

# A Laboratory of Struggles: Alternative Narratives, Emancipation Strategies, and Production of Knowledge within the Contemporary Art Scene in France

Anysia Troin-Guis



Le Chemin des Fous (Lgbt Migrants Refuge accompanied by Arthur Eskenazi & Liam Warren), exhibition view, Coco Velten, Marseille, France, 2022. Photo : Kevin Seisdodos

Anysia Troin-Guis is the laureate of the first edition of the TextWork Writing Grant

Understanding the French art scene today involves thinking about the conceptual challenges that unite a constellation of artists and collectives, whose practices and strategies oscillate between creation, theory, and transmission. Clearly, a renewal of critical thinking is currently occurring in contemporary art, inherited from the history of the struggles of the 1960s-70s, radical and alternative pedagogies and institutional critique, notably through the notions of disidentification<sup>1</sup> and intersectionality.<sup>2</sup> This critical thinking is all the more urgent to question, analyse, and apply within various French contexts, both on the academic and political levels, and in the media, which all actively condemn it: the work of artists, combining theory, practice, and testimony, thus emerges as

another gateway for participating in struggles.

The various modes of enunciation and strategies of struggle within the contemporary art scene can be questioned from their various sites of intervention, according to several scales of involvement, from within the institution through to more marginal or alternative practices. These could be individual initiatives or collective actions, in which traditional inherited or communal forms of knowledge are highlighted. Through them, artists think about a history of struggle through actions, proposing a critique of ultraliberalism and its corollary, patriarchal capitalism. In so doing, they produce antiracist, antisexist, intersectional, and queer knowledges. The articulation between art and political commitment can be expressed in forms that blur the limits between art, research, social sciences, and pedagogy: individual practices from artists who explicitly use critical and theoretical texts in their artworks and exhibitions; actions of collective intervention that call into question the normative frameworks of artistic institutions that host them (exhibition venues or art schools); and, finally, initiatives that operate at the crossroads of these same institutions and fields exterior to art, within a political perspective.

The constellation of artists described in this text is inevitably incomplete and sometimes subjective; it could be completed by a study of the works by artists such as Minia Biabiany, Julien Creuzet, Tarek Lakhri, Paul Maheke, Tabita Rezaire, Seumboy Vrainom :€, Samir Laghouati-Rashwan, or Mawena Yehouessi. It nevertheless results from a meticulous observation of many different scenes that meet and merge based on artistic, theoretical, and ethical affinities and sometimes through friendships. In addition, the fluidity of spaces connected to struggles, their constant evolution and vital reflexivity render any attempts at exhaustivity impossible. The choices made in this text allow specific projects to be more subtly analysed, firmly based in multiple and decentralised geographic contexts.

---

# Artistic Strategies of Struggle: Josèfa Ntjam and Gaëlle Choisne

## Josèfa Ntjam: The Figure of the Artist as an Afrofuturist Historian

Some artists develop an approach that updates historical narratives in order to critique a colonial past and revisit the official history. This is the case of Josèfa Ntjam whose afrofuturist<sup>3</sup> approach describes a protocol of creation in which the speculative narrative is combined with diverse and well-researched documentation that restores value to key references of the African continent and its diasporas. The artist appropriates the tools of research and anthropology to study objects, interconnect them, and create new worlds. She thus (re)models the figure of the historian and brings the dominant narrative and counter-narrative into tension, filling in the omissions and erasures of a Western hegemonic History. In this sense, she notably refers to Cheikh Anta Diop and his book *The African Origin of Civilization* (1954), which retraces the Sub-Saharan origin of Egyptian civilisation. In an interview, Josèfa Ntjam explains:

A lot of ideas must be called into question in the book and it is inherent to historical study that it be reworked with new information. ... Blackness has become a symbol used later by the

Francophone thinkers of negritude: Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Léon-Gontran Damas, etc. I created an iconography entitled *People in Egypt* with all of the artists who referred to Egypt, many of whom came from the African diaspora: Muhammad Ali, Malcolm X, Alice Coltrane, Nina Simone, Beyoncé, or Barack Obama who I caused to appear on a Tutankhamun head. I find that this comparison has incredible power and presents a chapter of what happened before the slave trade. There really was a historical gap for this community and for me the link is the Atlantic. And through the Atlantic, we return to the many living dead present in the ocean. This history resurfaces from the ocean depths. From Mami Wata, the mermaid of the West African coastline, to Drexciya.<sup>4</sup>



Josèfa Ntjam, *Aquatic Invasion*. Performance as part of La Manutention residency, Palais de Tokyo, 2020, Paris, France. Photo on the left: Hugo Mir-Valette. Photo on the right: Fallon Mayanja. Photos: Paul Fogiel

The monographic exhibition *Unknown Aquazone* (Nicoletti, Art-O-Rama, 2021) – a title responding to a work presented at the Palais de Tokyo during the collective event *Anticorps* (2020) – summed up this desire to multiply stories, mixing temporalities, fiction, mythology, and history. Certain photomontages present imbricated figures from the struggle for Cameroonian independence (such as Ruben Um Nyobè or Marthe Ekemeyong Mourié); sculptures in ceramics deploy various hybrid creatures and aquatic divinities, notably the Voodoo goddess Mami Wata. The titles of the works, as well as their imaginary, also refer to the more contemporary world of techno, via the Detroit band Drexciya. In the early 1990s, this duo of Afro-American artists attempted to remain anonymous, thus manifesting their refusal to showcase themselves as individuals, and to tend towards the militant ideal of the collective and communal. They created work with a powerful political message, based on an aquatic uchronia built on the legend of the Drexciyans: a people founded by the children of slaves thrown into the sea because they were pregnant, between Africa and the Americas, during the slave trade period. The depths of the abyss paved the way for a Black Atlantis, the science-fiction version of Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic*.<sup>5</sup> According to Kodwo Eshun, an Anglo-Ghanaian writer, theorist, filmmaker, and founder of The Otolith Group, they are an alleged Afrofuturist allegory of the peoples of the African diaspora and a retrieval of – or even atonement for – their history.<sup>6</sup> Beyond entertainment, this techno music that resonates in Detroit is the fable of the Maroon who escaped slavery: the Drexciyans – like the fugitive slaves that established themselves in inaccessible places to escape their masters and create clandestine and resistant communities – succeeded in surviving the people who oppressed them, by finding refuge in a futurist aquatic empire where they thrived.

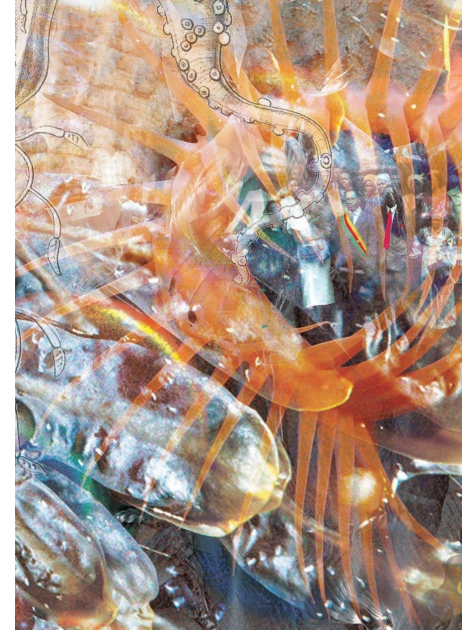




Josèfa Ntjam, Marthe Mounié, 2021.  
Photomontage printed by sublimation on  
Chromalux, 120 x 80 cm. Courtesy of the artist



Josèfa Ntjam, Father riding a seashell, 2021.  
Photomontage printed by sublimation on  
Chromalux, 120 x 80 cm. Courtesy of the artist



Josèfa Ntjam, Family Reunion, 2021.  
Photomontage printed by sublimation on  
Chromalux, 90 x 60 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Criss-crossing a fluid world, Josèfa Ntjam creates biomorphic creatures, monsters with intense colour that reappear from one work to the next. The performance / *Am Nameless*, presented in 2021 at the festival *Parallèle* in Marseille, unfolds like a ritual in which the artist operates between a mixing desk and a backdrop presenting a projected organic and aquatic bestiary. The powerful poetry of Josèfa Ntjam, with its multiple narration, now disenchanting, now full of hope, emerges from the depths of the seas and places itself at the borders of a technological space-time. In her discourse, personal pronouns merge or, quite simply disappear, turning the collective enunciation into a kind of ethical and political constellation. In it, we hear the refusal, the anger in spite of hope – “I furiously spit out the fantasies to which I’ve been assigned” – which recall the historical confiscations at the heart of Ntjam’s work, as well as a desire for disidentification. In the artist’s world, another world seems possible, a thinking and horizontal alternative enabling the (hi)story of dominations to be rewritten and to develop an aesthetic of the revolt. The liquid therefore sublimates the hybrid existences that populate this cooperative world, re-evaluates the stories, and allows the concept of identity to be shaped. It is no longer a question of a well-justified pessimism of the likes of Zygmunt Bauman<sup>7</sup> and his liquid societies, but a device for emancipation, a way of navigating towards an initiatory elsewhere, an oceanic or technological meta-civilisation. To cite the words of Achille Mbembe in his short book *Black Panther ou le retournement du signe africain* [Black Panther or the Inversion of the African Symbol] (AOC, 2020), it is a kind of reconciliation between all forms of life: human, animal, plant, mineral, and organic. Techno-narratives reenchant the world, through recourse to speculative fiction, and oppose a Western humanism that prefers to forget the traumas of Africa, from slavery to colonisation. This counterfactual history, this story of possibilities is about making an “apocryphal historical sketch of the development of European civilisation as it hasn’t been, as it could’ve been”<sup>8</sup> that the tools of art allow to be created, beyond the “basic” traditional historical approach. The use of fiction, highlighting minority discourse, the revalorisation of thinkers beyond the hegemonic Western field thus come to form a different story. The performance

*Aquatic Invasion*, with the participation of various artists invited by Ntjam in 2020 to the Palais de Tokyo, affirms this historical and political fluidity that renders artistic creation possible: “Here, our revolts will be the songs that will spur us on tomorrow. Our bodies, in the form of droplets, will infiltrate linear History that is now spinning off its axis.”<sup>9</sup>

## Gaëlle Choisine: Relational Poetics and Politics

Gaëlle Choisine’s approach is also affiliated with a history of struggles and an archaeology of history through its colonial remains.<sup>10</sup> The work of this artist is fuelled by a meticulous experimentation of the underlying connections to colonialism and systems of domination. She makes the relationship between objects, materials, references, creation, and audience the paradigm of her corpus – between the private and the political, scientific thought and emotions. The political dimension of Gaëlle Choisine’s work seems to be linked, among other things, to her origins: she is Franco-Haitian and articulates thought that combines political, social, economic, and environmental issues with the vernacular traditions of the Caribbean country, its myths and way of life in the post-colonial context. Such a legacy superposes traditions and the processes of exoticising these, capitalism and the inimical effects of colonisation. It calls for us to reflect on a position: innately decolonial, Choisine’s position is thereby integrated within the history of the Americas and its desire to refuse domination. This perspective is thus affiliated with the notion of cultural cannibalism coined by Oswald de Andrade in his *Cannibalist Manifesto* (1928), which contributes to Brazilian modernity and established the importance of a symbolic cannibalism: ingesting and absorbing the violence of the coloniser via the act of devouring the dominant culture. Rationality, classification, and stability are replaced by the notions of fluidity and reappropriation,<sup>11</sup> with a view to proposing new, alternative subjectivities.<sup>12</sup> A critical experience of knowledge and creation, which recognises the porosity of borders, references, and materials, Gaëlle Choisine’s approach brings this fundamental aesthetic and political thought regarding the modern world up to date in the post-colonial context. The artist affirms that, in her work, as in “our society, nothing derives from an isolated space, but everything is mixed, combined, hybridised, devoured and spat back out, absorbed and permeated”.<sup>13</sup>



Gaëlle Choisine, Monument aux Vivant.e.s, 2022. View of the cycle at Palais de la Porte Dorée, Paris, France. Photo : DR

Based on images found on the Internet, her filmic trilogy *Cric Crac*, created between Haiti, France, and Canada, perfectly illustrates the remains of the myth within Haitian society and its impact on the contemporary context. The expression “cric crac” comes from an old Haitian tradition of oral storytelling: the storyteller says “cric” to their audience and the latter accepts to listen by answering “crac”. The stories that Gaëlle Choisine tells are used here under the genre of experimental film, comprising layering, looping, and found footage, so as to develop new forms of documentary and an alternative historiography. She also evokes the figures of the werewolf and zombie in Haitian beliefs. The zombie, to cite just one example, plays a prominent role in Voodoo culture and, concomitantly, in the stigmatisation to which Westerners subject them.<sup>14</sup> A fantasy of slavery as a “production of a pure body, an absolutely docile body, an ‘organ’ of production, ... the zombie is the spectre of the slave trade and slavery, the memory of the great white sorcerer transforming Black people into beasts of burden on the plantation”.<sup>15</sup> The artist also studies a historical and political allegory of Voodoo beyond its mythological and superstitious dimensions. She analyses its dual perception, according to the side of History she finds herself on: a means of resistance and threat from the Afro-descendant proletariat towards Western imperialism and colonialism, or a stigmatisation of beliefs deemed archaic. *Cric Crac* insists on a mix of cultural references, from the poet René Depestre, whom Gaëlle Choisine cites in the video, to interviews with experts on Haitian culture.<sup>16</sup> archive imagery, and excerpts from North American films.<sup>17</sup> The mix of subjectivities, from the popular, the political, cultural products, and industrial production, attest to a politically committed cultural cannibalism, which considers the historical referent a fiction and vice-versa. It is a matter of



transforming a traumatic memory into a means of empowerment, so as to “decolonise and disalienate the mind of the Amerindian-Afro-European”.<sup>18</sup> So a two-sided reception is at play in Gaëlle Choisne’s work: the audience is led to reflect on the structures of domination by colonialist and patriarchal traditions and on the ability for the oppressed individual to act.<sup>19</sup>



Gaëlle Choisne, exhibition views of Cric Crac, Centre d'art contemporain La Halle des bouchers, 2015, Vienne, France. Photos : Blaise Adilon

A pathway appears implicitly and develops throughout Gaëlle Choisne’s work: the importance of the collective, of using multiple voices and inviting other people to express themselves. In many of her works, the act of dividing up the enunciation emerges as a practice of solidarity and sharing. This is the case of *Temple of Love - Affirmation*, which took place at the musée d’Art moderne de Paris in 2020 as part of *Nuit Blanche*. A long-term project, *Temple of Love* is devised as a multifaceted space of care, for re-evaluating our relationship to the world through the notion of love. In the *Affirmation* chapter at the MAM, the idea was to present a performance infused with voguing and ballroom culture, which emerged in the 1970s among Latina and black LGBT communities in the United States.<sup>20</sup> In a museum with closed doors, due to the health measures, the artists of the House of Ninja invited by Choisne danced and moved around sculptures and installations. Outside, the audience watched through the large windows but heard no music, only mantras featuring decolonial perspectives. The performance thus offered a form of political resistance, which took love, self-acceptance, and otherness as its main principles: “[the tune] of racialized self-enactment in the face of overarching opposition”.<sup>21</sup> In these projects emerge two categories of Afro-descendancy: the one connected to the United States, or more broadly the West, marked by a popular and contemporary culture, with voguing; and the one more specific to the Caribbean, whose traditional heritage has been preserved and updated. Both, however, are confronted with reappropriation or erasure. In this sense, Gaëlle Choisne formulates a poetics of survival through the role of the body and its interaction with living things. She imagines places of collective care and posits the paradoxical idea of the museum, a national institution, as a safe space during this *Nuit Blanche*...



Gaëlle Choïsne, installation views of Temple of love – AFFIRMATION, 2020, in collaboration with HOUSE OF NINJA, Nuit Blanche, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France. Photos : MAM

The artist's decolonial and political thought is also reflected in her relationship to the institution: according to some, accepting the state's money means buying into the system and its violence – its institutional racism, discriminatory laws, and lack of strong cultural policy. In a nutshell, it would mean being hoodwinked, or worse, collaborating. Nevertheless, state funding, derived from public taxes, can be used to undertake financial or symbolic redistribution of these means, possibly diverting them from their original intended uses. In this perspective, Gaëlle Choïsne's initiative illustrates the complementarity of her collective approach to art and her desire to develop thinking stemming from the history of struggles: on the Journée nationale des mémoires de la traite, de l'esclavage et de leurs abolitions [National Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade, Slavery, and their Abolition] the artist invited the Afrofeminist choir Maré Mananga, as well as musicians and artists,<sup>22</sup> to present a collective performance at the Palais de la Porte Dorée, on 10 May 2022, entitled *Monument aux Vivant-e-s – CHOC*. Produced by the French Minister of Culture's programme *Mondes nouveaux*, and far from the governmental communication operation that announced the winners the previous autumn, the first chapter of this art project confronts the trauma that the slave trade and slavery represent, through a choral ceremony commemorating these crimes against humanity and their abolition. Song, music, performance, litany, and psalmody accompanied a kind of supportive and sober communion held at the former Palais des colonies, a site that embodies the problematic of a conflictual and traumatic history.<sup>23</sup> If the current context of cultural policies seems hard to accept, "pockets of resistance" (to cite Gaëlle Choïsne) can be disseminated to offer sites for discussion and representation that contrast with the official speeches or the absence of veritable commemorative apparatus concerning slavery.<sup>24</sup>

## EMANCIPATION STRATEGIES AND INSTITUTIONS

### EXHIBITIONS AS A SITE OF SUBVERSION?

The critical thinking at work in certain artistic practices exhibited in France is sometimes appropriated within propositions emanating from the institutions themselves, in an attempt to reverse power relations and subvert traditional exhibition formats. The exhibition *À Plusieurs* [Together] at the FRAC Lorraine in 2021 thus proposed an examination of African diasporas and dominant structures of thought inherited from colonialism. Director Fanny Gonella and curator Agnès Violeau followed a curatorial principle that aimed to avoid subsuming the perspectives of individuals from this diaspora, not speaking for those concerned, but instead inviting artists to adopt the role of curator. The researcher, curator,



and artist Mawena Yehouessi evoked in the exhibition text a plurality of “authorities, identities, communities, mediums, persons, and personalities” who invited a discovery of the space as “a platform, a conspiracy, a common ground”.<sup>25</sup> Different artistic communities thus developed around the artists Tarek Lakhri, Josèfa Ntjam, and Tabita Rezaire. Lakhri had invited Inès Di Folco and Ibrahim Meïté Sikely. Josèfa Ntjam exhibited the video made with Sean Hart, *Mélas de Saturne*, thus opening up a dialogue between singularity, ancestral culture, and technological research.<sup>26</sup> Rezaire brought together the work of many artists in a Moon ceremony and deployed a body of work combining spiritualities and digital tools, through different screens presenting images of the satellite and various testimonies.<sup>27</sup>



Tarek Lakhri, *À plusieurs*, 2022. Installation view at FRAC Lorraine, Metz, France.  
Photo : Aurélien Mole. Courtesy of the artist, FRAC Lorraine and VITRINE London/Basel

Borne by the notion of hybridity and the diversity of practices represented (installation, painting, video, sculpture, etc.), the exhibition was intended as a platform multiplying points of view in order to deconstruct power relations. It thus attempted to offer more horizontal relationships and decompartmentalise roles, questioning the conditions of existence of artistic creation: “on how this becomes the reflection of a demographic reality born from displacements and aggregations – inherently decentralised, entropic and plural” (FRAC Lorraine website). In this way, it opens up pathways regarding questions of representation and enunciation. The venue was approached as a space for dialogue, for precarious and supportive affiliations. Ideally, all of this calls for a reconfiguration of the mechanisms of domination within an institutional cultural venue. But I say “ideally” because one of the guest artist-curators, Kengné Tégua, eventually left the project, which he explained in a long article on Le Club de Mediapart entitled “*À Plusieurs*, Frac Lorraine ou d’un enfer pavé de bonnes intentions” [“*À Plusieurs* (Together), Frac Lorraine or from Hell Paved with Good Intentions”].<sup>28</sup> In it, he presents himself as a “deaf cyborg HIV-positive Black artist” and his approach illustrates the impasses of a project designed as inclusive and eager to foster community, when it proves impossible to capture the complexity of class, race, and ableist relationships. In the artist’s view, the intersectional problematics were superposed without really being articulated among themselves, and were not sufficiently taken into account, whether within the institution or within emancipatory collectives. In his opinion, the good intentions and commitment of the institution should not mask a systemic problem pertaining to the multiple forms of domination towards the various social categories. All in all, the exhibition purportedly participated in a hegemonic culture that revels in recuperating intersectional struggles, without however relinquishing its privileges and violence

towards minorities (in this sense, we could, for instance, ponder why the artists were not officially credited as curators). The subject and structure of the exhibition thus apparently emerges as tokenism, which either unburdens itself of a noxious and discriminatory environment, or plays on a “trend effect” led by the liberation of the voices of the persons concerned. That is a facet of the thinking developed by philosopher Sara Ahmed, when she reflected on the term “diversity” and its ambiguous relationship with the history of struggles: connected to questions of antiracism, multiculturalism, and equal opportunities, it tends to be used as a comfort zone for the privileged, who evacuate its meaning in a two-fold movement of recuperation and invisibilisation. For the researcher, “The comfort of diversity is ... explicitly defined as a form of hiding, a way of not having to think hard thoughts” that “might provide a cushion, both softening the edge of critique and allowing institutions to be reinhabited as softer spaces.”<sup>29</sup> This also conveys a need to present guilt as a substitute for any form of amends or even thought, which leads Sara Ahmed to affirm:

We need to throw a wrench in the works, to stop the system from working. ... Making feminist points, antiracist points, sore points, is about pointing out structures that many are invested in not recognizing. That is what an institutional brick wall is: a structure that many are invested in not recognizing. It is not simply that many are not bruised by this structure. It is also that they are progressing through the reproduction of what is not made tangible. When we are talking of sexism as well as racism, we are talking about systems that support and ease the progression of some bodies.<sup>30</sup>

## Re-Evaluating Art School Pedagogies: Critical Thinking in Service to Teaching

The pitfall of the recuperation of critical thinking is a rather significant issue in this essay and leads us to question the training of artists itself, within the critical genealogy in which they are immersed, the pedagogical content of the classes that they follow at art school, and the historical, philosophical, curatorial paradigms that, in some sense, will contribute to shaping their practice, if not completely influencing it. Thinking about the history of struggles in relation to pedagogy, which is far from being homogenised among the various art schools in France, can therefore constitute a kind of core of the institution, or at least open up a space for consideration within it. Launched at the Villa Arson by Sophie Orlando, professor of art theory; Céline Chazalviel, head of publications; Christelle Alin, head of the public relations department; and Flo\*Souad Benaddi, an artist graduating from the Villa Arson in 2021, the programme *La Surface démange* illustrates that schools can be a site of potential transformation.<sup>31</sup> Through an examination in three chapters of the connection between theory and practice – teaching, publishing, and mediation – this participatory approach attempts to break away from a certain verticality of teaching, in which only the teachers are deemed knowledgeable. After a research day on pedagogies in art schools, held in 2020 with figures from within the school and beyond, a digital platform is being launched in autumn 2022, followed by public talks and a book collection, pending publication in 2023. It consists of a “unit gathering together various functions and positions both within and beyond the Villa Arson, which has assigned itself the objective of gathering, sharing, and developing critical practices in art”.<sup>32</sup> A site of collection, experimentation, encounters, and testimonies, it hosts different forms of content (speeches, artworks, theoretical texts) from artists, teachers, or activists. Its aim is to think about the training of artists and the various pedagogical practices established, which combine references to the critical

pedagogy of bell hooks, Paolo Freire, or Henri Giroux; the situated knowledges of Donna Haraway; or the ethics of care. Based on an epistemology of viewpoint, the project aims to understand the construction of the condition of creation, from a critical perspective, firmly rooted within a social and political history that has evolved over the decades. While the initiative stems from an institution, it does however develop beyond a static structure, by deconstructing formal hierarchies, by refusing “the elitism of class” of academic intellectual productions<sup>33</sup> or Sara Ahmed’s “institutional brick walls”, and by excluding the imposition of a turnkey bibliography. It also contributes to a valorisation of feminist, decolonial, and anti-ableist research, which have difficulty finding legitimacy in the French academic world, as a result of a republican tradition and universalism that are stubbornly reticent to accept any recognition of differences.<sup>34</sup>

Since this project remains ongoing, we must think long term about the impact and benefits of such an enterprise within French art schools and under teaching conditions that, even now, continue to rely on a critical approach that is mainly conservative and Western, that does not sufficiently integrate the history of feminisms or decolonial thought. Uncovering the claims of students or activists, helping voices discussing discrimination to circulate, recalling the privileges pertaining to whiteness are just some of the objectives of *La Surface dérange*. Other initiatives are emanating from the students themselves, within collectives or associations such as Le Massicot or the magazine *Show*, and the various online campaigns entitled *#balancetonecoledart*.<sup>35</sup> So it is up to the institution to identify such stakes without instrumentalising or recuperating them, to create real changes. Participating in the Niçois project, the artist Flo\*Souad Benaddi was already making this approach her working methodology in her fifth-year thesis, entitled *Sit on my Face* (Villa Arson, 2021). At once a design object falling within the history of the artist’s book and alternative publications, a medium for personal and political stories, and a historical collection bringing together sources and testimonies relating to intersectional debates and LGBTQIA+ struggles, the document prefigures the principles that we find in *La Surface dérange*:

To embark on an investigation based on tight reins, which are deconstructed yet connected by the resilience of bodies and desires. In this way, a database is built up that reflects my theoretical, militant, personal, and practical encounters... They do not necessarily follow a logical sequence, but more of an interest in some of the specificities of struggles. ... Gathering these stories and taking the time to informally record these *saviours/savoirs* (knowledges) that myself or others have experienced. To try to establish a framework for knowledges that have only ever been constellations. To deliver a map for each meteorite’s tail, within which we can situate and orientate ourselves.

Already broached in this text, the problematics linked to institutions and to the context of creation and distribution show that it is vital to reflect on alternative formats such as publication, organising workshops, or other ways of exhibiting and appropriating various sites in order to showcase political artistic productions without these being construed as tokenist pomp or a means of speculation. The symbolic violence of recuperation of decolonial, intersectional, and queer issues by a bourgeois elite and the confrontation between an exhibition context integrated within a dominant and oppressive system and of artworks affiliated with struggles raises questions as to the finality of urgent and necessary artistic approaches. While it is difficult for an artist to totally bypass interactions with institutions, other dynamics can be considered, within the margins of the system – when these are considered as “a site of radical possibility, a space of resistance”<sup>36</sup> in which voices and creation can contribute to a circular economy.



---

# Working within the Margins of the Institution: Countering the Traditional Formats of the Art World

## Qalqalah قَلْقَلَة, une plateforme éditoriale et curatoriale collective

The editorial and curatorial platform Qalqalah قَلْقَلَة is one example of the collective initiatives developing at the margins of institutions, while sometimes maintaining an intellectual and economic relationship with them. Its methodological and creative tool is the translation of texts that are not widely distributed and examine current conflicts, colonial heritage, and contemporary revolts. Its editorial committee comprises researchers, curators, and artists such as Line Ajan, Virginie Bobin,<sup>37</sup> Montasser Drissi, Victorine Grataloup, Vir Andres Hera, and Salma Mochtari, and it proposes texts in French, English, and Arabic, so as to support a circulation of discourses and contribute to a de-hierarchisation of languages within the research context. The collective therefore produces knowledges and is involved in creation and exhibitions that advocate a feminist, inclusive, and intersectional position, opposing the reactionary, discriminatory, and authoritarian discourse found in France in recent years. Similarly, it regularly holds workshops in schools or art centres, whose invitations contribute to the economic operation of the platform, thus demonstrating the impossibility of completely liberating oneself from institutions in a context of financial precarity.

This space for experimental writing thus opens up another story about struggles and critical research. Beyond theorising or describing the artwork, the idea is to constitute an œuvre by thinking about one's own conditions of existence in material, conceptual, social, or political terms. This way of creating stories contests a hegemonic Western vision that leaves little room for dissonant, discordant, and minority voices. Within the continuity of the refusal instigated by postcolonial studies, notably Edward Said, who condemned hegemonic relations in the contemporary world and the marginalisation of extra-Western cultures and spaces, the idea is to think about the dominant structures within languages as well as the necessity of heterolinguism. This examination of language and translation emerges as fundamental, as it acknowledges agonistic forces, both as they occur and throughout history: at once a process of domination and appropriation, but also ethical and positive openness in the construction of the communal.<sup>38</sup> So it is a matter of broaching translation as an "ethics of differences". Philosopher Judith Revel, to whom the collective refers on its online platform, calls for this ethics, as it is "through the recognition of a commonality of concerns within struggle that the construction of this commonality as a new, future form of universality can occur".<sup>39</sup> In this vein, there are multiple forms of invention that rely on weaving intellectual and emotional bonds between the various art-world stakeholders and the research that enables this critical position to be achieved, for instance as in the exhibition *Qalqalah قَلْقَلَة : plus d'une langue* [Qalqalah قَلْقَلَة: More Than One Language] presented in 2020 at the Centre régional d'art contemporain Occitanie in Sète, then at the Kunsthalle in Mulhouse in 2021. Just as there is a refusal of homogenisation of languages, there is also a strong desire to counter a homogenisation of creation, which would tend towards a pseudo-universality of the contemporary art world, blind to social, cultural, and geographic differences. In this sense, Salma Mochtari describes Qalqalah قَلْقَلَة as

a “form open to collective changes, to evolutions of needs, desires, and resources. It is the result of a two-pronged approach, between the strict editorial space of the platform and the traditional spaces of contemporary art and art research”.<sup>40</sup>



institute for incongruous translation, Seeing Studies, 2011. Sophia Al Maria, Untitled, (Apotropaia series), 2019. Exhibition view of « Qalqalah قلقله : plus d'une langue ». CRAC Occitanie, 2020, Sète, France. Graphical intervention : Montasser Drissi. Courtesy of the artists and the galleries Thirdline & Sfeir-Semler. Photo : Marc Damage



Mounira Al Solh, Sama'/Ma'as, 2014 - 2017. Exhibition view « Qalqalah قلقله : plus d'une langue ». CRAC Occitanie, 2020, Sète, France. Courtesy of the artist and the gallery Sfeir-Semler. Photo : Marc Damage



Qalqalah قلقله, Session 2 du workshop à la Fondation Camargo, 19 novembre 2021, Cassis, France. Photo : Fondation Camargo

## Collective Translation of *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten

This methodology connecting translation, collective work, and intellectual and elective affinities was notably found again in the project that led to the French publication of the book *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, a series of essays published in 2013 by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, at the initiative of Brook publishing house. An analysis combining philosophy with Black arts and tradition, the book was the focus of numerous translation workshops, from 2019 onwards. The latter brought together different researchers, artists, translators, and other participants eager to contribute to the French reception of a critical collection on racial capitalism and modes of resistance to it, with the premise that the “undercommons as a place and a being stems from the uncertainty of collective creation, of habitation through exchange, through improvisation as a critique”.<sup>41</sup> While sessions were held within the framework of institutions such as the Centre Pompidou, in galleries or alternative sites, the majority of these took place in the home of Brook’s editor, Rosanna Puyol, or other private places. Puyol insists on the importance of the autonomous and supportive character of this enterprise, which alternated work and moments of conviviality, particularly around meals. The precarious economy of the independent publishing house led Rosanna Puyol to only subsidise meals and accommodation, and to cook, namely with her mother, for most of the workshops outside of institutions – for instance at Myriam Suchet’s home, a researcher and translator, or at Sandar Tun Tun’s places of residence, an artist currently living in Marseille. During workshops at various institutions – such as Bétonsalon at the invitation of Cédric Fauq, at the Maison populaire during the curatorial residency of Thomas Conchou, and during Tarek Lakhri’s École d’automne – certain interventions were able to be paid. But, overall, it was therefore a circular economy and a collective effort that brought the project to fruition in 2022; everyone participated in their own way and gave their time, guided by the desire to establish the basic

principles of a democratised culture and a model of benevolent society based on hospitality.



Stefano Harney & Fred Moten, *Les sous-communs, planification fugitive et étude noire*, collective translation, Brook, 2022

## The Status of Artists as Political Instruments: *Le Chemin des Fous*

*Le Chemin des fous* is a long-term project in multiple forms initiated by the encounter between Moussa Fofana, cofounder of Refuge Migrant-es LGBTQI+ de Marseille (RML) and of two Marseille-based artists, Liam Warren and Arthur Eskenazi.<sup>42</sup> Finding its origins in a project linked to *Manifesta 13* in 2020, this collaboration was expressed through an initial performance, *DÉRIVES*, presented at La Vieille Charité. Following a series of workshops with the two artists, the residents and members of RML, mostly foreigners, staged slices of life attesting to their condition and to the various forms of discrimination suffered by many migrants, owing to their status as foreigners and to their sexual and gender identity. This first resolutely intersectional proposition was extended by a regular fixture in the form of creative and theoretical workshops at Coco Velten, a temporary site of occupation in the heart of Marseille, which aims to be a hub of



solidarity and cultural exchange.<sup>43</sup>

This desire to establish a safe space on a weekly basis allowed cooperation and creativity to be generated among the various participants and stakeholders of the project, who were able to form a group with shared experiences and multiple identities and expectations. As a locus of experimentation, learning, and encounters, the idea was to develop a horizontal line of inquiry into the notions of inclusivity, care, and liberation of speech: a practice stemming from the epistemology of situated knowledges, which insists on “the need to produce a collective capacity for analysis that takes the point of view of the dominated, and that therefore makes a lot of space for their experiences”.<sup>44</sup> Aware of the privileges of some and the forms of oppression suffered by others, this approach involved questioning the ethical frameworks of this kind of collaboration and anticipating any imbalances between socially oppressed individuals and their allies (the two artists residing in France with regular status). Taking pains to avoid any reproduction of another form of tokenism that would only represent superficial inclusiveness, this approach therefore relied on Liam Warren and Arthur Eskenazi’s refusal to unilaterally elect a way of proceeding, to adopt the position of professionals confronted by marginalised and extremely precarious individuals: for this kind of experimentation, it was a matter of creating a community and collectively finding solutions to connect artistic expression with practical utility.



Le Chemin des Fous (Lgbt Migrants Refuge accompanied by Arthur Eskenazi & Liam Warren), view from a performance on the 8th of July 2022, Coco Velten, Marseille, France. Photo : Robin Plus



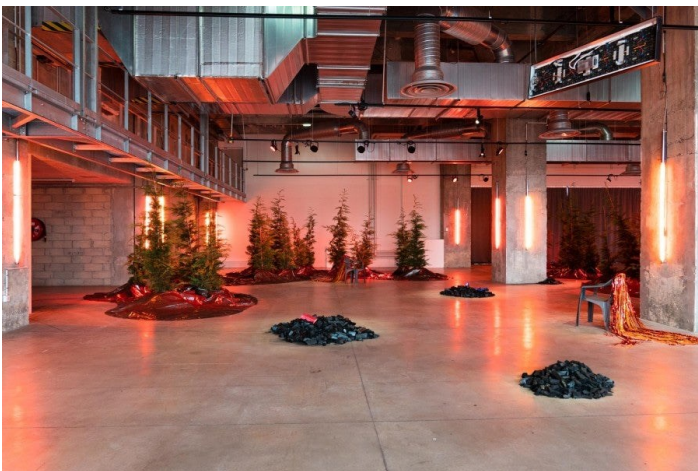
Le Chemin des Fous (Lgbt Migrants Refuge Migrants accompanied by Arthur Eskenazi & Liam Warren), exhibition view, Coco Velten, 2022, Marseille, France. Photo : Kevin Seisededos

These workshops, based on the question of identity and self-representation, contribute to accumulating a corpus documenting the RML association, its history, and its members. The key highlight of this project was established in June 2022 during the *AOZIZ Festival of Inclusion*, a queer, inclusive, intersectional festival,<sup>45</sup> in coordination with the *Festival de Marseille* and *Pride 13*, as part of *Le Chemin des fous*, which connected exhibitions and performances. The exhibition brought together a performative video installation as well as different art objects and multiple editorial practices, created during collaborative encounters. Performances took place, combining dance, song, or texts, whose actions and stories emphasised the agency of a collective guided by the values of solidarity, inclusion, and emancipation. While the project enjoyed support from the Enowe-Artagon art production fund for its exhibition costs, the participants or artists could not be paid and each invested their time according to their desires and solidarity, attesting in this respect, too, to the importance of the team’s

intellectual, militant, and artistic affinities.<sup>46</sup>

*Le Chemin des fous*, an ongoing and multifaceted project, also involves an examination of legal issues, notably through the establishment of the status of co-author once the group has obtained subsidies or been invited to participate in paid residencies. The participants are performers but also artists, a status that could allow the migrants' Kafkaesque administrative pathways to be facilitated, since the vast majority of them find their cases dismissed and are condemned to live as illegal aliens, rendering them vulnerable and financially precarious. This perspective belongs to an artistic genealogy in which we find Olive Martin and Patrick Bernier's *X et Y c/Préfet de... - Plaidoirie pour une jurisprudence*.<sup>47</sup> a play performed by two legal experts that advocates for copyright as a protective law, "unlike the right of foreigners, which, in the context of the economic and social crisis, no longer grants migrants the essential guarantees of public freedoms that form the basis of any democratic society".<sup>48</sup> In a similar approach, the Bureau des dépositions in Grenoble, an artist collective, attempts to bring cases to court against expulsion procedures threatening asylum-seeker members.<sup>49</sup>

More recently, artist Mégane Brauer has also developed militant ideas on migration, within the framework of the exhibition-residency *Uni-e-s par le feu* [United by Fire], co-created with Anes Hoggas, Samet Jonuzi, Suela Jonuzi, Ersi Morina, and Klevis Morina, at Les Magasins généraux in Pantin, under the curatorship of Anna Labouze and Keimis Henni. Having met at the Saint-Just squat in Marseille, home to around two hundred exiles between 2018 and 2020, Mégane Brauer invited some young artists (still teenagers) to develop the exhibition with her. Launched at the squat during a workshop in 2020, the collaboration between the six artists aimed to both constitute a record of an unusual experience (that of a place inhabited autonomously) and create art. But a fire that precipitated the evacuation of the site left no trace of these works.<sup>50</sup> The co-authors, all connected through a collaborative agreement, now claim an "intangible, collective, and plural" body of work. At Les Magasins généraux, it took the form of installations, real or fictional stories, and an examination of the support provided to the exiled artists, consisting more of an array of perspectives and an archival attempt than a static exhibition.



Mégane Brauer, Anes Hoggas, Samet Jonuzi, Suela Jonuzi, Ersi Morina, Klevis Morina, views from the exhibition-residency *Uni-e-s par le feu*, 2022. Magasins généraux, Pantin, France. Photos : Mathis Payet-Descombes. Courtesy of the artists and Magasins généraux

This complex intertwining of artistic and militant practices requires an examination of the internalised forms of domination and subordination, a consequence of French and European migratory policies. It requires some brainstorming about what being an ally of a marginalised population subjected to

discrimination means, and at the risk of taking on missions that should more appropriately be the domain of the public authorities. In a supposedly providential state, which must have social welfare, protection, and justice as its principles, such approaches seem to reinforce the passivity or even disengagement of the government among migrant populations. Based on this same perspective, the various calls for institutional cultural projects require that artists include hospitals, prisons, schools, or other public places in their approach. While artists, not always trained to intervene within such social services, come to play a beneficial role of mediation therein, what is more problematic is their almost palliative role of the public administration. So the question is not that of knowing whether or not this kind of initiative should be undertaken. On the contrary, they are absolutely pertinent and necessary, but it is a matter of thinking collectively, alongside sporadic approaches that only benefit individualities, about overall ways of changing the problem of reception and assistance to exiles in France and rendering these procedures systematic. Artistic practice and the status of the artist can therefore be a gateway towards a way of thinking that must be developed in all fields of society.

While there is obviously not “one” homogenous art scene in France, the one that I have chosen to comment on can be considered a laboratory of struggles in which individual projects are fostered, as well as collective creations, supportive ideas, and artistic practices that aim to relay an elliptic, erased, or denied story. Through its multiple initiatives, this young generation illustrates a desire to transform the art world into an echo chamber that thinks about the world and thinks about its own role, both inside and outside of institutions, through the creation of sites of protest, the writing of non-linear stories and alternative discourses, the development of new subjectivities and new narratives. The use of speculative fiction, showcasing of traditional and communal knowledges, the search for more egalitarian frameworks and circular initiatives based on a history of struggles leads to considering the deconstruction of dominant and discriminatory thought as fertile material for updating artistic strategies. These forms also offer an extension of the human sciences, of pedagogy, history, and anthropology: breaking the shackles of the logos, these practices contribute to a political imagination, a promising utopia, and, in the words of José Esteban Muñoz, they represent “necessary modes of stepping out of this place and time to something fuller, vaster, more sensual, and brighter”.<sup>51</sup>

Translated from French by Anna Knight

1. Disidentification is a concept linked to psychology and sociology, founded by José Esteban Muñoz in his book *Disidentifications*. It concerns the analysis of artworks and artistic approaches that calls the stereotypes of race or gender to which they have been assigned into question: in short, the artists who strive to subvert the codes of hegemonic culture (male, white, heterosexual, and cisgender). See José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

3. Afrofuturism refers to a long-term movement from which an aesthetic derives, emerging in the mid-twentieth century, combining black culture and science fiction (see notably Sun Ra for music and Octavia E. Butler for literature). The term appeared under the plume of Mark Dery in his founding text “Black to the Future: Interviews with Samuel R. Delany, Greg Tate, and Tricia Rose”, in *Flame Wars: The Discourse of*

2. Intersectionality is a notion derived from the social and political sciences, developed by racialised feminist theorists, including Kimberlé Crenshaw, in order to mitigate a lack in terms of the multiple processes of interconnected power relations, unpacking relationships of domination between social formations (race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, etc.) that generate complex forms of discrimination. For a historical overview of the notion, see Éléonore Lépinard and Sarah Mazouz, *Pour l'intersectionnalité* (Paris: Anamosa, 2021).

4. Josèfa Ntjam, interviewed by Marie Bechtouille, “Zombie Melancholy: Zombies Don’t Forget, They’re a Form of Memory. Interview with Josèfa Ntjam”, trans. Anna Knight, *La belle revue* [online] (2021): <https://www.labellerevue.org/en/thematic-dossiers/universal-zombienation-lbr-11/itw-josefa-ntjam>



Cyberculture (Durham, Duke University Press, 1994).

5. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993). The sociologist, in the wake of Cultural Studies, develops a theoretical framework to analyse the cultural productions of the African diaspora and update a cultural history stemming from slavery and the slave trade. The pertinence of her statement is based on the foregrounding of a hybrid, transatlantic culture that refuses nationalist essentialism and builds on the encounter between territories surrounding the Atlantic – African, Caribbean, British, and American territories – informing a hybrid production reflecting the fluidity of diasporic identities.

7. See Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Life* (Oxford, UK: Polity Press, 2005). The theorist forges this expression to refer to contemporary societies whose laws and market economy are in constant flux and are based on overconsumption, rendering living conditions precarious and interhuman relationships superficial.

9. Notably Fallon Mayanja, Aho Ssan, Hugo Mir-Valette (editingworldgrid), Nach, Sean Hart, Nicolas Pirus, Steven Jacques, Bamao Yendé & Le Diouck, Monochrome Noir, Crewrâle93, and Lala & ce.

11. In another text, he writes: “Anthropophagy is the cult dedicated to the instinctive aesthetic of the new land. It is the pulling apart of imported idols, to enable the ascent of racial totems. It is the land of America itself, as it is filtered and expressed through the vassal temperaments of its artists.” Oswald de Andrade, *Anthropophagies*, trans. Jacques Thiériot (Paris: Flammarion, 1982), 261.

13. Gaëlle Choïsne, interviewed by Hélène Soumaré, *Point Contemporain* [French online journal] (January 2018): <https://pointcontemporain.com/gaëlle-choïsne-entretien/>

15. Dénètem Touam Bona, “Les métamorphoses du marronnage”, *Lignes*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2005): 39.

17. Notably *The Serpent and the Rainbow* by Wes Craven (1988), *Mondo Trasho* by John Waters (1969), or the clip *Thriller* by John Landis and Michael Jackson (1983).

19. For a more in-depth look at the relationships between transcription of history and empowerment, see Marine Cellier, *Makandal en métamorphose. Hérosismes et identités dans la littérature caribéenne*, doctoral thesis under the direction of Crystel Pinçonat, Aix-Marseille Université.

21. Muñoz, *Cruising*, 80.

23. The performance was created with the participation of the Maré Mananga choir, Christelle Oyiri aka Crystallmess, Sophie Soliveau, Kelly Carpaye, Eden Tinto Collins, Joseph Decange, Frieda, and Pierre Et La Rose.

25. Mawena Yehouessi, *À Plusieurs* exhibition text in English, available on: [https://www.fraclorraine.org/media/PRESS\\_MAY21.pdf](https://www.fraclorraine.org/media/PRESS_MAY21.pdf)

27. Various artists were therefore invited: Yussef Agbo-Ola, Julien Creuzet, Hlasko, Elsa Mbala, Jenny Mbaye, Memory Biwa et Robert Machiri, Aisha Mirza and Mahta Hassanzadeh, Liz Mputu, Nolan Oswald Dennis, Bogosi Sekhukhuni, Justine Shivay.

29. Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (London: Duke University Press, 2012), 66.

6. See Kodwo Eshun, “Further Considerations on Afrofuturism”, *The New Centennial Review*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2003): 287–302. In 2010, The Otolith Group made the film *Hydra Decapita*, also based on the world of Drexiciya.

8. Quentin Deluermoz, Pierre Singaravélou, *Pour une histoire des possibles. Analyses contrefactuelles et futurs non advenus* (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, coll. L’Univers historique, 2016), 26. [All translations from quotations in French are ours, unless otherwise stated.]

10. Namely the gardens, universal exhibitions, or certain monuments.

12. In this respect, see the fundamental work of Tarsila do Amaral.

14. Gaëlle Choïsne writes: “The word ‘zombie’ finds its origins in Haitian culture and in Creole means ‘ghost’ or ‘revenant’. With its source in Africa, the concept of the zombie assumed great importance within Haitian culture, where it is linked to the slavery and oppression on the island. By taking a potion, a man or a woman, whose death has been clinically observed and whose funeral has taken place in front of everyone, is brought back to life by a sorcerer, in order to subjugate that individual. Even now, the omnipresence of the figure of the zombie can be explained by the persistence in Haiti of archaic political structures. This negative figure refers to the state of passivity in which the country lives and that allows the oligarchy to maintain its privileges.” *La Feuille de boucher*, published for the exhibition *Gaëlle Choïsne Cric Crac*, presented at the contemporary art centre La Halle des bouchers de Vienne, from 14 February to 3 May 2015.

16. Notably Frantz Voltaire, director of the Centre international de documentation et d’information haïtienne, caribéenne et afro-canadienne, and Monique Dauphin, a feminist activist, engaged in the movement of Haitian immigrant women in Quebec.

18. Manuel Zapata Olivella, *El árbol brujo de la libertad : África en Colombia, orígenes, transculturación, presencia, ensayo histórico mítico* (Valles: Universidad del Pacífico, 2002), 129.

20. On this subject, José Esteban Muñoz writes in his founding book, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2009), 80: “Vogueing, for instance, is too often considered a simplistic celebration of black queer culture. It is seen as a simple appropriation of high fashion or other aspects of commodity culture. I am proposing that we might see something other than a celebration in these moves—the strong trace of black and queer racialized survival.”

22. Christelle Oyiri, Sophie Soliveau, Kelly Carpaye, Eden Tinto Collins, Joseph Decange, Frieda, and Pierre Et La Rose.

24. Within the same perspective of redistribution, here financial and symbolic, see the workshop led by Gaëlle Choïsne as part of the exhibition by Mohamed Bourouissa *Urban Riders*, held at the Musée d’Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2018) with a group of refugees, from Eritrea, Sudan, Syria, or Afghanistan, based on the work of French-Cuban artist Hesse (1936–2017).

26. Notably with Mawena Yehouessi aka M.Y, Nicolas Pirus, Fallon Mayanja, Hugo Mir-Valette (editingworldgrid) and Borgial Nienguét Roger.

28. See (in French): <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/kteguia/blog/190521/plusieurs-frac-lorraine-ou-d-un-enfer-pave-de-bonnes-intentions>.

30. Sara Ahmed, “Scientific genealogies, practices and citation

31. This was written shortly before the publication of the *Libération* article of 8 July 2022, describing situations of harassment and sexual abuse by a teacher from this same art school. This concomitance illustrates perfectly that it is – now, more than ever – necessary to instigate hard thinking and changes on the pedagogical level in art schools and to provide students with safe spaces for working and speaking. See (in French): [https://www.liberation.fr/societe/droits-des-femmes/harcelement-sexuel-propos-racistes-humiliations-la-villa-arson-une-ecole-dart-au-climat-deleter-20220708\\_TBWTYONCQ5C53OU3A4X5BVIBUU/](https://www.liberation.fr/societe/droits-des-femmes/harcelement-sexuel-propos-racistes-humiliations-la-villa-arson-une-ecole-dart-au-climat-deleter-20220708_TBWTYONCQ5C53OU3A4X5BVIBUU/)
33. See bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (London: Routledge, 1994).
35. On this subject, see the recent podcast (in French) *Paye ta vie d'artiste* / made by Manifesto XXI and coproduced by the Printemps de l'art contemporain, held at the SOMA in Marseille, for a discussion entitled “#balancetonécoledart : vers de nouvelles pédagogies” about pedagogy, precarity, and power relations in the art world, starting in schools: <https://manifesto-21.com/podcast-paye-ta-vie-dartiste-ecole-dart/>.
37. Virginie Bobin is also a member of the editorial committee of *TextWork*.
39. Judith Revel, “Construire le commun : une ontologie”, *Rue Descartes*, vol. 67, no. 1 (2010).
41. The exhaustive list of translators: Rémi Astruc, Orestis Athanasopoulos Antoniou, Laetitia Badaut Hausmann, Antoine Barberon, Katia Barrett, Paul Batik, Nelson Beer, Amina Belghiti, Emma-Rose Bigé, Mélanie Blaison, Elisabeth Boshandrey, Kathleen Bonneaud, Ana Cecilia Breña, Eugene Brennan, Nina Breuer, Willie Brisco, Aimo Buelinckx, Salomé Burstein, Ninn Calabre, Ève Chabanon, Ghalas Charara, Virginie Chavet, Marie Chênel, Camille Chenais, Etienne Chosson, Lisa Colin, Alexandre Collet, Christel Conchon, Thomas Conchou, Sofia Dati, Laure de Selys, Jérôme de Vienne, Florent Dégé, Judith Deschamps, Fig Docher, Eugénie Dubreuil, Diana Duta, Jacob Eisenmann, Abderrahmane El Yousfi, Marion Ellena, Lou Ellingson, Phoebe-Lin Elnan, Iris Fabre, Kim Farkas, Cédric Fauq, Claire Finch, Lucas Fritz, Léa Gallon, Nathalie Garbely, Léa Genoud, Leo Gentil, Valentin Gleyze, Sarah Holveck, Sandrine Honliasso, Caroline Honorien, Nina Kennel, Nora Kervroëdan, Nadir Khanfour, Soto Labor, Tarek Lakhrissi, Ana Marion, Héléne Mateev, Callisto McNulty, Juliette Mello, Léna Monnier, Lucas Morin, Violette Morisseau, Elena Lespes Muñoz, Margot Nguyen, Jordan Nicholson, Pierre Niedergang, Rokhshad Nourdeh, Léo Osmu, Rebecca Oudin-Shannon, Laura Owens, Sophie Paymal, Marielle Pelissero, Céline Peychet, Baptiste Pinteaux, Madeleine Planeix-Crocker, Céline Poulin, Rosanna Puyol, Catherine Quéloz, Eva Fleur Riboli-Sasco, Mathieu Rajaoba, Lily Robert-Foley, Delphine Robet, Pauline Roches, Guillaume Rouleau, Luce Rouyre, Neige Sanchez, Samy Sidali, Jon Solomon, Chloé Subra, Myriam Suchet, Oona Sullivan-Marcus, Laura Trad, Emma Tricard, Sandar Tun Tun, Esther Um, Gemma Ushengewe, Mona Varichon, Alice Wambergue, Mawena Yehouessi.
43. From March 2021, workshops were led with various artists: two members from the group Ramziya Hassan (Oriental dance) and Anis Khamlich (voice, karaoke), Nina Gazaniol (video), Erika Nomeni (writing/rap), Alou Cissé Zol (contemporary dance), Andrew Graham (waacking dance), Silvia Romanelli (costume and make-up drag queen), Elsa Ledoux (screenprint reproductions), Daouda Keita (contemporary dance), Maria de la Vega (Latin dance).
45. AOZIZ is a network in Marseille working with mixed groups of people with or without disabilities, and minority or marginalised individuals.
47. Olive Martin and Patrick Bernier, *X et Y c/Préfet de... - Plaidoirie pour une jurisprudence*, performance created in 2007, in association with Sébastien Canevet and Sylvia Preuss-Laussinotte, performed by S. Canevet and S. Preuss-Laussinotte and produced by Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers.
- privileges: Academic walls”, *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017), 158.
32. See the presentation of the platform *La surface démange*, available (in French) on: <https://villa-arson.fr/actualites/2021/09/la-surface-demange>
34. The philosopher explains this expression as follows: “I described citations as academic bricks through which we create houses. When citational practices become habits, bricks form walls. I think as feminists we can hope to create a crisis around citation, even just a hesitation, a wondering, that might help us not to follow the well-trodden citational paths. If you aim to create a crisis in citation, you tend to become the cause of a crisis.” (Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 148.)
36. bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1990), 149.
38. In this regard, see the work of Emily Apter, notably *The Translation Zone. A New Comparative Literature* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006), or the most recent book [in French] by Tiphaine Samoyault (Paris: Seuil, 2020).
40. “Qalqalah قَلْقَلَة ou l'aventure de l'hétérolinguisme.” Interview by Éric Mangion and Luc Clément. Published on *Switch on Paper* (21 October 2021).
42. Notably featuring the participation and creations of Anis Khamlich, Alex Bakabum, Allieu Jallah, Abdo, Ahmed Ba, Abulah Koroma, Austin Eboru Muoghalu, Abdul Mustapha Koroma, Amadu Jalloh Alhade, Abdul Mustapha Koroma, Bai, Ben Rayane, Brian Recha Jongis, Calistus Anaezionwu, Fouad, Isha Koroma, Isaac Hura, Jabbie, John Mansaray, Kai Biango, Moussa Fofana, Mohamed Sawaneh, Mohamed Lamarama Jalloh, Mehdi, Mohamed A'Sesay, Matthew Ohajiani, Nana, Paul, Raymond, Peter, Sylla, Souleymane Traore, Suleyman Mohammed, Sesay Foday, Sario Camara, and Oneyeke.
44. Lépinard and Mazou, *Pour l'intersectionnalité*, 42–43.
46. In this vein, working for several years with Liam Warren, I offered to write the exhibition text in order to problematise the stakes of this kind of approach and helped with the mediation of the exhibition and performances with various audiences.
48. For an in-depth analysis of this extraordinary performance, see Cécile Debost, “Plaidoyer pour une jurisprudence”, *Les Cahiers de la Justice*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2015): 23–27.
50. Private interview with the co-authors (June 2022).

49. See <https://www.pacte-grenoble.fr/programmes/bureau-des-depositions>

51. Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 189.