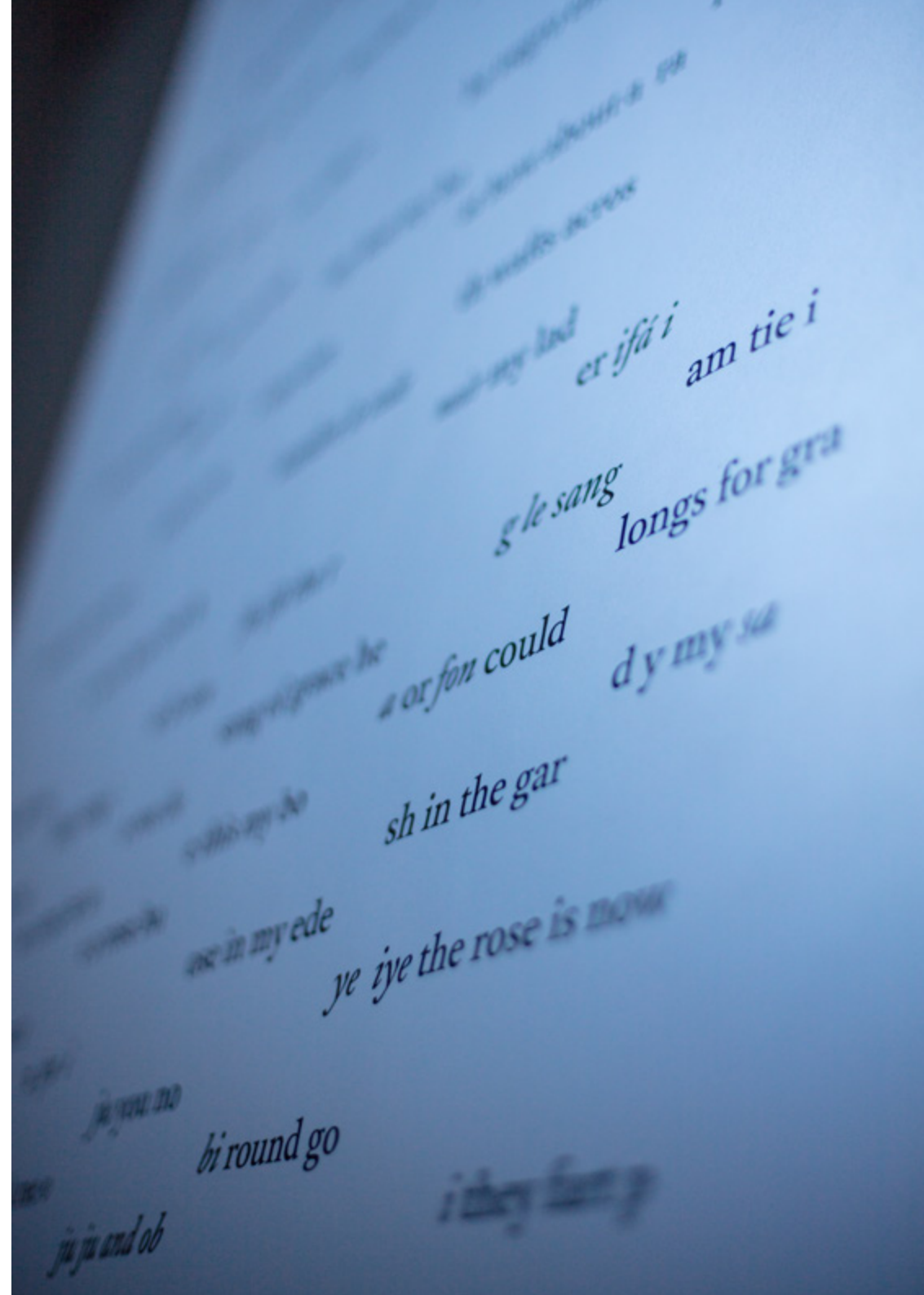








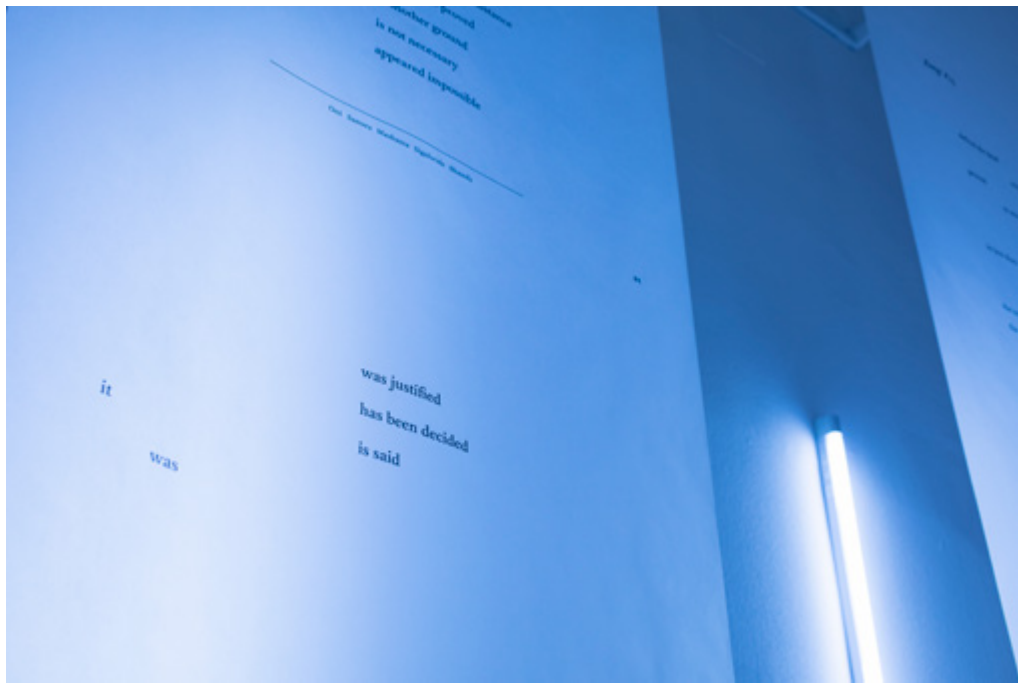














Joey Holder  
*Proteus*, 2015-ongoing  
Video Installation

In an interview with the online magazine RHIZOME Joey Holder says that she is »interested in the way that network theories, complexity theory, and emergence are related to ‘natural’ as well as ‘synthesized’ systems and the points at which the two diverge«. Holder looks at the ambivalent zones, the grays and connections between the ‘natural’ and the ‘artificial’ and how they are shifting. In her work, notions of depth and non-ground play an important role. Following her films and blogs we are scrolling forever or floating underwater.

This volatile quality manifests itself in Holder’s focus on shape-shifting. In Greek mythology, Proteus is an early sea-god of rivers and oceanic bodies of water. He can foretell the future, once caught. At the same time, he resists becoming property, stays fleeting and elusive. In *Proteus*, Holder follows scientists ploughing through the deep sea of the Arctic Ocean with a remotely controlled vehicle. The marine biologists are trying to understand and map unique ecosystems, which survive in extreme heat without light or oxygen, like the underground volcanoes called black smokers. Holder links this project to another research group, which is trying to extract and decipher DNA-sequences of microorganisms living in the deep sea.

The artist investigates how contemporary science has changed our notions of life and who will foremost profit from the information extracted from these seemingly alien creatures and whether they function as a testing ground for a future dystopian environment caused by global warming.



Joey Holder,  
*Proteus*,  
2015-ongoing, video still  
Courtesy of the artist

Jennifer Mattes  
*Sea You Bye The Sea*, 2017  
Video installation

The installation *Sea You Bye The Sea* deals with the island both as a symbolic or utopian and real place. Found footage of research trips to the deep sea is assembled with filmed images of a construction site on the Greek island Cythera. This scenery is superimposed with fragments of the three paintings *The Embarkation for Cythera* (1710–1718) by the French painter Jean-Antoine Watteau. These so called *fêtes galantes* genre-paintings show the courtly-aristocratic society of the 18th century searching for a refuge from their privileged life.

Cythera is said to be the birthplace of Aphrodite, the goddess of love. The amorous adventures of the aristocrats are projected onto the contemporary photograph of a Cytherian construction site. In combination these fragments create the picture of a worn-down stage, which disturbs one's idyllic view onto the sea. In the following centuries, Watteau's paintings were often taken as an ideal for utopian escapes. Utopia figures as the ideal draft of a better world freed from all human indeterminacy. Hence a closed system with a totally predictable future, Utopia quickly slides into a state without a future: a dystopia. On a symbolic level both islands—Utopia and Cythera—become prisons with a sea view and the lavishness of a privileged European society is criticized.

The second part of the installation consists of a projection of images of the ocean onto the floor. It gives the impression of both an island and an abyss, directing the spectator into a dark, bottomless hole. Standing on the edge of the wafting field one discovers a place where unknown beings glow and rays of mythical creatures rhythmically appear and disappear in the spotlight of the maritime explorers.



Jennifer Mattes,  
*Sea You Bye The Sea*,  
2017, video still  
Courtesy of the artist



Wolfgang Tillmans  
*Pro-EU Anti-Brexit Campaign, 2016*

»The official 'Remain' campaign feels lame and is lacking in passion. It also lacks an active drive to get voters registered – and with the deadline already falling two weeks before the referendum, this should be an urgent priority.«

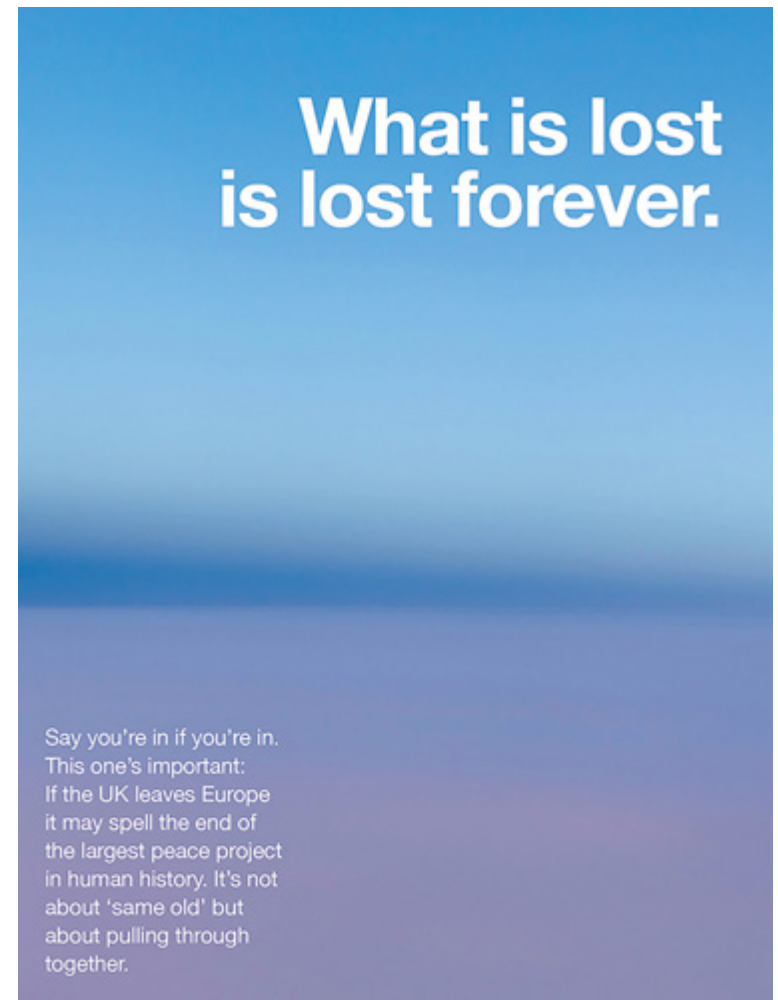
Wolfgang Tillmans in a statement, published on April 25th, 2016, on his website.

In April 2016, Wolfgang Tillmans created a poster-campaign against the possible exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union. The posters of the *Pro-EU Anti-Brexit Campaign* were available for free download and meant to spread around Britain. They feature outright, poetic, and political messages, set against unicolored and color gradient backdrops or photographs reminiscent of sunsets, shores, and islands.

As a renowned photographer Wolfgang Tillmans used his unique visual language and his publicity to address a back then forthcoming decision about the future political positioning of the UK.

Instead of shattering bridges, Tillmans suggests we already sit between them. This reminds us of Édouard Glissant, who embosses the figure »archipelagic thinking« as a non-dichotomous alternative to Western thought that foregrounds the mutual influences between scattered islands.

Showing two posters of the campaign, after the decision for the Brexit was taken on the 23rd of June 2016, points to the ongoing actuality and practice of rethinking and redoing European communities of multiple belongings and co-becomings. Rendering a political act a failure or past defeat is a performative act of speech. In that sense, »What is lost, is [not] lost forever«, we can also render it otherwise.



Wolfgang Tillmans,  
*Pro-EU Anti-Brexit Campaign,*  
2016, Courtesy of the artist  
and betweenbridges

**Paul Maheke**  
*Tropicalité, l'Île et l'Exote*, 2014  
Video, 12min

*Tropicalité, l'Île et l'Exote* is a muted video with subtitles produced with the support of CIAP-Île de Vassivière in the context of a three-month long artist-residency on the artificial island of Vassivière in France.

The work interweaves multiple media and practices like moving image, dance, music, and language. It raises questions like: How can we re-structure space through the body? Can violent history be turned against itself and made useful? How can a desiring body act in the light of heteronomy and vulnerability?

Through a narrative composed out of texts by Patrice Chamoiseau, Michel Foucault, and Victor Segalen concepts such as 'otherness' and 'exoticism' are addressed to explore queer Black subjectivities and emancipatory thought.

*Tropicalité, l'île et l'exote* exemplifies Paul Maheke's take on the body as archive and as a means to re-imagining subjectivity. The artist approaches bodily acts while looking jointly at the symbolic figure of the island as typical spaces to be colonized as well as possible sites of community-resistance.

»I agree to call 'Diverse' everything that was until now called foreign, strange, unexpected, surprising, heroic, and even divine, everything that is Other.«

Victor Segalen, cited in *Tropicalité, l'île et l'exote*, min. 1:48.

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»The stories of escape from slavery, the redemptive power of suffering, and the triumphs of the weak over the strong that dominated respectable black cultural production during the nineteenth century gave way gradually to a different variety of story altogether.«

Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness* 1995, p. 201.



Paul Maheke,  
*Tropicalité, l'Île et l'Exote*, 2014,  
with the support of CIAP-Île de  
vassivière, OTRO Koo Jeong-A,  
video still  
Courtesy of the artist

The Otolith Group  
*Hydra Decapita*, 2010  
Video installation, 31 min

The Otolith Group, namely Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun, connect the massacre of Zong from 1781 to William Turner's painting *Slavers Throwing overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhoon coming on*, and John Ruskins' take on that painting. The painting's exhibition at the Royal Academy in London in 1840 coincided with a meeting of the British Anti-Slavery Society, which fought against slavery years after its official abolition in 1807.

By connecting these contexts, The Otolith Group delineates history until it is shown to be persistent and haunting. The abstraction of bodies in the face of capital can't simply be cut out of Western cultures fabric. At the same time, that history must be reformulated in a non-hegemonic terminology, for example by making use of Sci-Fi or Afro Futurist narratives.

Here, *Hydra Decapita* references the sound of early Detroit techno musicians *Drexcija*. In their music an extraordinary metaphorical underwater universe is built. It contains practices like wave jumping, a bubbly metropolis, and the possibility to breath underwater: aquatic lungs. In pointing to these practices, The Otolith Group points us to the matters of fact of a reality built through violence, but at the same time, opens up new pathways.

In historical paintings the sky above the water's shimmering surface works as a ventilator of mood, often serving nationalist representations. The depiction of the water's surface with the horizon and the sky above it offers a promise of freedom. In *Hydra Decapita*, though, we are caught in a perspective that only shows dark, nightly waters with neither sky nor horizon to escape to.

*Hydra Decapita* was commissioned by MANIFESTA 8: The European Biennial of Contemporary Art.

»Most of the time I can no longer see what I hear. I track the voices as they move around a fictional system they call Drexcija. An invented world whose effects remain incalculable.«

*Hydra Decapita*, min. 7:36

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»They spoke of women in labour, thrown overboard by slavers. Of 1781. The Zong. Was Drexcija a mausoleum for their dead? [...] A requiem for those buried in the liquid grave of the Subatlantic?«

*Hydra Decapita*, min. 19:89

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'Forensic Oceanography' acts as »an attempt to document the deaths of migrants at sea and violations of their rights«.

*Forensis. Architecture Of Public Truth*. By Forensic Architecture, 2014, chapter »Drift«, p. 658.

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»The maritime space is constantly registered in optical and thermal cameras, sea-, air-, and land-borne radars, vessel tacking technologies, and satellite that turn certain physical conditions into digital data according to specific sets of protocols, determining the conditions of visibility of certain events, objects, or people. While many of these remote sensing means remain in the exclusive hands of states and their agencies,



certain types of automated vessel tracking data [...], meteorological data, as well as satellite imagery are available to the public. Moreover, parallel civilian networks also supplement these sensors: migrants frequently film their crossings with mobile phones, while networks of ship- and plane-spotter post photography of naval activities, thereby contributing to documenting, transmitting and archiving events at sea.«

*Forensis. Architecture Of Public Truth*. By Forensic Architecture, 2014, chapter »Drift«, p. 673.

The Otolith Group,  
*Hydra Decapita*, 2010,  
video still  
Courtesy of the artists  
MANIFESTA 8 and LUX

M. NourbeSe Philip  
*Zong!*, 2008, excerpts  
 Book of poetry

In November, 1781, the British slave ship *Zong* was on its way from the Gold Coast, in modern-day Ghana, to Black River in Jamaica. During the course of the journey, the captain of the ship ordered around 150 African slaves to be murdered by drowning so the ship's owners could collect insurance monies. Only the legal documents of the court's decision between the parties Gregson and Gilbert on the case of *Zong* remain as a testimony of the atrocious event.

In her book of poetry »Zong!« the writer M. NourbeSe Philip relies entirely on these documents, which she tears apart and casts into poems. The wreckage, fragmentation, and dislocation of language work against representation and decipherability. By saying »I murder the text, literally cut it into pieces, castrating verbs, suffocating adjective« Philip addresses her process of work with the rationalized and brutal language. Why has history been written in this way? How can a story be told that cannot yet must be told? Philip deals with a concrete historical context, but at the same time re-writes and delineates history. The poet shows history as something that reappears in a ghostly and distorted manner, as something that rhymes, as Fred Moten might put it.

The massacre of *Zong* becomes a knot of developments – a knot that needs slow and careful investigation, as it is symptomatic for the abstraction and de-humanization of Black bodies and how they are tied to economy or legitimized under the pretext of economic interests.

»Those of us who teach, write, and think about slavery and its afterlives encounter myriad silences and ruptures in time, space, history, ethics, research, and method as we do our work. Again and again scholars of slavery face absences in the archives [...].«

Christina Sharp: *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, 2016, p. 12.

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»Black expressive culture with poets and poet-novelists such as M. NourbeSe Philip, Dionne Brand, and Kamau Brathwaite »do not seek to explain or resolve the question of this exclusion in terms of assimilation, inclusion, or civil or human rights, but rather depict aesthetically the impossibility of such resolutions by representing the paradoxes of blackness within and after the legacies of slavery's denial of Black humanity. I name this paradox the wake [...].«

Christina Sharp: *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, 2016, p.14.

cunt & ruth he  
 dove dove she  
 dove they  
 dove they  
 omi omi  
 omi oh my go they  
 were d go they ne  
 the the groes ne  
 ever dove claire cote  
 the dove  
 where the nest doves  
 the row  
 row slaves  
 boat save the  
 got got got pig  
 eden s deer and air in nig  
 will lion and cub  
 one lie  
 with the one  
 other will we sail  
 end to to the eden  
 my doe eye d queen  
 & once  
 nonce now  
 slave ruth  
 this sire read  
 i will rise

96

M. NourbeSe Philip,  
*Zong!*, Page 96, 2008  
 Courtesy of the artist  
 and Wesleyan University Press  
 Concept for the installation  
 of the poems: Lisa Stuckey  
 & Manuel Carreon Lopez

Thanks to Wesleyan University Press for their permission to present poems from *Zong!* by M. NourbeSe Philip (Author) and Setaey Adamu Boateng (Contributer), Wesleyan Poetry Series, 2008.

Stefanie Schwarzwimmer  
*(Un-)Mapped (with cat paw detail)*, 2017  
Acrylic glass, 3D-print, steel, textile print

*Hemispheres (with turtle shell detail)*, 2017  
Acrylic glass, 3D-print, textile print

*Algorithmic Nature*, 2017, Mixed Media

Stefanie Schwarzwimmer playfully deals with contemporary modes of constructing and projecting reality. By mapping the surface of a three-dimensional globe onto a piece of fabric, the artist engages with the transitions between 2D- and 3D-spaces. She witnesses which information is lost and what is found in the act of iterative translation going back and forth endlessly.

The artist further establishes the thesis that with digitisation we experience a flattening of cartography or other means of visual representation anew – perceiving less the earth, than an image of it. Throughout history the earth was discussed both as a flat and a round entity. Antique Islamic knowledge of cartography had been lost after medieval times and was dug up again during the Renaissance. This important source of knowledge on visual world-building has been disguised in European historical master narratives ever since.

The cat paws in *(Un-)Mapped (with cat paw detail)* and the turtle's armature in *Hemispheres* comically allude to a European history of the subjection of nature for the sake of 'cultural advancement'. The demonstration of this imperialist hierarchy found its way into the core of the private, albeit representative household, featuring the body parts of exotic animals in colonial furniture or trophies. Further, the four turtles are reminiscent of the Viennese Secession, which draws the viewer's body and thought outside of the window toward the artist-run institution and its Jugendstil or Art Nouveau architecture.

»Data are not numbers but diagrams of surfaces, new landscapes of knowledge that inaugurated a vertiginous perspective over the world and society as a whole: the eye of the algorithm, or algorithmic vision. This is no longer the magic second sight of the Stochastic Man of the pre-digital age. The accumulation of numbers by the Information Society has reached the point at which numbers themselves turn into space and create a new topology. The digital matrix is eventually morphing into a world of curves and waves rather of social patterns, dorsals of anomalies and spikes, concretions of intelligence. A new collective geography opens to colonization.«

Matteo Pasquinelli: *The Spike. On the Growth and Form of Pattern Police*, in: Stephanie Hankey/ Marek Tuszynski/ Anselm Franke (ed.): *Nervous Systems*. 2016, HKW/Spector books, p. 281.



Stefanie Schwarzwimmer,  
*(Un-)Mapped (without cat paw detail)*,  
Acrylic glass, 3D-print, steel,  
textile print, 2017  
Courtesy of the artist

Viltė Bražiūnaitė & Tomas Sinkevičius  
*A Romance of Many Dimensions*,  
2017  
3D-Rendering

In *A Romance of Many Dimensions* Viltė Bražiūnaitė and Tomas Sinkevičius show a three-dimensional rendering of a shiny gun, which endlessly rotates around its own axis against an unspecified background. The weapon's shiny surface carries a mirrored reflection of the exhibition-space that surrounds the gun and the video screen. *A Romance of Many Dimensions* is created site-specifically, reflecting exactly the environment it is currently positioned in.

The artwork echoes the connection between the condensed representation of ideas and art in a space and the violence that is embedded in it. Gestures of reflection and representation are informed by positioning and interests, they leave things out and construct their object. As the title suggests, romance and desire are also linked to acts of speaking to one another, showing one another. The moving gun is not pointed to one specific object, it turns and turns, marking a 360-degree-view of a possible target.

*A Romance of Many Dimensions* precisely gets to the point of the on-looker's complicity in processes of mediation and representation. It is nevertheless indifferent to whom of us exactly it is looking. This on-the-point, site-specific work connects an abstract meta-discussion with the corporeal position of the visitor within the exhibition space's here and now.



Viltė Bražiūnaitė & Tomas Sinkevičius,  
*A Romance of Many Dimensions*,  
2017, video still  
Courtesy of the artists

## Library

- Rosi Braidotti: *The Posthuman*. 2013, Polity University Press.
- 
- Emma Christopher/Cassandra Pybus/Marcus Rediker (ed.): *Many Middle Passages: Forced Migration and the Making of the Modern World*. 2007, University of California Press.
- 
- T. J. Demos: *Decolonizing Nature / Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology*. 2016, Sternberg Press.
- 
- Forensic Architecture (ed.): *Forensis. The Architecture of Public Truth*. 2014, Sternberg Press.
- 
- Paul Gilroy: *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness*. 1993, Verso.
- 
- Édouard Glissant: *Poetics of Relation*. Originally published in 1990.
- 
- Saidiya Hartman: *Scenes of Subjection. Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. 1997, Oxford University Press.
- 
- Karin Amimoto Ingersoll: *Waves of Knowing. A Seascape of Epistemology*. 2016, Duke University Press.
- 
- John Miller: *Empire and the Animal Body. Violence, Identity and Ecology in Victorian Adventure Fiction*. 2012, Anthem Press.
- 
- Fred Moten: *Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)*. 2013, Duke University Press.
- 
- Fred Moten/Stefano Harney: *The Undercommons. Fugitive Planning & Black Study*. 2013, Minor Compositions.
- 
- M. NourbeSe Philip: *Zong!* 2008, Wesleyan University Press.
- 
- Samuel R. Delany: *all*.
- 
- Christina Sharpe: *In the Wake. On Blackness and Being*. 2016, Duke University Press.
- 
- Virginia Woolf: *A Room of One's Own*. Originally published in *The Forum*, 1929.

## Soundtrack

**Drexycia:**  
**Drexycia 2. Bubble Metropolis. 1993, Underground Resistance. Black Sea, 1995. Black Sea / Wavejumper. 2015, Clone Aqualung Series.**

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The Otolith Group's essay film *Hydra Decapita* takes as its vantage point the fabulations of the Detroit techno group Drexycia. The musicians Marcel Stinson and Gerald Donald, whose identities remained veiled for a long time, created a legendary discography, including titles such as *Deep Sea Dweller*, *Bubble Metropolis*, or *Aquatic Invasion*. Their music carries motives of the Atlantic as a site of revolution and resistance – water is considered a means of change, wave jumping a strategy of coping. In their music Drexycia evoke Afro Futurist imaginaries. At the same time, they foreground the importance of nightlife in opening up emancipatory spaces for marginalized communities.

The Drexycia Research Lab compiles information and research about the mysterious duo. Available online under: [www.drexcyaresearchlab.webs.com](http://www.drexcyaresearchlab.webs.com)

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**M. NourbeSe Philip: any live-reading.**

The title of M. NourbeSe Philip's poetry-book *Zong!* echoes the song, and therefore the often imposed practice of singing in the transatlantic slave trade. NourbeSe's craft stands for poetry, which cannot be separated from the many tongues that live in it and the sound of its performance.

»[T]he circulation and mutation of music across the black Atlantic explores the dualistic structure which puts Africa, authenticity, purity, and origin in crude opposition to the hybridity, creolisation, and rootlessness. There has been (at least) a two-way traffic between African cultural forms and the political cultures of diaspora blacks over a long period.«

Paul Gilroy: *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness*, 1995, p. 199.

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»The opacity of these sorrowful and half-articulate songs perplexes and baffles those within and without the circle of slavery. [...] Douglass emphasized the singularity of sorrow, thus hoping to establish an absolute line of division between diversion and the glimmerings of protest. Yet this distinction could not be sustained, for the promiscuous exchanges of culture and the fraught terms of agency muddled the lines of opposition, and as Douglass himself recognized, on rare occasions the pleasure available within the confines of slavery indeed possessed glimmerings of insurgency and transformation.«

Saidiya Hartman: *Scenes of Subjection. Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. 1997, Oxford University Press, p. 48.

## Artists

Viltė Bražiūnaitė & Tomas Sinkevičius  
 \*1991 in Vilnius, based in Vienna.  
 \*1991 in Birštonas, based in Stockholm.

Viltė Bražiūnaitė and Tomas Sinkevičius have collaborated for many artistic projects, which often imply moving image, sound, language, and spacious installations. Despite their young age, they have exhibited extensively, including Konstfack and Platform in Stockholm, JMVMC, Contemporary Art Center, and Malonioji 6 in Vilnius.

Viltė Bražiūnaitė currently studies at the class for Art and Media at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Tomas Sinkevičius earned his master's degree from the Konstfack in Stockholm and his bachelor degree from the Vilnius Academy of Art.

Joey Holder  
 \*1981, based in the UK.

Joey Holder oscillates between online and physical spaces, opening up a manifold of different spatial tunnels one can discover, scroll down, skip through. Joey Holder's exhibition and practice oscillates between using internet-footage and mining data. Holder received her education at the Goldsmiths College and at Kingston University in London.

Paul Maheke  
 \*1989 in Brive-la-Gaillarde, based in London.

Paul Maheke is an artist with a special focus on the body as historical archive and movement as a way of resistance. In his practice, Maheke combines installation, moving image, and performance. Maheke has exhibited and performed at the South London Gallery, The Serpentine Galleries, and Tate Modern, amongst others.

Jennifer Mattes  
 \*1982 in Stuttgart, based in Vienna.

Jennifer Mattes uses contemporary mass media in her time-based art practice. She was educated at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the Merz Akademie in Stuttgart.

Selected Screenings and exhibitions at Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Kassler Dokumentarfilm-festival, and mumok cinema. Mattes was granted the Birgit Jürgenssen Preis in 2014.

The Otolith Group  
 Founded in 2002, based in London.

The Otolith Group consists of Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun. They are known for their longstanding collaborative artistic production, which often takes the form of essay films. For their work, The Otolith Group draws from a wide range of materials and historical contexts, which are intertwined in a complicated way.

M. NourbeSe Philip  
 \*1947 in Woodlands, based in Canada.

M. NourbeSe Philip is poet, essayist, and playwright. Philip studied political science and law and practiced the latter. Later she would choose to devote herself to writing, which nevertheless would be influenced by her former occupation. Philip has published several books, for which she received numerous awards. Philip covers a range of literary genres and themes, from the book-length poem Zong! to the young adult novel Harriet's Daughter. Philip taught at the University of Toronto, at York University, and has been writer in residence at McMaster University and University of Windsor. The poet has contributed extensively to the advancement of social justice in Canadian politics.

Stefanie Schwarzwimmer  
 \*1990 in Linz, based in Berlin and Vienna.

Stefanie Schwarzwimmer is an artist and graphic designer. She is especially interested in the development of new media technologies and how they alter modes of thinking, experience, and relating. She is currently enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and holds a scholarship at the Berlin Program for Artists, led by Angela Bulloch, Willem de Rooij, and Simon Denny.

Wolfgang Tillmans  
 \*1968 in Remscheid, based in London and Berlin.

Wolfgang Tillmans has developed a strong legacy of photography and media-based arts, involving music in its latest iterations. In his photography Tillmans famously dealt with the emancipatory recesses of techno and rave culture during the 1980s and 1990s. Recently, a major solo show opened at the Tate Modern in London. Tillmans heads his own exhibition space, between bridges, in Berlin in order to foster a range of artists.

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## Curators

Andrea Popelka  
 \*1991 in Vienna, based in Berlin.

Andrea Popelka is art theorist, writer, and curator based in Berlin. She has worked extensively at cultural institutions and co-curated exhibitions at ACUD gallery, Berlin, Kunsthalle Wien, the Tieranatomisches Theater, and the Phyletic Museum in Jena. She is interested in a radical curatorial practice beyond the individual producer towards unexpected encounters.

Lisa Stuckey  
 Based in Vienna.

Lisa Stuckey engages in cultural and media theory, art criticism, curatorial work, and the moving image. She has published on platforms like the Journal for Artistic Research and her videos have been presented at mumok cinema, at the Austrian Cultural Forum New York, and the Künstlerhaus Wien. She is enrolled in the Art and Media as well as the doctoral program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, where she as well curated »Prisoners of Venus. A Video Exhibition«



Published on the occasion of the exhibition *Posthuman Complicities* exhibit, exhibition-space at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna  
Exhibition: March 10th–May 14th, 2017  
Opening: Thursday, March 9th, 2017, 7 pm

Artists: Viltė Bražiūnaitė & Tomas Sinkevičius, Joey Holder, Paul Maheke, Jennifer Mattes, The Otolith Group, M. NourbeSe Philip, Stefanie Schwarzwimmer, Wolfgang Tillmans

Curators:  
Andrea Popelka & Lisa Stuckey

Texts: Andrea Popelka & Lisa Stuckey

Exhibition Views: Manuel Carreon Lopez,  
[kunst-dokumentation.com](http://kunst-dokumentation.com)

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Andrea Popelka, Lisa Stuckey

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Any questions on your mind regarding  
the exhibition?


Feel free to contact the curators:

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Lisa Stuckey: [ls@lisastuckey.net](mailto:ls@lisastuckey.net)



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## Der Standard:

»Das Motiv der Körpererweiterung greift auch auf die zweite Ausstellung über, *Posthuman Complicities*, kuratiert von Andrea Popelka und Lisa Stuckey. Hier zeigt beispielsweise Joey Holder in ihrer Videoinstallation *Proteus*, wie Wissenschaftler mit Tauchrobotern »fremde« Lebensformen an Unterseevulkanen untersuchen, was sich perfekt mit dem dystopischen Video *Hydra Decapita* der Otolith Group verbindet, einer hypnotisierenden *Techno-Natur-Tracking-Bilderpoesie*.«  
(Helmut Ploebst, 20.3.2017)

<http://www.derstandard.at/2000054505940/Prosthesis-und-Posthuman-Complicities-Prothesen-fuer-den-ueberfluessigen-Koerper>

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## Salzburger Nachrichten:

»[U]nter dem Titel »Posthuman Complicities« [werden] Arbeiten versammelt, die das Fließende, den Ozean als Symbol für postkoloniale Geschichtsschreibung heranziehen. Das Massaker auf dem Sklavenschiff *Zong* 1781, bei dem 150 Sklaven getötet wurden, steht im Zentrum, mit dem sich etwa die Dichterin M. NourbeSe Philip und The Otolith Group beschäftigen. Die nicht-diskriminierende Geschichtsschreibung, die Geschichte der Anderen erhält ihren Raum, in dem Stefanie Schwarzwimmer mit fließenden Arbeiten die Konstruktion von Grenzen und Messeinheiten durch Kartenmaterial oder Viltė Bražiūnaitė und Tomas Sinkevičius mit einer rotierenden Pistole die Position des Betrachters hinterfragen.«

Von APA, 9.3.2017

<http://www.salzburg.com/nachrichten/oesterreich/kultur/sn/artikel/prothesen-kunst-in-der-akademie-der-bildenden-kuens-te-237810/>



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