



Cildo Meireles. *Red Shift*,
1967–84. Parts 1, 2, and 3.
Each part, 394 x 197 (1000 x
500). Courtesy Galerie
Lelong, New York.

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Liminalities: Discussions on the Global and the Local

In the twenty years since Edward Said, in his landmark study *Orientalism*, framed debates about cultural identity and the construct of the Other, there have been extraordinary worldwide political, economic, and social realignments; massive migrations and displacements of peoples; and the development of a seemingly

borderless electronic communications network. At the same time, there have been intense, and often violent, reassertions of the particularities of cultural, ethnic, and religious identification. Within the context of the arts, the specifics of identity and difference have been the focus of many artists, curators, critics, and historians. Simultaneously,

recent years have witnessed the emergence of a global art produced by an international band of cultural nomads who travel widely to create and exhibit their work, much of which derives from their experience of homeland, displacement, migration, and exile.

Art Journal invited a group of curators and critics to respond to the following questions: How do you reconcile the simultaneous forces that propel your work toward a postnational globalism with those that assert fierce allegiance to particularized notions of identity and difference? As the concepts of home and nation are called into question, where do you position yourself and your work between the poles of the global and the local? What has been the impact of these forces on your work and its place within the larger frame of reference?

When I moved from Venezuela to the United States in the early nineties to pursue my doctorate in art history at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, I never imagined that my first contribution to *Art Journal*, one of

Mónica Amor

Whose World? A Note on the Paradoxes of Global Aesthetics

the most important publications in the field, would be on globalization. Nor did I anticipate that my training in art theory and modern art would define me as a Latin Americanist or that most of the articles I would be asked to write and the lectures

I would be requested to give would be on the ill-defined subject of Latin American art and culture. In a so-called postnational era, I never assumed that my nationality would so determine—and restrict—what I was assumed to be capable of doing.

Nevertheless, I embraced my newly adopted field with enthusiasm. After all, my first language is Spanish; I was interested in postwar South American art and the complexities of modernity in some countries of the region; and I was writing for magazines that considered contemporary South American art, such as *Art Nexus* and *Poliester*, as well as *Third Text*, a London-based journal devoted to cultural perspectives from, and about, the periphery. In addition, like many of my colleagues at the Graduate Center, I embraced with great excitement interdisciplinarity and the efforts of cultural studies to rethink the artistic canon. I took courses on the cultural contradictions of globalization, on emergent discourses and the Third World, and on contemporary social and

cultural theory, along with art history courses. But I was soon disappointed. Not in my courses, which always expanded my frames of reference, but in my practice—or the practice that I was asked to perform and that I constantly tried to subvert. For in spite of my art historical training, most of my professional opportunities seemed limited to what is vaguely called Latin American art—a field that classifies under one rubric the work of artists as disparate as Antonio Berni, Raúl Lozza, Gego, Cildo Meireles, and Tunga—and its relation to current cultural issues.

Globalization is part of this story. The term stands for a field of economic, social, and cultural forces intimately related to the economic structures embodied by corporate capitalism that can illuminate—or obfuscate—our understanding of contemporary artistic practices. When globalization is explored as a matrix of forces informing the production, circulation, and reception of specific works of art, it can help us to further understand the discursive dimension within which artistic practices are immersed. But when it is thematized uncritically, it can become a mere catchword emblematic of the postmodernist demands of the metropolis at stake—Kwangju, Johannesburg, Istanbul, São Paulo, Lyon, and Venice, just to name a few of the main biennial producers.

I will not deal here with the economic dimensions of globalization because I am not an economist. Suffice it to say that the economic and political inequalities on which globalization is predicated are worth noticing and that the parallels with what may seem to be an outdated imperialism are shocking. My main concern here is with the increasingly prevalent celebration of globalization by curators, critics, and other art professionals—specifically, with the naïvely monolithic conception of the local as one term in a hierarchical opposition in which the global occupies the position of privilege. This leads us to a paradox, since globalization is alleged to problematize the binary opposition of the national and the international by facilitating networks of communication, as well as economic and cultural exchange, that defy national borders and hegemonic models of cultural production. Nevertheless, in the art world globalization has all too frequently served to reinforce dominant paradigms of circulation and to leave conventional institutional structures intact—at least in mainstream U.S. and Western European institutions, where the multiculturalism of our global village manifests itself through quotas that intervene little in the dynamics of the dominant artistic discourse.

This has become clear to me in my own work. I am often asked to discuss in panels, symposia, round tables, and catalogues Latin American art and its relationship to our epochal mottoes: multiculturalism, postcolonialism, diaspora, and, of course, globalization. However, I am never asked to discuss the work of a particular artist or a specific group of works, much less to consider the parallels and differences between, for example, postminimalism and neoconcrete art. Moreover, the possibility that someday a postwar art course in a U.S. university might consider the contributions of South American artists, like the conceptualists of Argentina (Tucuman Arde and the artists working around the Instituto Di Tella during the sixties come to mind), is still unlikely within the entrenched structures of North American academia.

The public programs organized in conjunction with two recent exhibi-

tions of the work of contemporary South American artists have further underscored my concerns. The Chilean artist Eugenio Dittborn's first major one-person museum exhibition in the United States, "Remota," organized by Dan Cameron and presented at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York from February 12 to April 13, 1997, was accompanied by panel discussions on current cultural issues that touched little on the artist's work. Similarly, the major traveling exhibition "Re-Aligning Vision: Alternative Currents in South American Drawing," organized by Mari Carmen Ramírez and presented at El Museo del Barrio in New York from May 7 to September 7, 1997, gave rise to a panel on alternative curatorial practices and globalization at the Drawing Center. It seems impossible to break free from the straitjacket of cultural studies-related topics and to have historians, critics, and curators read closely the formal and conceptual operations of a South American imaginary that runs parallel to and in close dialogue with better known cultural productions from the United States and Europe.

In the absence of a more sophisticated model of analysis, one that would go beyond the parochial Greenbergian reading of modernism, South American art is forced to participate in the absurd dichotomy of form and content—studied only in relation to the latter, as if it were incapable of new ideas through new forms. The consequences for contemporary art have been dangerous. Compelled to operate almost exclusively under geopolitical frames of reference, so-called non-Western artists—an absolutely inappropriate term for art produced in South America, since the continent has participated in the dynamics of Western modernization for as many centuries as the United States—have dipped themselves in the fallacy of representation. So-called Latin American artists, for example, unaware of the strong legacy of artists like Lozza, Gego, Lygia Clark, Hélio Oiticica, and their complex responses toward the representation of national identity—responses that problematize representation itself—have dismissed the structural contradictions of globalization in favor of an accommodating illustration of current cultural theory. While I do consider that contemporary cultural theory has been one of the greatest contributions to our understanding of cultural identity, the dynamics of globalization, and postcolonial culture, in the visual arts the emphasis has been placed more on the representation of the issues at stake than on the deployment of a praxis to confront them. This tendency to contextualize art produced in South America almost exclusively in relation to cultural issues—but not also in dialogue with the formal problems that U.S. and Western European artists have investigated—has limited the recognition of the important contributions of certain South American avant-gardes and artists to that history. It is telling, for example, that the complex investigations of various groups of abstract artists that emerged in Argentina during the forties—including Grupo Madi, Arte Concreto-Inventiva, and Perceptismo—have not been publicized in the United States and Europe nearly as much as the "local" iconography of an artist such as Joaquín Torres García.

Only recently have institutions in the United States and Europe—such as the Witte de With in Rotterdam; the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona; the Kanaal Art Foundation in Kortrijk, the Netherlands; the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis; and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston—begun to rec-

ognize the important contributions of artists like Clark, Gego, Oiticica, and Meireles to the art of the sixties. Unless institutional paradigms change dramatically, however, there is little hope that the modern artistic canon will truly expand. As an art historian, my desire is not to be a Latin Americanist but to be able to generate dialogical models that can enrich our knowledge of the complexities of modernism in the North as in the South, to explore the dynamics of both the local and the global in the formation of models of representation, and, most important, to demonstrate that artistic practices are sites of resistance in front of the homogeneity of the discourse.

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Julie Dash's film *Daughters of the Dust* (1992) is based on the epic tale of dislocation, migration, and acts of cultural survival forged under the despotic and inscrutable memory of slavery. Told on the eve of the migration of the Peasant family from Ibo Landing, in the Sea Islands of Georgia, this migration exemplifies that form of scattering and separation that bears portentous similarity to the context of many contemporary African artists. The presence of these artists in many parts of the world captures in manifold ways the reality of arrivals and departures that every day is played out in airport terminals, train stations, docks, etc., throughout the world. How has the language of these artists changed since migration? How have their identity, sense of place-

lessness, or presence been altered by re/dislocation and how have they transformed the normative forms of expression in the sites they occupy? Does migration necessarily mean the leaving behind of one's own

Okwui Enwezor

Between Localism and Worldliness

country, culture, and ethnic enclave, or does it involve other forms of traveling that mean more than the physical crossing of borders?

This last question is important if we consider how much things have changed in the last half century. The movement of populations—from rural to urban, agrarian to industrialized, national to postnational and transnational—provides keys to new articulations about the meanings of identity, identification, affiliation, allegiance. Introducing concepts of hybridity, ambivalence, and indeterminacy into the lingua franca of cultural and political discourse, these movements pry open routes into the values of ethnicity, origin, and authenticity. Such reroutings not only question but also unsettle allegiances and make clear sites of myriad political, cultural, social, and expressive thought, so that speaking of "black" Africa has become not only an inadequate point of classification and differentiation but anachronistic. In this regard, various discourses are beginning to recognize the validity of Maghreb-ian, Caucasian, and other histories as integral to the ways we define and expand the notion of who and what is African.

Thus in speaking of Africa today we need to ask how the struggles of independence, the problems of the national sovereign state, the expanding definition of national culture, citizenship, and cosmopolitanism (which are

partially linked to economic malaise, social obsolescence, and political destabilization) define subjectivity. What role does the notion of individual freedom and desire play in the construction of identity? How do such definitions provide affective processes of critical thinking, radical revision, translation, and postnationality? These questions are urgent, for we must be able to account for new diasporic formations that have become part of the postcolonial experi-

ence of African artists and intellectuals. We need to investigate the cultural and intellectual productions based on this experience of diaspora, to explore how the conditions of exile and expatriation provide new motifs and challenges to the discourse of Africa in the late twentieth century. This investigation should contend not only with exile and expatriation in relation to movement into the crowded metropolises of the Western hemisphere but also with the transnational movements occurring today in Lagos, Abidjan, Johannesburg, Dakar, and Cairo.

While movement and migration have been perpetual motifs of the twentieth century, and while many of us often focus on the problematics of dislocation and displacement, particularly those made through spatial distinctions between here and there, home and exile, we must not forget that vast numbers of migrations happen internally, within bounded national territories. Even when these movements happen internally, they are not always predicated on a shattered spatiality, in which particular kinds of migrants form clusters. These clusters, in addition to redefining the spatial character of the city, bring to those sites new cultural archetypes and languages that often compete with the rooted, settled communities.

Though these convergences often serve as metaphors for conflict, the realization of a

new temporality within the spatial problematics of the city makes the process compelling. Thus it is possible to live in one's own country, city, and culture and remain as distinctly alienated and distant from its social procedures as those who journey to the strange beyond of the global metropolis. This minimally recognized condition of migrancy, placelessness, exile, and displacement serves as a metaphor for what today's contemporary African artists embody. They travel both at home and abroad, journey physically and psychically, migrate in between the pixelated and information-saturated sites of the cyberworld, and inhabit the complex matrices of popular culture that form part of the transterritorial dimension of the global network and exchange systems.



Julie Dash. *Daughters of the Dust*, 1992. Film still.
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They bring disparate attitudes and experiences to the zones where they trade (not only in symbolic exchanges), and they help to redefine and reshape the contours of contemporary cultural practice. These artists engage in critical conversation with the thorny issues of place, identity, and memory, which acquire new meaning insofar as they detotalize and deconstruct a performative African psychic space from a homogenized, political economy of race and authenticity to one of multiple identities.

In evoking some of the problematic terms that have served as cannon fodder for African identity discourse, I have no interest in repeating those worn-out modes of postcolonial address that insistently and invidiously set up binary distinctions within the practices of those African artists who live on the continent and those who don't. Nor am I interested in the other distinctions that separate their practices into native/foreign-born, authentic/inauthentic; in such small spaces nationalism, ethnocentrism, and racism circulate their noxious fumes. Still, it would be fair to concede that, indeed, certain differences do layer some of the above distinctions. However, singling out differences is helpful insofar as we understand that we can only deploy them to establish paradigmatic attitudes that exist between disciplines, discourses, locations, and practices.

The names of these artists are varied: Georges Adeagbo, Oladélé Bamgboyé, Bili Bidjocka, Mary Evans, Kendell Geers, Kay Hassan, Bodys Isek Kingelez, Abdoulaye Konate, Moshekwa Langa, Wageshi Mutu, Donald Odita, Olu Oguibe, Outtara, Peet Pienaar, Jo Ratcliff, Tracey Rose, Folake Shoga, Yinka Shonibare, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Ike Ude, etc. They come from Johannesburg, Douala, Lagos, Cotonou, Kinshasha, Cape Town, Aba, Nairobi, Bamako, and Dakar; and they live and work in New York, London, Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, and Tokyo.

These and other contemporary African artists work within many critical, avant-garde procedures: video, film, installation, actions, performances, photography, and digital technology. Though they do not eschew traditional means of making art, they are deeply located within conceptual and post-modernist matrices. Often based on the critique of various hegemonic social, political, and cultural practices, their works aim to destabilize, challenge, and reinscribe the global terrain of culture as a complex territory in which they can stake a claim as much as can any contemporary practice coming out of Great Britain, the United States, France, or Germany. In so doing they invoke and highlight many transgressive and subversive movements and critical and radical articulations.

Nonetheless, talking about these artists in this way does not give us a full picture of what it is to be an African artist in the age of globalization; all it says and repeats is what has always been known—that Africa is made up of multiple and disparate identities, cultures, territories. However, in following this most traditional of analytic routes, we are given a set of imperatives with which to examine what Homi Bhabha has termed “measure of dwelling,” which speaks to how we define and determine belonging and place. What, in the late twentieth century, are the conditions of belonging and dwelling for Africans who live in places other than Africa?

I have repeatedly raised these issues because very few of the discussions

about belonging, identity, nationality, and exile have adequately explored that hinge where many Africans dwell, think, create, or, in some cases, while away their time dreaming paradoxically of home. And where exactly is home for these people? And where home has become unimaginable except in old, tattered black-and-white photographs, what set of imperatives within the nascent narratives of crossing, settling, dwelling, and transterritorialization do such immigrants conjure up to locate themselves in the new land and to stitch the unruly patterns of home? How do they accommodate the locations of departure and arrival?

There are very few answers for such fraught questions, particularly when we focus on those expressive and social languages acquired in the temporal fissures of postcolonial migration. Making sense of the new temporalities and spatial configurations many Africans have entered into today—between what James Clifford calls localism and worldliness—cannot happen until we acquaint ourselves intimately with how African subjectivity has been defined within this reality. Moments of migration forged by contingent histories repeat through various signs, little bits and pieces or remembered conversations (articulations predicated on the falling away, the fragmentation of collective memory). Even while attempting to disguise those accidents of foreignness and hybridity—that exemplary piecing together, part myth and part experience—one easily slips between different forms of speech, from colloquial Igbo to clipped British stiff-upper-lip English; from classical Yoruba to Swahili to Arabic and Hindi. All these describe Africa, at home and abroad.

In such a moment of contingent, indeterminate cultural histories, one must question why few discourses of contemporary Africa have taken notice of these patterns and textures of migration and movement. First, the degree to which the patterns of migration have been figured seems always to narrate that liminal space as only a temporary one; hence, the need to define and forge a broader affiliation of Africans in a foreign place was seen as unnecessary, for one always returns. Second, many African immigrants who left before or during the period of independence never imagined that various political and economic emergencies could so easily attenuate the desire to return. Moreover, many found secure situations for themselves in the places they had settled and so those places became legitimate homes away from home.

If one pursues a more detailed picture of contemporary Africa in the late twentieth century, one finds that diaspora is not an equivocal term that excludes African artists. In its incremental and divergent formations, thinking about the links that diasporicity offers as tools to critically appraise the art of the continent does indeed give us access to the transcontinental and transnational regimes of the contemporary production of her artists. It short-circuits any essentialist reading of “African” as embedded in a timeless warp of pre-colonial African traditions. Clifford put it nicely when he wrote that diaspora could be “seen as potential subversions of nationality—ways of sustaining connections with more than one place while practicing nonabsolutist forms of citizenship.” It seems to me that the terms under which we negotiate the sense of what is African in the late twentieth century are predicated on the values of this nonabsolutist, nonessential form of affiliation. The world of

contemporary African artists is not circumscribed by any absolutist identity or territory. In this sense their work raises key questions not only for those who will have their views of what and who an African artist is, but equally for those critical Western establishments that will no doubt continue to attempt to sequester these artists into disqualified ethnic categories. But more important, these artists pose another, more salient and lasting, question. Like the Peasant family in *Daughters of the Dust*, as we cross and settle and resettle, how do the new accents we acquire during the course of migration or contact with other cultures change our positions of affiliation? How do we secure new communities, embody diverse identities, reterritorialize vestiges of the cultures of home, experiment with new ways of being and making, and create new economies of exchange and circulation for stories and symbolic and political values? Indeed, what are the ways one is and becomes African in the surging tumult and noise of the millennial clamor for a homogenized—and commodified—global identity?

This article is a revised version of an essay that originally appeared in the catalogue for the exhibition "cross/ing: Time.Space.Movement," organized by Olu Oguibe for the Contemporary Art Museum of the University of South Florida (1997), published by Smart Art Press, Santa Monica.

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During the past three years, I have been organizing the exhibition "Inside Out: New Chinese Art." One goal of the exhibition, on view at the Asia Society and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in New York from September 15, 1998, to January 3, 1999, is to present a survey of contemporary art from Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the community of overseas Chinese

Gao Minglu

Extensionality and Intentionality in a Transnational Cultural System

artists. However, as a guest curator from Mainland China, my chief concern has been to present the artworks in a theoretical framework within which contemporary Chinese art makes sense to a Western audience, but at the same time retains and respects the original content and context of

the art, insofar as this is possible in the very different social and cultural milieu of a Western museum space. To do so has meant confronting many of the issues raised by your questions.

To begin, a transnational system—or "postnational globalism," as you call it—has caused a profound disjuncture in the definition of Chinese modernity. Located in one of the most rapidly changing regions in the world, both economically and politically, Chinese societies have gained international attention in part because the issues of Chinese modernization and cultural identity have come to be seen as vital to the construction of a post-Cold War global order. Although the nature of modernity has been debated within Chinese societies for nearly a century, the practical and theoretical concerns of this modernity were rooted in a desire for internal strengthening in reaction to Western influ-

ences. Until the late 1980s, Chinese modernity could be labeled a defensive modernity, bound up with the articulation of a national identity and subjectivity. It did not seek a global role or interaction in a larger modern world.

Global modernization, however, with its superficial consciousness of location, boundary, and interrelatedness, has put an end to this self-focused and self-defined modernity and pushed Chinese societies toward a transnational cultural identification. The structural determinants of this newfound cultural identity are economic and are reflected, for instance, in the pervasive McDonaldisation of Chinese societies during the nineties.

A shift in the art world of Mainland China from the political concerns of the eighties to the economic ones of the nineties is evidence of this process of globalized modernization. The idealist, utopian avant-garde that blossomed with the '85 Movement (an art movement that emerged in 1985 and continued through



Wang Jin. *96 Central China: In Zhengzhou City, 1996*. Three photographs. Each, 31½ x 39½ (80 x 100). In 1996 Wang Jin and his partners created a 30-meter-long ice wall as a sculptural monument for the opening ceremony of the city's first large shopping mall. They embedded in the wall many luxury consumer goods—jewelry, cosmetics, toys, cell-phones, pharmaceuticals, and the like. Finding the frozen goods, the public began to dig them out using any means available, and finally brought down the wall.

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the second half of the eighties, which involved about one hundred unofficial, spontaneously formed art groups that questioned tradition, criticized authority, and negotiated Western ideas and art) and was dedicated to contesting local political and cultural oppression has given way to a pragmatic neo-avant-garde that strives to transcend the local in favor of acceptance in the international arena. This shift is largely a product of post-Cold War external pressures, but there is a persistent tendency in the West to ignore this transition and to misread contemporary Chinese art from a Cold War ideological perspective.

An example of such a misreading is found in a *New York Times Magazine* article of December 1993. The cover featured a reproduction of a painting by a Cynical Realist artist with the headline, "Not Just a Yawn but the Howl That Could Free China." Ironically, a visitor to this revolutionary artist might have been surprised to find him ensconced in a large house in Beijing with a beautiful garden and a big gate between him and the little people. Contrary to the image of the radical avant-gardist portrayed in the article, this particular artist has been passionately engaged in creating and participating in a consumer culture that is an essential part of any capitalist society. Thus, what constitutes Chinese avant-gardism from a globalist perspective is questionable on the level of local resistance to consumer culture.

Virtually every exhibition of Chinese art held in the West (Hong Kong, Australia, Europe) since the early nineties has reiterated this misreading. Chinese artists of the Political Pop and Cynical Realist persuasion have been

presented as exemplars of a nonofficial avant-garde and their work interpreted in light of the Tiananmen democracy movement of 1989. In fact, Political Pop is a facile combination of socialist forms of propaganda and consumerist symbols presented in a neutral way and has been criticized as opportunistic by many Chinese artists and art critics. Meanwhile, the international focus on Political Pop has overshadowed another major post-Tiananmen avant-garde



Zhang Huan. *To add one meter to the fish pond.* Color photograph. A performance project organized by Zhang Huan in 1997. Zhang persuaded village laborers who have flooded into the major Chinese cities over the past decade, because of the urban economic boom, to stand in a shallow pond, thus raising its level. The work investigates China's urbanization, which has caused a crisis of public resources, education, environment, and crime.

trend: the further dematerialization of the art object. One such project in this regard involves a self-imposed exile from mass-consumer culture and work that is overtly antagonistic to the Coca-Cola-ization of Chinese society. This work, which I have called Apartment Art, is generally unmarketable and ephemeral and is usually exhibited in private spaces. It is also created in streets, plazas, shopping malls, or other public spaces in "consumerist happenings" in which commercial objects are used as media and consumers are inducted into the event. Thus, one might argue that Chinese intel-

lectuals and artists are experiencing circumstances similar to those faced by the Western avant-garde a century ago, in which two modernist sensibilities operate side by side—one materialist, the other a critical, aesthetic. The latter, however, is more than a utopian aesthetic program but challenges materialism as part of a broader social critique.

"Inside Out" poses other difficult issues. First, the local Chinese context is not monolithic. The cultures represented in the exhibition are separated by profound historical, political, and regional differences, and creating an integrated, nonhierarchical structure was a significant challenge. Furthermore, national identity as conveyed in some artworks implicates these differences. Thus, the visibility of the individual works reflects different identity contexts: nationalism in the Mainland, nativism in Taiwan, regionalism in Hong Kong, and what I have called postorientalism among overseas Chinese artists. Political and economic factors—for instance, Taiwan's independence movement, Hong Kong's handover to China—have created tensions between the Mainland, Taiwan, and Hong Kong as well. Obviously, contemporary Chinese identity is being shaped by these events. My curatorial task has been to capture the changing declarations of identity of the different Chinese societies in an objective way.

Second, Chinese tradition—how is it defined and to whom does it belong?—is a major concern of cultural identity for Chinese artists, especially those who have emigrated to the West and are directly involved in the Western mainstream art scene. It is therefore critical to examine the ways in

which artists deploy the traditional in a contemporary context and negotiate the local and the international. Since cultural differences only appear in a situation of negotiation, successful Chinese artists such as Cai Guo-quiang, Huang Yongping, Gu Wenda, and Xu Bing have used traditional Chinese materials and subjects, not as touchstones of a monolithic entity, but as dimensions of a material language and as bridges over which different cultural identities may meet.

Finally, globalization has produced an acute consciousness of individual disposition. As Anthony Giddens argues, a distinctive feature of modernity is the increasing interconnection between the two extremes of extensionality and intentionality—globalizing influences on the one hand and personal dispositions on the other. This feature of modern history is now transforming the Third World perhaps even more profoundly than in the West. In contemporary Chinese societies, the transmutations produced by modernization are having a seismic impact on everyday life and conceptions of the self. Thus, the visual characteristics of contemporary Chinese art reflect increasingly distinct individual experiences. One must be sensitive to these expressions of individualism and at the same time keep in mind the larger forces propelling them.

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Is the planet developing a global culture, or are certain regions of the world once immune from the influence of the West just becoming more Western? Perhaps the issue is not globalization or local identity but the growing cultural domination of more powerful groups supported by economic and political might over others. For Hong Kong, the threat is not the West, but China. Since the early nineties, when Hong Kong's return to China was becoming imminent, its people have discussed the question of Hong Kong's cultural identity with increasing fervor. Out of insecurity, we have exaggerated our uniqueness and have tried hard to solidify, even fabricate, a distinctive cultural identity, which for some did not exist. As a presenter of culture, a curator can play a role in helping to shape this discourse.

Oscar Ho
Hong Kong:
A Curatorial Journey for an Identity

In 1843 the British, who wanted a port for trading with China, took over Hong Kong as part of the ratification of the Treaty of Nanking. Hong Kong became a bridge between the East and the West, with no existence of its own except as a convenient passage between these two cultures. During the first half of the twentieth century, Hong Kong took on another role. Natural disasters, economic crises, and political unrest in China forced many citizens to move to the British colony. Hong Kong consequently became a center for refugees who had no engagement with the city. They worked hard and tried

to make as much money as possible so that they could immigrate to other places or return to China once the situation there improved. Hong Kong was only a railway station, with many romances but no marriages.

After the communists took over China in 1949, another massive flow of refugees ensued. By the early fifties, it was apparent that the communist regime was going to stay. The refugees had no choice but to make Hong

Kong home, although psychologically and culturally they were still linked with China. Also in the fifties, after the refugees had established themselves in their new home, Hong Kong's first baby boom, which resulted in a truly "Hong Kong" generation, began. For this generation, brought up in a British colony with no direct contact with China, communist China was a distant entity.

The colonial government naturally had no intention of nurturing the people's sense of identity, with either China or Hong Kong; a colonial power does not need colonists with a strong local identity. Instead, the government encouraged

the people of Hong Kong to live in an ambiguous cultural state. In 1984 the British agreed to return Hong Kong to the Chinese in 1997 as a special administrative region of China. Most Hong Kong people, especially the Hong Kong-born generations, were hesitant about reunification, for we had commonly regarded our motherland as backward and oppressive, and many of us were fully aware of the dramatic differences between Hong Kong and China. On the other hand, the British government's refusal to grant the right of abode in the United Kingdom to its own citizens in Hong Kong also demonstrated that Hong Kong people were not British. Hong Kong remained a transcultural political entity that was neither Chinese nor British, neither Eastern nor Western.

After the 1989 democratic movement in Beijing, the people of Hong Kong were becoming increasingly anxious. On the one hand, with one million demonstrators in the streets, many people were surprised to discover how much they were emotionally linked with China. On the other, they were terrified by the fact that fairly soon Hong Kong would return to a nation that could treat its people with such brutality. Since many Hong Kong people were refugees or children of refugees from communist China, the military suppression on June 4 only intensified their fear. There was a general feeling that China would socially, politically, and culturally overwhelm Hong Kong. Many people emigrated. For those who could not or did not want to leave, the need



Gretchen So. *Untitled (Tai Kok Tsui)*, 1997. Cibachrome print. 16 x 20 (40.6 x 50.8). Courtesy the artist. Regarding her series of photographs of Hong Kong during the year of its return to China, So writes: "Focusing on the city's culture, the photos ... give a general sense of how Hong Kong has changed. [The series is] a portrait of the city, not of its individual inhabitants."

to establish something we could hold on to, an identity, increased. For a city with an ambiguous cultural existence, the urgent necessity of establishing such an identity before the deadline of July 1, 1997, was apparent.

Around the same time, the Hong Kong Arts Centre, an independent arts organization with no government subsidies, decided to engage in the identification and definition of Hong Kong's cultural identity by examining its visual culture. As the center's exhibition director, in 1991 I launched the Hong Kong Culture Series of exhibitions, through which I sought to question the prevalent point of view that there was no specifically Hong Kong cultural tradition before the sixties. For the first time in this small British colony, an art institution took the concept of Hong Kong's cultural identity seriously. In fact, the concept of identity had been examined so little in Hong Kong, as well as in China, that we even had difficulty translating the word into Chinese.

The series, which continued through 1997, consisted of two exhibitions a year that focused on aspects of art and culture in Hong Kong from the early twentieth century to the present—a period that has received relatively little critical attention. The exhibitions considered a range of subjects, from the history of comics in Hong Kong to Hong Kong art of the sixties. The series itself was quite successful—probably because it premiered when many people in Hong Kong strongly feared the possibility of being overwhelmed by China. By 1995 the message from such people was clear: “Yes, we are Chinese, but we are very different from the Chinese in China.”

In the process, however, we forgot the other peoples of Hong Kong—Indians, Euro-Asians, Filipinos, and others, many of whom have been here for generations. While we had tried to solidify a distinctive culture of our own with respect to China, we had simplified the complexity and diversity of Hong Kong. Once we recognized the potential danger of assuming such a narrow cultural identity, we sought to redress this issue. In the 1995 exhibition “Being Minority” we invited artists from various Asian nations—Indian, Thai, and Filipino, among others—to collaborate with local ethnic communities and produce work out of their encounters. It is telling that while we originally had intended to invite Hong Kong artists of different ethnic origins, we had difficulty identifying artists from these communities, probably because the local art environment provided little infrastructural support for artists from ethnic communities to develop and grow. It is unfortunately telling that the public response to this exhibition, unlike those that focused on work made by artists of Chinese heritage, was poor.

Meanwhile, as Hong Kong approached reunification with China, Beijing and its local supporters launched many active campaigns nurturing Chinese nationalism. After Tung Chee Wah took office as the chief executive of the special administrative region, it became obvious that the new government would initiate a major public reeducation campaign designed to cultivate re-identification with the motherland. By 1996, when a wave of so-called sudden patriotism emerged in Hong Kong, we presented the exhibition “Being China (being Hong Kong).” This exhibition featured works by over thirty Hong Kong artists known for using Chinese elements. Through this exhibition we hoped to reveal how Hong Kong artists perceived China. The China to which these artists responded had many faces. It could be the China of mountain and

mist of the Sung and Yuan dynasties, the China of Yan Yeng and bamboo, or the China of Shanghai during the thirties. But very few artists engaged with the communist China of the present. At a time of political transition, many people, especially politicians, were zealously displaying their love of China. But to what China were they referring? It seemed as if people were fabricating a China based on what they needed. For example, many wealthy individuals in Hong Kong in the nineties became newly interested in the sophisticated and international city of Shanghai in the thirties. Eager to be Chinese again, these individuals, however, found it difficult to identify with contemporary China, which did not correspond with their world of refinement and taste. "Being China (being Hong Kong)" attempted to reveal the ambiguity of this nationalistic passion and to ask, What, except size, is the difference between nationalism and regionalism?

The more we studied Hong Kong culture, the more we found the discussion of a distinctive cultural identity problematic. Hong Kong's success is based on its ability to accommodate and use whatever cultures are available. Built on the active integration of many cultures, it is shaped by a nexus of geographical and historical factors (for example, the fact that it has been a British colony and a refugee center). Precisely this ability to use anything without becoming obsessed with the distinctive self that generated such creativity and imagination is central to Hong Kong's cultural identity. In Hong Kong movies, for example, it is not uncommon to see a hero who takes moral and friendship obligations seriously (as in traditional Chinese novels) and is at the same time a lonely outsider (as in French film noir) with the most unbelievable fighting skills (as in Japanese comics), whose story is told with sensational effects (as in Hollywood cinema).

For me as a curator, the shift from seeking to nurture a distinctive cultural identity for Hong Kong to working to dismantle this concept was a significant reversal. However, since Hong Kong's return to Chinese political authority in 1997, it has become increasingly apparent that discussions of cultural identity in Hong Kong are polarizing into these two extremes. On the one hand, the communist Chinese government and its senior officers are working hard to enlist the people's patriotism; on the other, the sense of Hong Kong-ness has never been stronger. As a city of refugees, Hong Kong used to treat refugees from China with compassion and kindness. Now, with the growing sense that such immigration poses a real threat to Hong Kong's unique existence, there is increasing resentment of Chinese immigrants as invaders who are unwelcome violators of our land and culture. In the past one hundred years, Hong Kong has never been so narrow-minded as it is now.

What makes Hong Kong unique is its diversity. Diversity does not necessarily mean globalization or Westernization. Instead, it means awareness of the many layers and dimensions of our culture. Cultural identity is important at some historical moments, when a people (or an individual, for that matter) needs to strengthen and protect itself from becoming overwhelmed. However, an obsession with defining a singularly distinctive culture can be devastating, at least in the case of Hong Kong. The success of Hong Kong is built on its ability to accommodate, absorb, adopt, manipulate, and transform anything

that can help resolve our problems and enrich our life. Being a trading port and a refugee center, the rootlessness of Hong Kong's culture gives birth to an open, accommodative culture that is essential to our survival. One day, when the people of Hong Kong are no longer afraid of being overwhelmed, they might begin to appreciate the diversity of their own culture more powerfully.

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Edward Said's *Orientalism* inaugurated the paradigm for postcolonial studies by breaking away from the Marxist study of ideology and demonstrating the formative, rather than reflective, role of representations in the social construction of reality. Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha subsequently expanded the use of poststructuralist methods, and their insights into the archival fears and fantasies of colonial discourse in India were complemented by Stuart Hall's and Paul Gilroy's relational views on the hybrid worlds of new ethnicities and traveling cultures among the African and Caribbean diasporas of the

Kobena Mercer

Intermezzo Worlds

Black Atlantic world. Henry Louis Gates, reciprocally, espoused the view that "signifyin'" was the key trope in the African American cultural text.

While such critiques of race and representation widely enhanced the reception of new voices—Fred Wilson, Keith Piper, or Lorna Simpson in the visual arts; Spike Lee or Isaac Julien in cinema; Toni Morrison or Hanif Kureishi in literature—it is salutary to maintain an analytical distinction between art's sensory pleasures and demands and theory's interpretative authority. By recognizing the unpredictable interaction between these distinct planes of experience and activity we can appreciate how the critical mass that once generated heightened expectations among art world institutions gave way to a countervailing trend toward ideological downsizing.

The slew of multicultural mega-exhibitions following Jean-Hubert Martin's "Magiciens de la terre" (1989), which included "The Other Story" (1989) and "The Decade Show" (1990), reached saturation point with the 1993 Whitney Biennial. The heady embrace of Otherness—which once encouraged the semantic escalation whereby the marginal, the exilic, or the nomadic seemed all so desirable—was gradually edged out of the fashion cycle and gave way to more cautious and even hostile responses. The de-funding of the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States, like the dismantling of the Arts Council in Great Britain, gave the market a much greater role to play in distributing opportunities for hitherto marginalized artists.

The overall picture of today's global art system is fascinatingly complex and contradictory. Diversity is more visible than ever before, but the unspoken rule is that you do not make an issue of it. Artists of color are welcomed into the expanding circuit of biennials in South Africa, Australia, Turkey, and South Korea, and this may often be accompanied by the unstated awareness that you will probably look a bit dumb if you make a big deal about difference.

I am skeptical about the seductive attraction of abstract polarities like the local and the global because they give an illusion of theoretical mastery over an unstable world of risk and uncertainty. This tends to lose sight of the



Yinka Shonibare. From the series *Effnik*, 1996. Made in collaboration with Joy Gregory. Chromogenic development print. 50 x 40 (127 x 101.6). Courtesy Autograph (The Association of Black Photographers). In the exh. cat. *Eclectic Flavour*, published as *Contact Sheet*, no. 95 (Syracuse, N.Y.: Light Work, 1998), Eddie Chambers writes of the Nigerian-born, London-based artist's *Effnik* series: "With Shonibare striking a sumptuous pose as a refined and cultured late 18th-early 19th century man of letters, racist orthodoxies are rendered even more hopelessly preposterous."

more fuzzy ambiguities that occur at an intermezzo level, of which I'll highlight a few.

Young British artists have attracted widespread attention ever since Damien Hirst curated the exhibition "Freeze" (1988), which set a scene in motion that culminated with the Royal Academy's exhibition of Charles Saatchi's collection in "Sensation" (1997). New British art is incredibly diverse—from the Goya-inspired broodings of Jake and Dinos Chapman to Gillian Wearing's hilarious vox pop videos to the unlikely poetic materials of Rachel Whiteread or Cornelia Parker. But when viewed in a global frame, three anomalous tendencies are rather perplexing. First, the prominent element of pastiche patriotism in Brit Art's generic neo-Conceptual jokeyness suggests a regressive defense against the threatened loss of national identity under global homogenization, especially when it was marketed with Brit Pop as a media-driven repackaging of mythical Swinging London. But, second, far from being invisible or excluded from England's intensely particularistic attachment to the local,

young black British artists, like Steve McQueen, Virginia Nimarkoh, Chris Ofili, and Yinka Shonibare, have rapidly attained integrated visibility. Their interests in ethnic signifiers as source material are perceived to be as commonplace as Benetton, Coca-Cola, or Nike advertising. When you factor in the New Labour government's attempt to co-opt the arts into a marketing pitch dubbed Cool Britannia (ouch!), you notice that, as an export, Brit Art does not travel very well. Audiences in Sydney or Minneapolis may be bemused by its quirky cultural specificity, but beyond the subculture of the London scene, who really buys into the hype? Is it not the British themselves who need to believe in it?

It is too early to talk of a postnational moment. Because the United States is the only superpower left, and because its pluralist traditions are receptive to cosmopolitan ideas, some may believe that the divisive era of difference has dissolved into an ecumenical global art. However, sociologists observe that, in addition to the McDonald's model of standardization, globalization generates translocal circuits of exchange that may subvert the nation-state through connective flows that translate across cultural differences. Diaspora offers a premodern paradigm for postindustrial times. But even here one observes

the more disturbing dissemination of what Herman Gray in his 1995 book *Watching "Race": Television and the Struggle for Blackness* calls "hyperblackness."

African American struggles for voice and for visibility once generated metaphors that linked aesthetics with ethics. But where Michael Jordan or Puff Daddy enjoy global media visibility today, the signifying difference of their hyperbolic blackness is detached from political referentiality. Unlike a Muhammed Ali or a Miles Davis, it is hard to see what they stand for. Indeed, how can you take a stand when the ground is constantly shifting beneath your feet?

I am excited by the way young African American artists, such as Michael Ray Charles, Ellen Gallagher, and Kara Walker, play fast and loose with the stereotypical grotesque. It shows that art has the power to undo ideological effects of representation. But I am concerned that aspects of North American (mis)translations of cultural studies into minoritarian celebrationism hinder our ability to understand the massive shifts in relations of race and representation in the post-affirmative action era. The new regime of compulsory visibility associated with hyperblackness decouples modernist conventions of culture and politics.

My view is that the international art world is witnessing a cognate process I call multicultural normalization. Norms are slippery things. Not as formal as rules or laws, they require social consent and psychic investment, and all individuals are beholden to them. Although the cultural studies shelf keeps shrinking at my local Barnes and Noble, I am nonetheless happy to carry on with the culturally materialist view that holds that alternatives are possible only because the outcomes of human struggles over norms are never guaranteed in advance.

The summer 1998 highlight for me was "L'Afrique par elle-même," an exhibition of African photography from 1840 to today, curated by the *Revue Noir* editorial team and presented at the European House of Photography in Paris. Studio portraiture and urban reportage revealed cosmopolitan worlds that flourished in coastal cities and evoked transcultural correspondences that complicate received views on ethnicity, temporality, and technology. Like Samuel Fosso's performative self-portraits, the exuberant youth photographed by Depara in 1970s Zaïre did not seem particularly bothered about the colonial gaze. They saw themselves as "normally" having fun with the ephemera of modernity. This confirms the question of cultural mixing as the key issue that Jan Nederveen Pieterse insightfully describes in the 1995 anthology *Global Modernities*, edited by Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson, as "globalization as hybridization." If this teeming melange lies in the past before us, opening a wider field of research into our plural modernities, then I can't wait to get there.

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Just before Christmas London was reverberating with endless renditions of an old Wham! hit: "Last Christmas I gave her my heart./The very next day,/she gave it away." Just before Christmas, a number of us went to INIVA, Britain's Institute of International Visual Arts, which was founded in London a few

Irit Rogoff

Twenty Years On ... Inside, Out

years ago under the sponsorship of the Arts Council of Great Britain to explore new frameworks of "internationalism" in the arts—not the great touring exhibition variant but the oblique movements of transnational, displaced, and diasporic influence of culture on the move. We went to hear two South African artists, Premi Chakravarti and Clifford Charles, speak about their perceptions of the recent Second Johannesburg Biennale. Describing the impact of the last horrific years of the reign of apartheid politics on the cultural life of South Africa, they showed images of Johannesburg—the evacuation of its center by the rich whites who have moved to barricaded suburbs north of the city and its takeover by masses of migrant poor who have come in from enforced residence in country townships and transformed the streets into a teeming marketplace. They described the nascent culture of urban paranoia that has accompanied these metropolitan demographic changes, in which such population shifts are deemed inherently dangerous and viewed as the abandonment of modernist progress to the implied chaos of another way of inhabiting the city. They spoke of the exorbitant cost of the specially built exhibition hall and the cost of entry within the context of a depressed and turbulent economy. They questioned the importance of bringing all those international artists to a beleaguered and tortured moment of cultural politics and wondered whether there was a context in which these imported luminaries could actually be read and interpreted. They enacted for us the full complexity of receiving the Biennale project from within, reading it not through the reception strategies of the international curators and traveling art critics, who had been the informative source for most of us, but from the perspective of being locally informed as well as internationally aware—the perspective of looking from the inside, out. I sat in the audience at once eager to be informed, as well as to inhabit my theoretical inclinations fully. Actually they are theoretical imperatives, for that is what I do—not historicizing objects, not curating, not criticizing—but theorizing, by which I mean the attempt to articulate a set of questions about an issue which challenges its very credibility as an issue or a subject while producing a degree of self-consciousness for the context of its discussion. In this case the issue was the crossover of the model of international exhibitions from the centers of the West into the context of emergent, struggling, or overwhelmed cultures in the throes of trying to make coherent who their real cultural partners and what their real geo-alliances might actually be.

Why was an entirely new situation, such as the one emerging in South Africa, being addressed by a worn-out nineteenth-century machine such as the international exhibition? How does this phenomenon work toward clarifying the terms by which one is accepted into the family of cultured nations? How can one reconcile a political and human horror that resulted from several intertwined layers of colonial histories and occupations with such a blithe importation of a cultural model based on the world's fairs, which so exempli-

fied the conceits of Eurocentric supremacy? What was I to do, a theorist working in the heart of the West, about the enormous complexity with which I had just been presented? Was the response of using someone else's experience as the raw material for metatheoretical formulations not just another example of the import-export model of cultural negotiation I had just been railing against? "The very next day,/she gave it away" jangled in my head.

The editors of *Art Journal* have asked several of us to respond to a series of questions concerning the shifts in perception and work linked to multi- and cross-cultural processes that have taken place in the twenty years since the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* and of the events and dynamics in which it is embedded. As the field has grown so large and diverse, it does not seem possible to expound across the board on everything that has taken place. Instead I want to use one example revolving around certain curatorial choices and the cross-cultural, international relations made manifest by such practices. I use "curatorial" in a broad sense as an arena in which international markets and local contexts come up inadvertently against the legacies of colonial dominations and the institutional structures, epistemic beliefs, and cultural biases that these histories both generated and naturalized. But I have something else in mind: the beginnings of a belief that "curatorial" describes far more than professional art workers putting objects in spaces. Rather, it is a range of intellectual, critical, and pedagogical work that has come to resemble curating in its understanding that much of what we do is founded on the arbitrary collection and display of elements of thought in different contexts and under the aegis of different headings. Curating has become so interesting because it forces confrontation with a range of problems and relations—material and psychic, political and economical, aesthetic and theoretical—that other practices still maintain within strictly guarded and separate boundaries.

In thinking through the issues raised by the critique of the Second Johannesburg Biennale, it became clear to me that twenty years on within the discussion of postcolonialism, global circulation, cross-cultural translation, hybridity, and diasporic longings, we have the possibility to address these questions from a multiplicity of concurrent perspectives. We haven't so much moved on as stayed in place—and made that place a far more complex arena from which there is no correct exit.

Some of the complexity we can bring to this is a wariness concerning ethnocentric nationalism. Perhaps there is a growing recognition among those working within cultural criticism that ethnocentric nationalism that insists on the possibility of evolving a pure form of culture from the inside produces more than anything else a purely artificial set of boundaries that cannot, and never could have been, maintained.

Equally, the great project of critical cultural anthropology has gone a long way toward producing another form of wariness. While we can accrue certain amounts of information about another culture, we can never actually produce ourselves as viewing it from within. Instead, we always remain in the position of cultural voyeurism in the name of a posturing expertise or claims for a local authenticity.

In thinking about communication and circulation, about what constitutes people having access to other cultures, it seems that our understanding of that

circulation is constantly expanding from that of the intentional exchange of high-art products ("utopian" ones to paraphrase Michel Foucault, that reflect society in idealized, perfected form) to the unintentional infiltration of popular, general culture. We are increasingly aware that culture undergoes a constant process of global circulation and that it had done so long before the advent of international telecommunications or the emergence of the so-called

international art market. When we look at the histories of fashion, textiles, and decoration, of food and drink, of colors and shades, of poetic expression, of the sexual imagination, we understand that from the beginning of mobility there had always been a circulation and a cross-cultural translation and that we simply did not have the means and awareness by which to narrate this process.

Equally and perhaps most germane to the problem at hand is the growing recognition of psychic identifications and projections in the



Vera Frenkel... from the *Transit Bar*, 1992. Six-channel videodisk installation/functional piano bar built at Documenta 9, Kassel. Partial view as constructed on the second floor of the Museum Fridericianum. Courtesy the artist. Photo Dirk Bleicker.

arena of political and cultural dislocation. A certain nagging worry is making itself manifest that on occasion we espouse the causes of someone else's horrific political realities out of the need to articulate a position for ourselves within our own, far less dramatically marked, political arenas. We have begun to understand the function of empathy in the political and cultural sense not simply as a humane response but also as a structure of identification in which parts of our own condition in the world become apparent.

For me, the questions raised by the Second Johannesburg Biennale and the complex ways in which it must be viewed and discussed come under the heading of "geography" and the attempt to geographize a problem that previously might have been discussed within the frameworks of exhibition criticism, or international cultural relations, or the global art market. This, therefore is the notion of geography I have been working with in recent years—an uncanny geography in Freud's sense of "that class of frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar." We have to remember that Freud's "uncanny" is actually the *unheimlich*, the unhomed or that which is not at home. Both its frightening and its familiar qualities come from its awkward relation to being not at home, to strangeness. I was drawn to try and work in the arena of geography because it seemed possible to locate within its revised

understanding an alternative set of relations between subjects and places in which it is not scientific knowledge and not the national categories of the State that determine both belonging and unbelonging. Rather, they are linked sets of political insights, memories, subjectivities, projections of fantasmatic desires and great long chains of sliding signifiers.

The new book I have put together, *Terra Firma: Geography's Visual Culture*, is not about identity politics nor artworks that reference the iconography of geography, as might be inferred from its title. It is certainly not a study in cultural geography nor an exercise in dragging geographical metaphors across fields of cultural production. I wanted to explore links between the dislocation of subjects, the disruption of collective narratives and of languages of signification in the field of vision, with an epistemological inquiry that stresses difference rather than universal truth. The conjunction of emergent rhetorics of deterritorialized subjects with the theorization of deterritorialized epistemologies seemed an opportune moment for thinking through all the investments and certainties that define and anchor themselves to the arena of geography. The degree to which geography as a set of understandings regarding belonging and rights has been masking many fundamental shifts in identity formation has made me feel an urgency to rewrite those relations so that they actually reflect contemporary conditions.

All this is from a perspective of the *unhomed* or the *unhomely* which indicates not just the material conditions of lives but also what is allowed and what is forbidden in terms of identifications. It is perhaps best articulated by Homi Bhabha: "The unhomely captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world in an unallowable place. To be un-homed is not to be homeless, it is what Henry James called 'taking the measure of your own dwelling in a state of incredulous terror.'"

Those of you who are familiar with the various works that have informed this inquiry will recognize the footprints of theorists Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and Paul Gilroy; of artists Jimmie Durham, Eran Schaerf, and Vera Frenkel; and of writers Chinue Achebe, Sara Suleri, Anton Shammas, and Abraham Verghese, among the many others who have opened up these possibilities. In the wake of this work we are no longer positioned within the suffocating binarism of First World/Third World cultural relations. We no longer maintain the illusion that there is an authentic inside from which we can view an outside that imposes alien concepts. And most certainly, we no longer need the wholesale importation of unreflected cultural models with their nostalgic hankerings for the "Family of Man." Instead, by putting the desires for such on display as the emergent subject of our work, we may be able to elicit an alternative set of ideas about what constitutes cultural gratification.

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