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Seeing Blackness: Found Footage and the Archive as Modes of Investigation in the Hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique

Abstract: Marie-Josèphe Angélique was a black slave in New France (Montreal, Canada) tried for setting a fire, burning down much of what is now known as Old Montreal. She was brutally tortured and hanged, her body eventually burned to ash in 1734. Over the last years, there has been an increased national interest in the figure of Marie-Josèphe Angélique, however, scholars and authorities have not come to an agreement about her hanging. Some speculate that the authorities, under pressure from an enraged population seeking a scapegoat, took the easy way out and condemned Angélique. Others believe that Angélique was determined to undermine the slave system and started the fire as revenge against her owner. I decided to explore these racial anxieties through my experimental documentary *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* (2017), in which I used the hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique as an entry point to explore the relationship between the constitution of a racialized self, racial representation and the construction of collective memory, employing found footage as a mode of inquiry and aesthetic exploration into notions of appropriation, documentation and intertextuality.

Keywords: media culture; found footage; visual culture; experimental filmmaking: research-creation; experimental documentary; identity politics; critical heritage

Blackness in Canada: The absented presence

In 2017, as Canada celebrates the 150th anniversary of the enactment of the Constitution Act, 1867, which united separate colonies into a single British Dominion – later known as Canada – we have an opportunity to revisit official narratives of reconciliation and to consider racialized histories that have been silenced in the context of settler colonialism. The progressive image of Canada as a multicultural nation with official policies of reconciliation was built, however, upon legacies of Black imprisonment and slave ownership. African slavery in the colonies of New France and British North America existed for more than two hundred years until their abolishment in 1834; yet, Canada's involvement in the trade of African slaves remains a silent chapter in our collective memory. Cooper claims that, "slavery is Canada's best-kept secret, locked within the national closet. And because it is a secret it is written out of official history"[1]. The case of the hanging of the Black slave Marie-Josèphe Angélique, in the city of Montreal in 1734, is a notably cogent

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[1] Afua Cooper, *The Hanging of Angelique* (Toronto: Harper Perennial, 2006), ibook, chapter 3, paragraph 1.

precedent, one which demands inquiry into culture and representation in Canada's long-standing history of settler colonialism and racialized political history.

On April 10, 1734, a fire started on the south side of Saint-Paul Street in Montreal. More than forty houses burned down in what is known today as Old Montreal. The black slave Marie-Josèphe Angélique was tried for setting the fire, and convicted. She was brutally tortured and hanged, her body eventually burned to ash. In 2004, Denyse Beaugrand-Champagne published the first rigorous analysis based on the records (written in French) of Angélique's trial. In her book *Le Procès de Marie-Josèphe Angélique* (2004)[2], the author presents various documents in detail, questioning the court proceedings and all possible culprits. Her conclusions point to the fire being accidental, the result of poorly cleaned chimneys and a cooking fire in the neighbouring house, most likely caused by the young Marie Manon, a *panis* (a slave of Indigenous origin) who was cooking next door. Manon appears to have spread rumours about Marie-Josèphe Angélique's rebellious, mischievous personality, which eventually may have led to the charges against the latter. By this account, Manon, who would have been severely punished by her owners had she been implicated in causing the fire, had ample and understandable motivation for diverting suspicion elsewhere. Beaugrand-Champagne believes that the authorities, under pressure from an enraged population seeking a scapegoat, took the easy way out and condemned Angélique on the basis of her independent, outspoken character rather than genuine evidence.

In contrast, Afua Cooper's book *The Hanging of Angélique* (2006)[3] champions the narrative that Angélique started the fire as revenge against her owner, and then sought to cover up the traces of her failed escape attempt. Cooper harshly criticizes Canada's settler society for denying the reality of slavery in the country's past. She claims, "Angélique's trial transcript constitutes the first slave narrative in North America."[4] This lack of consensus among authors writing about the Angélique case seems to mirror internalizations of class, gender, and race, reflecting the racial anxieties of present-day Canadians. The hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique is thus a story about the ways in which racialized thought, victimization, and differentiation became circulated as surreptitious cultural values by those who define class, gender, and race, both in the past and the present. Institutions of law and order in the eighteenth century conferred upon Marie-Josèphe Angélique a marginal identity, punishing her violently and ultimately erasing her from the world. In current academic scholarship, it becomes evident that writers have imposed their cultural assumptions, beliefs, and value systems upon their historical assessments, as they cannot reach an agreement on how to interpret the hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique.

This unstable memorialization of the figure of Marie-Josèphe Angélique operates beyond a mere lack of consensus among scholars; it represents a remnant of colonial processes in which the human condition has either been assimilated or forgotten. The figure of Angélique lacks a legitimate position in both national and collective memory alike. For example, in 2016, the Bank of Canada held an open call to nominate an important

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[2] Denyse Beaugrand-Champagne, *Le Proces de Marie-Josephe-Angelique* (Outremont: Libre Expression, 2004).

[3] Cooper, *The Hanging Of Angelique*.

[4] Ibid, paragraph 01.

historic female figure to be featured on the new ten-dollar note. Marie-Josèphe An-gélique numbered among 461 iconic Canadian women but came nowhere even close to figuring in the long list of twelve nominees.[5] Perhaps this example does not represent sufficient evidence to support a case for erasure or racial victimization; it remains, how-ever, a poignant illustration of how dominant processes of memorialization and visual-ization, such as banknote design, resonate in the collective consciousness and create a political presence. As Simone Browne reminds us, Blackness in Canada is an "absented presence"[6]. Reconciliatory discourses in Canada, more so in the wake of the national 150th anniversary, which attempt to attenuate and diffuse this colonial heritage of vio-lence and slavery, undermine the necessary and vital impulse to question the historical relationship between Black slavery and how racialized subjects are constituted today.

Unearthing the colonial experience:
Found footage and collective memory

In today's visual culture, as we increasingly communicate through images dis-seminated by means of mass media, online industries, advertising, design, art, and diverse cultural artifacts, it is imperative to scrutinize how images function, what they achieve, how they represent the realities they are intended to depict, what kinds of representations they mobilize, and, above all, how racialized identity is constituted through these technological mediations. In so doing, we begin to see the act of look-ing – the gaze – as a cultural construct, an extension of our visual experience. Implic-itly, we ask ourselves: What does it mean to look? Who is looking at what? And, for our purpose here, what position do racialized subjects occupy in our visual regime? Ella Shohat asserts, "each filmic or academic utterance must be analyzed not only in terms of who represents but also in terms of who is being represented, for what pur-pose, at which historical moment, from which location, using which strategies, and in what tone of address."[7] As a media artist, I'm particularly interested in disentangle the relationship between histories of representation and the technologies through which all they flow. Given so many approaches to the study of media culture via diverse dis-ciplines and academic fields, my artistic research privileges media experimentation that employs experimental aesthetic components – or what in Canada has come to be known as "research-creation". Chapman and Sawchuk have defined this approach to research as one that "typically integrates a creative process, experimental aesthetic component, or an artistic work as an integral part of the study. Topics are selected and investigated that could not be addressed without engaging in some form of creative practice, such as the production of a video, performance, film."[8]

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[5] Bank of Canada, https://www.bankofcanada.ca/banknotes/banknoteable/nominations/, acc. May 27, 2017.

[6] Simone Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 37.

7 Ella Shohat, "The Struggle over Representation: Casting, Coalitions, and the Politics of Identification," in *Late Imperial Culture*, ed Roman de la Campa, E. Ann Kaplan and Michael Sprinkler (New York: Verso, 1995), 173.

[8] Owen B. Chapman, and Kim Sawchuk, "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and Family Resemblanc-es," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37 (2012): 6.

In my video artwork *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* (2017), I examined the hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique, advocating for a subversive approach to racial representation via the use of found footage as a site of active engagement for emergent metaphors of identity and race. In the video, I had a character with white skin perform the role of Angélique in order to scrutinize our regimes of representation and attempt to understand their practices of recognition and exclusion (fig. 1). Stuart Hall calls for an analysis of how regimes of representation operate, claiming that we should "properly understand the traumatic character of the colonial experience. The ways in which Black people, Black experiences, were positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation were the effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalization."[9] Whiteness situated itself as the preeminent human race, the dominant discourse from which the rest should be translated, and the colour against which all other ethnicities were to be examined. As Simone Brown points out, "today's seeing eye is white"[10]. By removing Black characters from the narrative of the video, I attempted to highlight whiteness as the norm, the race from which all others deviate. Slavery, colonialism, and systemic racism echo throughout the piece, even if they are not presented directly. The horrors of racial indictment need not be depicted directly to be visible.

With my research, I seek to underline the artist's role in reshaping collective visual memory, using found footage to expose the mechanisms behind the perpetuation of certain narratives and stereotypes (fig. 3). "Stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power," observes Hall. "Power is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group […] stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes 'difference'[…] It then excludes or expels everything which does not fit, which is different."[11] The dominant model of white American ethnogenesis constantly perpetuated through media representations is the victimization of Black characters, stereotyping race and identity, and ultimately fuelling our racial anxieties. In my video, the white character performing Marie-Josèphe Angélique is portrayed attempting to escape her enslavement (fig. 4). Portrayals of imprisoned female characters are common across media culture. This victimization reveals a common pattern of uneven power dynamics between those who write history and those portrayed in it. This dynamic of male domination and female exploitation seems also to mirror such strategies of history writing as are complicit in misrepresentation and erasure. To frame the victimization of Blackness as the ultimate consequence of colonial trauma is to validate colonial authority as a continual, everlasting dominion, determining the performative character of identity and ultimately perpetuating stereotypes of race and identity.

As the viewer of my video witnesses a white person on screen performing a Black character, I seek to propose a radical relationship between image culture and representation. I aim to underline whiteness – to locate whiteness as a norm and a rule, but also

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[9] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 225.

[10] Browne, *Dark Matters*, 17.

[11] Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 258.

as an anomaly. We simply do not scrutinize closely enough the mechanics, codes, and metaphors of whiteness in visual culture. On this dominance of whiteness, Claudia Rankine explains, "we are bombarded with images of whiteness all the time, but not framed as whiteness. Instead they are framed as normality, as American life, as suburban life, as extreme wealth, but never as this thing called whiteness. What does it mean to make work that has that conversation as part of its making?"[12] By framing Marie-Josèphe Angélique as a white person, I sought primarily to avoid yet another representation of Blackness with negative undertones. We've seen enough portrayals of confined and imprisoned, racialized, female characters, over the years. To investigate our racial regimes of representation, we need to pose uncomfortable questions, interrogating processes of mythologization, cultural annihilation, and deliberate disappearance in the collective memory – the more so in the wake of the #MeToo movement,[13] and recent activist movements against cultural appropriation throughout the world, like the uproar at the 2017 Whitney Biennial in New York, where renowned visual artist Dana Schutz was accused of using Black death as racialized spectacle.[14] Being a white artist myself, like Schutz, through my video piece I sought to engage critically with these issues of positionality and asymmetrical power relationships, which form part of a larger conversation. Does a worthy critique necessarily require epidermically suitable speakers? Is it only Black people who may speak about Blackness? Ella Shohat puts this question most eloquently: "is permission to represent a given community limited to card carrying, epidermically suitable representatives of that community? Does the experience of oppression confer special jurisdiction over the right to speak about oppression?"[15] Wasn't the supremacy of the epidermis the issue against which we were fighting in the first place? I would suggest that race and racism extend beyond the reaches of a merely epidermal schema; nevertheless, it is through this epidermal differentiation that we reinforce and establish our partialities, national habits, and racialized fears.

We need to find ways to speak about racism without necessarily depicting the domination, subjugation, and brutality that racialized persons have experienced. I decided to explore these tensions on racial representation by engaging with a particular historical narrative and how this account has been erased and distorted. I used found footage not only to question history and the archive, but also as a mode of investigation and research. The use of found footage may serve as an artistic exploration into notions of appropriation, documentation, and intertextuality. Historical documents, experiences, and encounters all function as catalysts in the exploration of representation and knowledge production, combining analogue and digital media worlds (fig. 2). The archive simultaneously constitutes the work's departure point and overall subject; it is not a mere annex or footnote to the research impulse. Russell proposes the

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[12] Lauren O'Neill-Butler, "New World Disorder: Claudia Rankine," https://www.artforum.com/slant/claudia-rankine-on-the-racial-imaginary-institute-67312, acc. June 22, 2017.

[13] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_movement, acc. July 18, 2017.

[14]https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/mar/21/whitney-biennial-emmett-till-painting-dana-schutz, acc. July 18, 2017.

[15] Shohat, "The Struggle Over Representation," 167.

term archiveology, which, "in its most succinct form, refers to the reuse, recycling, appropriation, and borrowing of archival material […] Archiveology traverses experimental, documentary, and essayistic filmmaking, moving beyond the categories of found footage, compilation and collage."[16] The research impulse, the process, and the results all reveal existing image worlds and possible new artistic approaches to those worlds. In a sense, this research becomes a form in itself.

One of the legacies of the colonial heritage is the phenomenological experience of race imposed on the body, the process in which identity is corporealized through the inscription of race upon the skin, "collapsing, giving way to an epidermal racial schema",[17] as Franz Fanon stated. Media culture often privileges the instantly identifiable, most often the recognizable face and a perfect synchronization between performative identity and race. What's at stake when the viewer experiences alternative racialized modes of identity, such as a white character personifying a Black character? Can experiencing amplified or even contradictory modes of self actually function to move a story forward or to yield new knowledge? I vividly remember that moment when I had the idea not only to have a white character perform a Black one, but also to have this same character reference another figure – in this case Anna O., the famous Sigmund Freud patient. Anna O. is the pseudonym of Bertha Pappenheim (1859–1936), who was a patient not only of Freud but also of and Josef Breuer. Her clinical case, published in the book *Studies on Hysteria* (2000),[18] is regarded as the beginning of psychoanalysis. Anna O. was diagnosed with hysteria. Both Breuer and Freud agreed that the hysteric suffers mainly from reminiscences, and commonly experiences 'absences' as well. I found this phrasing poetic, almost revelatory. How can a person suffer from reminiscences and experience absences? Absences from what, exactly? I had the sudden realization that, if we follow Breuer and Freud's rationale, then each of us contains the memory of the world; we all have access to different realms of history and memory. As Breuer and Freud said, "these memories, unlike other memories of their past lives, are not at disposal. On the contrary, these experiences are completely absent from memory when they are in a normal psychical state."[19] But what is hysteria, precisely? In the 2012 documentary *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology*, Slavoj Žižek analyzes director Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*. In the eighteenth scene, Žižek observes, "Hysteria is the way we question our social and symbolic identity. What is hysteria at its most elementary? It's a question addressed at the authority which defines my identity; it's 'why am I who you are telling me that I am?'"[20] I could just imagine Anna O. and Marie-Josèphe Angélique screaming at contemporary scholars with all their contradictions: "why am I who you are telling me that I am?" In a way, the white character in my video work is not only performing Angélique, but is also questioning the mechanics of identity: "why am I who you are telling me that I am?" Of

[16] Chaterine Russell, "What is Archiveology?," http://iamhist.org/2017/05/archiveology/, acc. May 19, 2017.

[17] Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1952), 91–92.

[18] Joseph Breuer and Sigmund Freud, *Studies on Hysteria* (New York: Basic Books Classics, 2000).

[19] Ibid, 9.

[20] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2152198/, acc. March 14, 2017.

course, all this thinking belongs to the artistic domain; it is all part of artistic intuition. It seemed to me, however, that these issues pointed directly toward the mechanics of memory, identity, and history. Through both my video piece and my academic research, I seek to find different ways to engage with traumatic historical material, simultaneously upsetting the relationship between image culture, representation, and history – the point being to find different modes for redistribution of stable identities.

Via the use of found footage, my video *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* proposes unconventional spaces of abstraction and reflection by presenting experiences of the body and face as fields of possibility, ultimately attempting to expand our monolithic understanding of a racialized self. This is not simply to remove Blackness as a racial condition, but rather to examine how image culture mystifies and intertwines nationalistic rhetoric with statehood and belonging. When film/video footage is torn from its "natural" environment, it exposes the regimes of social control implicated in media production and works instead against the perpetuation of a given narrative. Wees reminds us that this "interruption produces a forced reading of the popular mythology of the culture. By being interrupted, in other words, cultural artifacts are forced to expose their less obvious, ideological functions"[21]. My video work not only calls into question the racial and historical tensions surrounding Marie-Josèphe Angélique's case, it also underlines concerns over processes of identity formation in media culture and how they intersect with race, identity, and the colonial past. Since media culture plays such an important role in our current cultural environment (more than Wees could have imagined back in 1993), we must understand how its various forms – advertising, commercial cinema, mass-media industries, etc. – deliver ideological and racial conditioning, negotiating politics and meaning in complex, disparate ways.

The use of found footage, for some time considered a subversive media practice, currently has been widely appropriated and trivialized by the mass-media industries, commercial cinema, advertising, and music videos. Debord reminds us that, "the ruling ideology arranges the trivialization of subversive discoveries, and widely circulates them after sterilization"[22]. As the practice of found footage has been trivialized by the mass-media industries, we need to search for modes of found footage that may subvert the flow of images, interrupting their affiliation with mass-media production. One of the potentialities of found footage is its ability to recount lost or repressed histories, thus revisiting forgotten or overlooked episodes of our colonial past. Found footage continues to tell stories within and outside of its precarious nature, offering the possibility to represent histories it once held. My video work employs found footage to manufacture new narratives and to recover particular historical moments neglected by the collective memory. As such, my artistic research is concerned with the aesthetics of uncertainty, examining what is at stake in the foregrounding of certain images, at once also hindering clarity and legibility. I use multiple processes of transfer and image making – e.g.,

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[21] William C. Wees, *Recycled Images: The Art and Politics of Found Footage Films* (New York: Anthology Film Archives, 1993), 54.

[22] Tom McDonough ed., *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, October Books, 2004), 31.

scanning, rephotographing – in order to create distance, to eclipse the footage's original context. Conditions of order and clarity are not immanent to moving images; rather, arrangements of light, motion, and definition are what underlie cinematic determinacy. In such a manner, I use the case of the hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique to investigate the postcolonial politics of memory. Colonial memory is a continual act of mourning that attempts to atone for a history deeply marked by conflict and collective struggles rooted in trauma. To think about postcolonial memory is to situate history as a process that identifies tensions between distance and proximity, knowledge, experience, presence, and erasure. Even if the hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique has been quietly excluded from our national collective memory, it remains an entry point to current discussions of critical heritage, cultural production, and signification.

Critical heritage, Blackness and racialized cinematic space

Almost three centuries ago, Marie-Josèphe Angélique faced some of the most established, powerful settlers in New France: Gilles Hocquart, Intendant of Montreal, and François-Étienne Cugnet, an influential member of the colony's judicial body. Hocquart and Cugnet were guided in their work by internalized conceptions about Black people and enslaved Africans, and were likely convinced of Angélique's guilt even before their official ruling. As Cooper reminds us: "there she stood, a lone, marginalized Black woman, facing the most powerful men in the colony. They were separated from her by race, gender, status, and occupation. Some, like Cugnet and Hocquart, had already made up their minds against her. As White men, settlers, rulers, imperialists, slaveholders, and colonizers, these men all had internalized perceptions about Black people and enslaved Africans"[23]. In 2012, 280 years after her death, the city of Montreal named a public square in her honour, Place Marie-Josèphe-Angélique; yet the institutional gesture of naming a minor and insignificant square in her honour would seem to reflect guilt and racial anxiety on the part of government officials. By mapping the unequal, disparate ways in which current academic and official institutions have defined race, we can observe how the logic of identity politics confers and creates power, operating as the remnants of colonial processes in which the human condition remains assimilated and forgotten. By placing into question the racial and historical tensions surrounding the conviction of Angélique, I aim to generate new modes of understanding the modern constitution of racialized subjects and identity formation in conditions of reconciliation and colonial heritage. As Hall explains, we should think of identity "as a production which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation"[24]. Even after slavery in Canada was abolished in 1834, this racial fixation has persisted in perpetuating codes and metaphors for Blackness, fuelling social tensions, and reinforcing uneven power relations in racialized visual representations.

After the abolition of slavery in Canada, exactly one hundred years after the hanging of Marie-Josèphe Angélique in 1734, the country's enlarged population

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[23] Cooper, *The Hanging of Angelique*, epilogue, paragraph 52.

[24] Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 222.

constantly oscillated between a laudable democratic impulse and the fear of falling into political irrelevance and losing parts of their historical identity. These social and economic anxieties fuelled the impulse to unify the country's vast territory, leading ultimately to Confederation in 1867. The Confederation is a unique framework within North America, implemented through the formation of various settler alliances to agree on a common constitution and create a sense of unity. Since the beginning, however, and until today, opposition in various forms of contestation and disconnect emerged and still exists. The Constitution Act, 1867 (originally enacted as The British North America Act, 1867), created a federal dominion and defined the operation of its federal structure, House of Commons, and Senate, its taxation system, and, especially, its justice system. Nonetheless, even though both the Iroquois Confederacy, established in the 1400s, and the Métis Confederacy, established in the mid-seventeenth century, figured prominently in the formation of Canada as a nation, they have been underestimated, ignored, and nearly erased – as, too, has the history of Black slavery.

The presumed positivity of the supposedly 'post-racial' era following Barack Obama's administration naively glosses over the history of racialized violence, physical oppression, and historical erasure in North America – the past conveniently forgotten. Why do some major historical events stand at the forefront of our collective memory, while other moments remain off in the distance? Does history remember some events at the expense of others? Unfortunately, this conflict between remembering and forgetting does not have a resolution. The reciprocal relationship between remembering and forgetting affects both the perception of historical experience and the production of historical narratives. Processes of exclusion and erasure remove the traces of those left behind. Yet these processes also offer multiple entry points to critically examine the manifestations, discourses, epistemologies, and policies of the colonial heritage. To situate critical heritage as a process of cultural production in relation to the past and aimed at the future is to understand heritage not as an intrinsic quality possessed by objects, places, or practices, but rather as a relational valuation of objects, spaces, narratives, and practices between past and present. In the wake of Canada's celebratory narratives of reconciliation, it is imperative to promote critical interventions in postcolonial memory and heritage, while simultaneously questioning the uneven power relations that conventional practices of heritage seem to reinforce between those who remember and those who are forgotten.

My video work oscillates between historical and fictional accounts; by using narratives and images appropriated from the past, I explore processes of mythologization, cultural annihilation, and deliberate disappearance in collective memory. Collective memory is comprised of inherently fragmented historical gaps, fears, and aspirations; but, like the cinematic experience generally, these components are time-reliant (fig. 5). The emancipated circulation of images provides an opportunity to trace the emergence of identity and belonging, its genealogy, and its disavowal in the history of racialized thought. In his text "Cinema–Body–Thought: Race-habits and the Ethics of Encounter", Sam Okoth Opondo explains, "it is worthwhile noting that cinema is a site of profound multiplicity and ambiguity. Not only does it disturb race-imbued realities, but it also acts as a site for the reconfirmation of habits, identities and social reality, a site for the

consolidation of the world of recognition and selves"[25]. Found-footage practices should not only complicate our easy consumption of images and other cultural products, they may also ignite reflection about representation and identity.

Advocating for new forms of racialized cinematic space reorients the problem of Black visibility, asking us what it means to see Blackness and those performative codes that both reinforce and disrupt what Blackness means. How can the Black body be visualized as both familiar and disruptive? How might we investigate the Black body as a troubling presence for the regimes that define it as such? Through the subversive racial representation of Marie-Josèphe Angélique, I have attempted in my video to make visible the mechanics, codes, and metaphors of Blackness in visual culture. We should advocate for cinematic spaces and racialized narratives that continuously engage with history and the ways in which cultural identity has been formed over time, in order to challenge dominant narratives and identities. In this spirit, I conclude with some words from bell hooks:

> For those of us who dare to desire differently, who seek to look away from the conventional ways of seeing blackness and ourselves, the issue of race and representation is not just a question of critiquing the status quo. It is also about transforming the image, creating alternatives, asking ourselves questions about what types of images subvert, pose critical alternatives, and transform our worldviews and move us away from dualistic thinking about good and bad. Making a space for the transgressive image, the outlaw rebel vision, is essential to any effort to create a context for transformation. And even then little progress is made if we transform images without shifting paradigms, changing perspectives, ways of looking.[26]
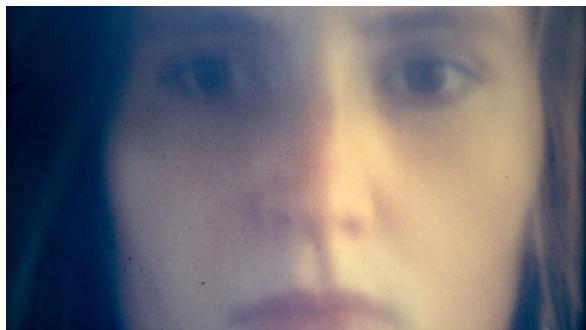

Fig. 1: Still from *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* (2017)
directed by Victor Arroyo.

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[25] Sam Okoth Opondo, "Cinema–Body–Thought: Race-habits and the Ethics of Encounter," in *Deleuze and Race*, ed. Arun Saldanha and Jason Michael Adams (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 258.

[26] bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 4.

Fig: 2: Still from *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* (2017) directed by Victor Arroyo.
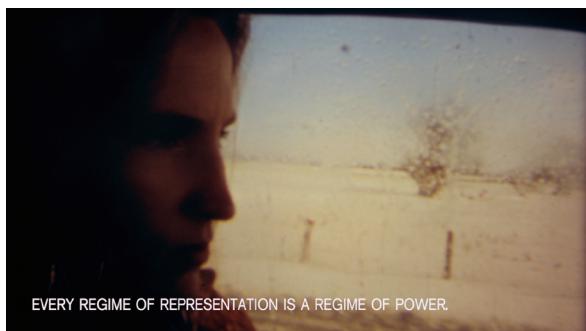
Fig. 3: Still from *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* (2017) directed by Victor Arroyo.

Fig. 4: Still from *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memor*y (2017) directed by Victor Arroyo.

Fig. 5: Documentation from *Anna O and the Case of Displaced Memory* (2017) directed by Victor Arroyo.

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