

Women and Migration

Responses in Art and History



EDITED BY

DEBORAH WILLIS, ELLYN
TOSCANO AND KALIA
BROOKS NELSON

WOMEN AND MIGRATION

Women and Migration: Responses in Art and History

*Edited by Deborah Willis, Ellyn Toscano and
Kalia Brooks Nelson*

GLOBAL INSTITUTE FOR
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List of Contributors

Sama Alshaibi's work explores spaces of conflict and the power struggles that arise in the aftermath of war and exile. Drawing from her experiences as a Palestinian-Iraqi naturalized US citizen, she uses her body as an allegorical site that makes the byproducts of such struggles visible. Alshaibi's monograph, *Sand Rushes In* (2015) presents her Silsila series, which probes the human dimensions of migration, borders, and environmental demise. Silsila was exhibited at venues including the Venice Biennale, Honolulu Biennale, and Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. Alshaibi has also exhibited in solo and group shows at MoMA, Bronx Museum, Denver Museum of Contemporary Art, Ayyam Gallery, and the Thessaloniki International Film Festival. She received a Fulbright Fellowship to Palestine (2014–2015), and was named University of Arizona's 1885 Distinguished Scholar as a Professor of Photography.

Grace Aneiza Ali is an independent curator and a faculty member in the Department of Art and Public Policy, Tisch School of the Arts, NYU. She has organized two major exhibitions in the US focused on contemporary Guyanese artists at Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art and the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute. Ali is also the Editorial Director of the award-winning OF NOTE magazine, an online magazine that features global artists using the arts as catalysts for activism and social change. Ali is a Fulbright Scholar, World Economic Forum Global Shaper, and Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Curatorial Fellow. She was born in Guyana and lives in New York City.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson is an assistant professor of African American and Black Diasporic art with a joint appointment in the Departments of African American Studies and Art and Archaeology at Princeton University. Born in Sri Lanka, she completed undergraduate degrees in New Zealand and Australia, worked as a Registered Nurse in the UK and finally moved to the United States in 2007 to begin a PhD in African American Studies and Art History at Yale University. In her teaching and research, she focuses on African American, Caribbean, and British Art, with an emphasis on histories of race, empire, and transatlantic visual culture in the long nineteenth century. She is currently completing a book entitled *The Currency of Cotton: Art, Empire and Commerce 1780–1900* examining processes of cultural exchange underpinned by histories of colonialism, and the legacies of these encounters in contemporary art practice. She has been the recipient of several fellowships, including from the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Winterthur Library, Museum and Gardens and the Paul Mellon Center for Research in British Art. She was awarded an ACLS Collaborative Research Fellowship along with Professor Mia Bagneris of Tulane University, to complete a book entitled *Beyond Recovery: Reframing the Dialogues of Early African Diasporic Art and Visual Culture 1700–1900*.

Isolde Brielmaier, a scholar and curator, is Assistant Professor of Critical Studies in the Department of Photography, Imaging and Emerging Media at Tisch School of the Arts at New York University where she focuses on contemporary art and global visual culture, as well as media and technology as platforms within which to rethink storytelling, the politics of representation, and mobility in its broadest sense. She also serves as Curator-at-Large at the Tang Museum. Isolde has written extensively on contemporary art and culture, including numerous exhibition catalogue essays, journal articles, and reviews as well as books. Among her distinctions, Isolde has received fellowships from the Mellon and Ford foundations as well as the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). She serves on several non-profit boards and sits on the Board of Trustees of the New Museum. Isolde is deeply committed to the promotion of arts education, global women's issues, and criminal justice reform. She holds a PhD from Columbia University.

Kalia Brooks Nelson is a New-York-based independent curator and educator. Brooks Nelson is currently an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Photography and Imaging at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Brooks Nelson holds a PhD in Aesthetics and Art Theory from the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts. She received her MA in Curatorial Practice from the California College of the Arts in 2006, and was a Helena Rubinstein Fellow in Critical Studies at the Whitney Independent Study Program 2007/2008. She has served as a consulting curator with the City of New York through the Department of Cultural Affairs and Gracie Mansion Conservancy. Brooks Nelson is also an ex-officio trustee on the Board of the Museum of the City of New York.

Alessandra Capodacqua is a photographer, teacher and a curator who lives and works in Florence, Italy. As an artist, she works with a variety of devices, from pinhole, toy, and digital cameras, to mobile to alternative printing process. She teaches photography in Italian and in English for national and international schools and colleges. Alessandra has curated exhibitions of photography and helped organize festivals of photography in Italy and abroad, such as the International Triennial Festival of Photography Backlight in Tampere, Finland and SI Fest 2016 in Savignano sul Rubicone. Her main area of interest is documentary photography, photojournalism, street photography, and visual storytelling. She is frequently invited to jury International Photo Awards and Prizes, and is a regular contributor to the LensCulture website. Her photographs are shown nationally and internationally. Her work is in private and public collections, including the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence, the Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, the MUSINF in Senigallia, and the Museo di Montelupone. Major publications include: *Autoritratto in Assenza* (2016); *Il Palazzo Magnifico* (2009); *Autori — Esperienze di fotografia stenopeica*; *Zone di Frontiera Urbana* (2007); *Valdarno, una visione in movimento* (2005); *Firenze Fotografia* (2000). www.alessandracapodacqua.com.

Sandrine Colard holds a PhD in Art History from Columbia University, and a MA in Africana Studies from New York University. She is a historian of Modern and Contemporary African Arts and Photography, with a focus on Central Africa. Based on research conducted in Belgium,

Kinshasa and Lubumbashi (DRC), her current book project examines the history of photography in the colonial Congo (1885–1960). She has also published on the ‘archival turn’ in African arts, and in particular on the work of contemporary Congolese artist Sammy Baloji. She has taught and lectured at Columbia University and Barnard College, and has co-curated the exhibition *The Expanded Subject: New Perspectives in Photographic Portraiture from Africa* at the Wallach Art Gallery (2016). Among others, Sandrine’s research was supported by fellowships from the Belgian-American Educational Foundation (BAEF), the Musée du Quai Branly, and the Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Fellowship Fund for 20th Century Art. Before joining NYU, Sandrine was a post-doctoral fellow at the Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art in Paris, affiliated with the ‘Globalization and Emergence of New Creative Scenes in Africa’ project.

Patricia Cronin’s work examines issues of gender, sexuality and social justice and has been exhibited in the US and abroad, including *Shrine For Girls* at the 56th Venice Biennale that traveled to The FLAG Art Foundation, NYC and The LAB, Dublin, Ireland. Other solo exhibitions were presented at the Capitoline Museum’s Centrale Montemartini Museum; Newcomb Art Museum, Tulane University; and Brooklyn Museum. Cronin is the recipient of numerous awards including: the Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant and two Pollock-Krasner Grants. Her works are in numerous museum collections, including the National Gallery of Art and Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC and Gallery of Modern Art and Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow, Scotland. She is the author of *Harriet Hosmer: Lost and Found, A Catalogue Raisonné* (2009) and *The Zenobia Scandal: A Meditation on Male Jealousy* (2013) and is Professor of Art at Brooklyn College/CUNY.

Arlene Davila’s work explores cultural politics in Latinx/Latin America focusing on issues of consumption, visual culture, urbanity and political economy. Davila is Professor of Anthropology and American Studies at New York University.

Alessandra Di Maio is Associate Professor of English and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Palermo, Italy. She divides her time between

Italy and the US, where she taught at several universities after earning her PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research includes postcolonial, black, diasporic, migratory, gender studies and transnational cultural identities. Her recent projects include a study of African Italian literature and the Black Mediterranean. She has been the recipient of a Fulbright scholarship, a UCLA Mellon postdoctoral fellowship, and a MacArthur Research and Writing Grant. Among her publications are *Tutuola at the University. The Italian Voice of a Yoruba Ancestor* (2000); *An African Renaissance* (2006); *Wor(l)ds in Progress. A Study of Contemporary Migrant Writings* (2008); and *Dedica a Wole Soyinka* (2012). She has translated into Italian Nuruddin Farah, Chris Abani, Caryl Phillips, and Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka.

Kathy Engel is Associate Arts Professor and Chair of the Department of Art & Public Policy, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. Between 1980 and 2008, she co-founded and worked as an organizer, director, cultural worker, producer, communications and strategic consultant for numerous social justice projects and organizations, locally, nationally, and internationally. Her poems and essays have appeared widely in journals and anthologies. Books include *Ruth's Skirts* (2007); *The Kitchen*, accompanying the art of German Perez (2011), and *Banish the Tentative* (1987). She co-edited *We Begin Here: Poems for Palestine and Lebanon* with Kamal Boullata (2007). She is co-producer of the videos *talking nicaragua* (1983), and *On The Cusp* (2008). For more information, visit www.kathyengelpoet.com.

Allana Finley hails from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Before moving to Johannesburg in 2001 from Los Angeles/New York, she worked in fashion for such brands as Eileen Fisher, Tiffany & Co and Gucci America. While living in Los Angeles, she honed her skills as a fashion stylist, focusing on product placement and the marketing of fashion brands through celebrity client relationships. She served as Head of Wardrobe in Oxygen Media's inaugural year of operation, and dressed the likes of Candice Bergen and Tasha Smith during that time. Over the past fifteen years, her focus has been on business development and strategic marketing for leading event and designer development platform African Fashion International; a malaria elimination initiative founded by Robert Brozin, Goodbye Malaria; founding board member of

the first ever South African Menswear Week; leading African designers Stoned Cherrie, CHULAAP, Rich Mnisi and online platforms oxosi.com and KISUA.com. She is a contributor to the book *African Catwalk* by Per Anders Pettersson (2016) which showcases an unexpected side of the African continent as it examines the fast growing fashion industry in Africa. This book is the first time the emerging African fashion industry has been documented in exclusive behind-the-scenes photographs.

Cheryl Finley is Associate Professor and Director of Visual Studies in the Department of the History of Art at Cornell University. She was trained in the History of Art and African American Studies at Yale University. Her chapter in this volume, 'Lôis Mailou Jones in the World', is taken from her work examining the global art economy, focusing upon artists, museums, pedagogy, biennials and tourism. A longtime scholar of travel, tourism and migration, Finley is also engaged in the collaborative project 'Visualizing Travel, Gendering Diaspora' with Leigh Raiford (University of California, Berkeley) and Heike Raphael-Hernandez (University of Würzburg) funded by the American Council of Learned Societies. Finley's research has been supported by the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, the Ford Foundation, the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Karen Finley works in a variety of mediums such as installation, video, performance, public and visual art, music, and literature. She has performed and exhibited internationally. She is the author of eight books, including her latest, the twenty-fifth-anniversary edition of *Shock Treatment* (2015). Her work includes 'Mandala: Reimagined Columbus Circle', an interactive walk that examines the symbols and history of Columbus Circle; 'Artist Anonymous', a self-help meeting for those addicted to art; 'Written in Sand', a performance of her writings on AIDS; 'Open Heart', a Holocaust memorial at Camp Gusen, Austria; 'Unicorn, Gratitude Mystery', a solo performance that explores the psychological portrayals of power that drives American election politics; and 'Sext Me if You Can', where Finley creates commissioned portraits inspired by 'sexts' received from the public. *Grabbing Pussy* was published in 2018. A recipient of many awards and grants, including a Guggenheim

Fellowship, she is an arts professor in Art and Public Policy at New York University.

Tiffany M. Gill is the inaugural Cochran Scholar and Associate Professor in the Department of Black American Studies and the Department of History at the University of Delaware. Her research and teaching interests include African American History, Women's History, the history of black entrepreneurship, fashion and beauty studies, and travel and migration throughout the African Diaspora. A graduate of Georgetown and Rutgers Universities, she is the author of *Beauty Shop Politics: African American Women's Activism in the Beauty Industry* (2010) which was awarded the 2010 Letitia Woods Brown Memorial Book Prize by the Association of Black Women Historians. In addition, she has served as a subject editor for African American National Biography, and has had her work published and reprinted in several journals and edited volumes. Before joining the faculty of the University of Delaware, Gill taught at the University of Texas at Austin and was a recipient of the 2010 Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award for excellence in undergraduate education. Currently, she is at work on a book manuscript chronicling the history of black international leisure travel since World War I.

Gayatri Gopinath is Associate Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University, and Director of the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality. She is the author of *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (2005), and has published numerous essays on gender, sexuality and diaspora in journals such as *GLQ*, *Social Text*, *positions*, and *Diaspora*. Her book, *Unruly Visions: The Aesthetic Practices of Queer Diaspora*, was published in 2018. Her recent articles and book chapters related to this project include: 'Queer Visual Excavations: Akram Zaatari, Hashem El Madani, and the Reframing of History in Lebanon' (2017); "'Who's Your Daddy?' Queer Diasporic Reframings of the Region' (2013); 'Archive, Affect and the Everyday: Queer Diasporic Re-Visions' (2010) and 'Queer Regions: Locating Lesbians in Sancharram' (2007).

Sharon Harley, Associate Professor in the African American Studies Department at the University of Maryland, College Park, researches and

teaches black women's labor history and racial and gender politics in the African Diaspora. A leading scholar in the field of black women's history, she is the editor and a contributor to the noted anthologies *Sister Circle: Black Women and Work* (2002) and *Women's Labor in the Global Economy: Speaking in Multiple Voices* (2007). Her most recent essay is titled 'The Solidarity of Humanity: Anna Julia Cooper's Personal Encounters and Thinking about the Intersectionality of Race, Gender, and Oppression.' As a fellow at the Harvard's Hutchins Center, she examined the political activism and romance between W. E. B. Du Bois and his second wife, international political and cultural activist Shirley Graham.

Marianne Hirsch writes about the transmission of memories of violence across generations, combining feminist theory with memory studies in global perspective. Her recent books include *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (2012); *Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory* (2010), co-authored with Leo Spitzer; and *Rites of Return: Diaspora Poetics and the Politics of Memory* (2011), co-edited with Nancy K. Miller. Hirsch is the William Peterfield Trent Professor of Comparative Literature and Gender Studies at Columbia University. She is one of the founders of Columbia's Center for the Study of Social Difference. She is a former President of the Modern Language Association of America and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Jessica Ingram is a photo-conceptual artist working primarily with themes related to power, race, and American history. She uses photography, video, and audio to explore the ethos of communities and the power of belonging. She received her BFA from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and her MFA from California College of Arts & Crafts in San Francisco. Her traveling solo exhibition 'Road Through Midnight' was exhibited at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, The Tennessee State Museum in Nashville, and the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. She was included in the exhibition 'Southern Accent: Seeking the American South in Contemporary Art' at the Nasher Museum, traveling to the Speed Museum in Louisville. Her collaborative projects have been featured at the Sundance Film Festival and installed publicly at the

Oakland International Airport, The Birmingham International Airport, and The Oakland Museum of California.

M. Neelika Jayawardane is Associate Professor of English at the State University of New York-Oswego, and an Honorary Research Associate at the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa (CISA), University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa). She is a founding member of the online magazine, *Africa is a Country*, where she was Senior Editor from 2010–2016. Her scholarly publications focus on the nexus between South African literature, photography, and the transnational/transhistorical implications of colonialism and apartheid on the body. Jayawardane contributed the introductory essay for the South Africa pavilion's 57th Venice Biennale catalogue, and essays for The Walther Collection's publication (2017) and other artists' catalogues. Her writing is featured in Al Jazeera English, *Transitions*, *Aperture*, *Contemporary&*, *Art South Africa*, *Contemporary Practices: Visual Art from the Middle East*, *Even Magazine*, and *Research in African Literatures*.

Kellie Jones is Associate Professor in Art History and Archaeology and a Faculty Fellow with the Institute for Research in African American Studies (IRAAS) at Columbia University. Her research interests include African American and African Diaspora artists, Latinx and Latin American Artists, and issues in contemporary art and museum theory. Jones has received numerous awards for her work from the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Harvard University; Creative Capital | Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant and a term as Scholar-in-Residence at the Terra Foundation for American Art in Europe in Giverny, France. In 2016 she was named a MacArthur Foundation Fellow. Jones's writings have appeared in exhibition catalogues and such journals as *NKA*, *Artforum*, *Flash Art*, *Atlantica*, and *Third Text*. She is the author of two books, *EyeMinded: Living and Writing Contemporary Art* (2011), and *South of Pico: African American Artists in Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s* (2017). Jones has also worked as a curator for over three decades and has numerous major national and international exhibitions to her credit. Her exhibition 'Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles, 1960–1980', at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, was named one of the best exhibitions of 2011 and 2012 by *Artforum*, and best thematic show nationally by the International

Association of Art Critics (AICA). She was co-curator of 'Witness: Art and Civil Rights in the 1960s' (Brooklyn Museum), named one the best exhibitions of 2014 by *Artforum*.

Roshini Kempadoo is an international photographer, media artist and Reader at the University of Westminster, London, creating photographs, artworks and writings that interpret, analyse and reimagine historical experiences and memories as women's visual narratives. Central to this is to reconceptualise the visual archive, the subject of her monograph *Creole in the Archive: Imagery, Presence and Location of the Caribbean Figure* (2016). Roshini is a cultural activist and advocate. She was instrumental in establishing the association of black photographers Autograph ABP, established at Rivington Place, London and contributed to the development of *Ten.8 International Photographic Magazine* (1986–1990). Roshini studied visual communications and photography, creating photographs for exhibition including the seminal digital montage series 'ECU: European Currency Unfolds' (1992), Laing Gallery, Newcastle. She was a member of Format Women's Picture Agency (1983–2003). Roshini's artwork *FaceUp* explores taking selfies, mobile technology and diasporic urban life for the exhibition 'Ghosts: Keith Piper and Roshini Kempadoo' (2015), Lethaby Gallery, London. Her project 'Follow the Money' revisits the question of economic migration and inequality, women's bodies and European diaspora narratives. She is an editorial board member of *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*.

Sarah K. Khan, a multimedia artist/journalist, focuses on women, migrants and food. Sarah makes visible their invisible lives via photography, cartography, film and writing. She partners with like-minded organizations and individuals to provoke thought about social injustices related to food, gender, culture, and the environment. Her arts training includes drawing in Mughal/Persian miniature techniques under Bashir Ahmed, Pakistan and The Prince's School, London, UK; paper- and bookmaking at Haystack Mountain School of Art, Maine; and with Mary Hark, Madison WI; letterpress printmaking intensives with Amos Paul Kennedy Jr., Gordo AL; photography mentoring from Faisal Abdu'Allah, Madison WI; collaborations with Meeta Mastani on handmade paper, block prints and textiles, Rajasthan India. Sarah earned a BA in Middle Eastern history/Arabic (Smith College), two

Masters (public health, nutrition, Columbia University) and a PhD (plant sciences, NY Botanical Garden/ CUNY). She has received grants and fellowships to pursue her work. She is fluent in French, proficient in Urdu/Hindi and Arabic and is based in NY, NY/Madison, WI.

Treva Lindsey is an Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at The Ohio State University. Her research and teaching interests include African American women's history, and black popular and expressive culture, black feminism(s). Her first book is entitled *Colored No More: Reinventing Black Womanhood in Washington D.C.* (2017). She is the inaugural Equity for Women and Girls of Color Fellow at Harvard University (2016–2017). She is currently working on a book project tentatively titled 'Hear Our Screams: Black Women, Violence, and The Struggle for Justice'. She is the recipient of several awards and fellowships from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the National Women's Studies Association, and the Coca Cola Critical Difference for Women Committee. She is a guest contributor to forums such as Al Jazeera, BET, Complex Magazine, and Cosmopolitan.

Bettina L. Love is an award-winning professor at University of Georgia. Her research focuses on the ways in which urban youth negotiate Hip-Hop music and culture to form social, cultural, and political identities to create new and sustaining ways of thinking about urban education and intersectional social justice. For her work in the field, in 2016 Love was named the Nasir Jones Hiphop Fellow at the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University. In April 2017, Love participated in a one-on-one public lecture with bell hooks focused on the liberatory education practices of Black and Brown children. In 2014, she was invited to the White House Research Conference on Girls to discuss her work focused on the lives of Black girls. She is the author of the book *Hip Hop's Li'l Sistas Speak: Negotiating Hip Hop Identities and Politics in the New South* (2012).

Maaza Mengiste is a novelist and essayist. Her debut novel, *Beneath the Lion's Gaze*, was selected by the Guardian as one of the ten best contemporary African books and named one of the best books of 2010 by *Christian Science Monitor*, *Boston Globe* and other publications.

Maaza's fiction and nonfiction examines the individual lives at stake during migration, war, and exile, and considers the intersections of photography and violence. Her work can be found in *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, BBC Radio, *World Literature Today*, *Words Without Borders*, *Lo straniero*, and *Lettre International*, among other places.

Editha Mesina was born in Quezon City, Philippines. Her photographs have been exhibited at the Cuchifritos Gallery, New York, Artist Space, New York; Clocktower Gallery, New York; Ceres Gallery, New York; A.I.R. Gallery, New York; Parrish Art Museum, Southampton; Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown; Philip Slein Gallery, St. Louis; Palais De Glace, Buenos Aires. Mesina is a member of the Faculty at NYU, Tisch's Department of Photography and Imaging. She is a 2006 Alex G. Nason New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow in Photography.

Jennifer L. Morgan is Professor of History in the department of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University where she also serves as Chair. She is the author of *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery* (2004) and the co-editor of *Connexions: Histories of Race and Sex in America* (2016). Her research examines the intersections of gender and race in the Black Atlantic world. She has published articles on women in the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade entitled 'Accounting for Excruciating Torment: Trans-Atlantic Passages' and 'Archives and Histories of Racial Capitalism'. She is currently at work on a project that considers colonial numeracy, racism and the rise of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade tentatively entitled 'Accounting for the Women in Slavery'.

Joan Morgan is an award-winning feminist author and a doctoral candidate in NYU's American Studies program. A pioneering hip-hop journalist, Morgan coined the term 'hip-hop feminism' in 1999, when she published the groundbreaking book, *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost*. Her book has been used in college coursework across the country. Regarded internationally as an expert on the topics of hip-hop and gender, Morgan has made numerous television and radio appearances — among them MTV, BET, VH-1, CNN, WBAI's *The Spin*: The All Women's Media Panel and The Melissa Harris Perry Show.

Morgan has been a Visiting Instructor at Duke University where she taught 'The History of Hip-Hop Journalism', a Visiting Research Scholar at Vanderbilt University and Visiting Lecturer at Stanford University's Institute for the Diversity of the Arts where she was the recipient of the prestigious 2013 Dr. St. Clair Drake Teaching Award for her course 'The Pleasure Principle: A Post-Hip Hop Search for a Black Feminist Politics of Pleasure'. She is the first Visiting Scholar to ever receive the award. She is also a recipient of the 2015 Woodrow Wilson Women's Studies Dissertation Fellowship, the 2015 Penfield Fellowship and the 2016 American Fellowship Award. Morgan's dissertation is entitled 'It's About Time We Got Off: Claiming a Pleasure Politic in Black Feminist Thought'.

Wangechi Mutu, a Kenyan born artist working between New York and Nairobi, studied at The Cooper Union and Yale University School of Art. Mutu participated in the 56th International Exhibition of Contemporary Art, Venice Biennale (2015) and has exhibited in solo shows worldwide including the Deutsche Guggenheim Museum, Berlin; Musée D'art Contemporain de Montréal; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; the Brooklyn Museum, amongst others. Mutu has presented solo exhibitions at Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium and The Contemporary Austin, TX. Through a variety of media, including painting-collage, sculpture, performance and video, her work explores questions about self-image, gender constructs, cultural trauma and environmental destruction.

Pamela Newkirk is an award-winning journalist and multifaceted scholar whose work addresses the historical absence of multidimensional portraits of African descendants in scholarship and popular culture. Her latest book *Spectacle: The Astonishing Life of Ota Benga* (2015) examines how prevalent and pernicious racial attitudes contributed to the 1906 exhibition of a young Congolese man in the Bronx Zoo monkey house. *Spectacle* was listed among the Best Books of 2015 by NPR, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Boston Globe, The Huffington Post Black Voices and The Root, and won the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Non-Fiction Literature and the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Foundation Legacy Award. Newkirk is the editor of *Letters from Black America* (2011) and *A Love No Less: More Than Two*

Centuries of African American Love Letters (2003), and is the author of *Within the Veil: Black Journalists, White Media* (2002). The book, which examines how race overtly and covertly influences news coverage, won the National Press Club Award for Media Criticism. Newkirk holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from New York University and Columbia University, respectively, and is professor of journalism and director of undergraduate studies in New York University's Arthur Carter Journalism Institute. She previously worked at four successive news organizations, including New York Newsday where she was part of a Pulitzer Prize-winning team. Her articles on media, race and African American art and culture have appeared in numerous publications including The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Guardian, The Nation and Artnews.

Lorie Novak is an artist and Professor of Photography & Imaging at NYU Tisch School of the Arts and Associate Faculty at The Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. Her photographs, installations, and Internet projects explore issues of memory and transmission, the relationship between the intimate and the public, and the shifting cultural meanings of photographs. Her work has been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions, and she is the recipient of a 2016 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Photography. In her 'Above The Fold' project, she has saved the front-page sections of the New York Times from 1999 to the present and categorized them according to content of the photograph above the fold. She is also Director and Founder, Tisch Future Imagemakers, a participatory photography project offering free digital photography classes to NYC area high school students. For more information, see <https://www.lorienovak.com>

Vanessa Pérez-Rosario is Associate Professor of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies and managing editor of *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*. She is author of *Becoming Julia de Burgos: The Making of a Puerto Rican Icon* (2014) and editor of *Hispanic Caribbean Literature of Migration: Narratives of Displacement* (2010). She recently completed a translation manuscript of Mayra Santos-Febres's 'Boat People' and has edited and translated the manuscript, 'I Am My Own Path: A Bilingual Anthology of the Writings of Julia de Burgos.' Pérez-Rosario is on the board of

Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project at the University of Houston, and former co-chair of the Latino Studies section of LASA.

Misan Sagay is an award-winning filmmaker, screenwriter and producer. She won the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Writing in a Motion Picture for Fox Searchlight's box office hit, 'BELLE'. The Belle script, nominated for a Humanitas Prize, was inspired by the true story of Dido Elizabeth Belle, the illegitimate mixed-race daughter of a British admiral who was raised by her aristocratic aunt and uncle. Sagay's producing and screenwriting credits include 'Secret Laughter of Women', starring Colin Firth and Nia Long, and the award-winning, critically acclaimed ABC television movie, 'Their Eyes Were Watching God', starring Halle Berry and executive produced by Oprah Winfrey. Sagay co-wrote 'Guerrilla' with John Ridley for Sky Atlantic and Showtime. She is writing 'Battersea Rise' for BBC, 'Imprinted' for ITV and 'Burma Boys' for Warner Bros. Misan Sagay is a member of BAFTA and the Academy for Motion Pictures where she sits on the Academy Nicholl Screenwriting Fellowships Committee and on the Writers Executive Branch.

Sirpa Salenius, native of Helsinki, taught at the University of Tokyo and at American university study abroad programs in Rome and Florence before moving to Finland to teach English and American literature at the University of Eastern Finland in 2016. Her conference presentations, lectures, and publications focus on Transatlantic Studies, in particular on American artists and writers in Italy. Her work looks at marginalization, race, gender, and sexuality, and the transgression of borders — social, cultural, and geographical. Her books include *An Abolitionist Abroad: Sarah Parker Remond in Cosmopolitan Europe* (2016), *Rose Elizabeth Cleveland: First Lady and Literary Scholar* (2014), and an essay collection, edited together with Beth L. Lueck and Nancy Lusignan Schultz, *Transatlantic Conversations: Nineteenth-Century American Women's Encounters with Italy and the Atlantic World* (2016). She has also co-edited an essay collection on *Race and Transatlantic Identities* (2017).

Gunja SenGupta's interests lie in nineteenth-century US and slavery/abolition in the Indian Ocean; sectional conflict; African American and women's history. Her first book, *For God and Mammon: Evangelicals*

and *Entrepreneurs, Masters and Slaves in Territorial Kansas* (1996), dealt with sectional conflict and consensus. In *From Slavery to Poverty: The Racial Origins of Welfare in New York, 1840–1918* (2009), she explored welfare debates as sites for negotiating identities of race, gender, and nation. Her articles have appeared in numerous journals including the *American Historical Review*, *Journal of Negro (African American) History*, *Civil War History*, and *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*. Her current projects, funded by Melon, Whiting, Wolfe, and Tow fellowships/grants, include one on nineteenth-century United States and slavery/abolition/empire in the Indian Ocean; and another on the history, memory and films of the Black Atlantic.

Debora Spini teaches Social Foundations at New York University in Florence. She is the author of various essays and book chapters in English and Italian on topics such as the transformation of public spaces, crisis of the modern self, secularization and post secularization. Her research interests focus on religion and political conflict, with a special concentration on gender as well as on monotheism and violence. On these topics, she has given lectures and participated in conferences and seminars in Europe, US, India and Brasil. She is the author of the monograph *La società civile post nazionale* (2006). With D. Armstrong, J. Gilson and V. Bello Spini co-edited the volume *Civil Society and International Governance* (2010). In her capacity as Vice President of the Forum for the Problems of Peace and War (www.onlineforum.it) she has promoted research on gender, religion and identity, now collected in the volume *Giovani musulmane in Italia. Percorsi biografici e pratiche quotidiane* (2015). Spini is a member of various scholarly societies including the Società Italiana di Filosofia Politica and the Società Italiana di Teoria Critica.

Ellyn Toscano is Senior Director of Programing, Partnerships and Community Engagement, NYU in Brooklyn and former Executive Director of New York University Florence. She is the founder of La Pietra Dialogues and the founding producer of The Season, a summer arts festival in Florence, Italy. Toscano co-organized Black Portraitures conference at NYU Florence and produced the exhibition 'ReSignifications', held at three venues in Florence, Italy. She is a member of the Boards of the Harbor Conservancy, New York, Museo Marino

Marini in Florence, Italy; of the John Brademas Center, New York; the Italian Advisory Council of the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, Umbertide, Italy; and the Comitato Promotore of the Festival degli Scrittori and the Premio Gregor von Rezzori, Santa Maddalena Foundation, Donnini, Italy. Before arriving at New York University Florence, Toscano served as Chief of Staff and Counsel to Congressman Jose Serrano of New York, was his chief policy advisor and directed his work on the Appropriations Committee. Toscano also served as counsel to the New York State Assembly Committee on Education for nine years and served on the boards of several prominent arts and cultural institutions in New York City, including The Bronx Museum of the Arts and the Brooklyn Academy of Music (representative of the Borough President). A lawyer by training, Toscano earned an LLM in International Law from New York University School of Law.

Imani Uzuri is a vocalist, composer and cultural worker who has been called ‘a post-modernist Bessie Smith’ by The Village Voice. Her work reflects her rural North Carolina roots singing spirituals and hymns with her grandmother and extended family. Uzuri has worked internationally in venues and festivals including Lincoln Center Out of Doors, SummerStage, Joe’s Pub, Public Theater, Performa Biennial, France’s Festival Sons d’hiver, London’s ICA, and MoMA. Uzuri has collaborated with a wide range of noted artists across various artistic disciplines. She is composer and co-lyricist for the musical GIRL Shakes Loose, selected for the 2016 O’Neill National Music Theater Conference. She was a Park Avenue Armory Artist-In-Residence in 2015–2016, a Jerome Foundation Composer/Sound Artist Fellow in 2016–17 and the recipient of a Map Fund award. In 2016 Uzuri made her Lincoln Center American Songbook debut as well as being a featured performer on BET for Black Girls Rock. She received her MA in 2016 from Columbia University in African American studies researching the liturgy, performativity and ‘subversive salvation’ of New Orleans-based preacher and artist Sister Gertrude Morgan (1900–80). She has written essays for *The Feminist Wire* and *Ebony* and her work is currently included in the anthology BAX 2016: Best American Experimental Writing. Uzuri is the founder and artistic director of Revolutionary Choir, community singing gatherings formed to teach historical and new songs of resistance and resilience. See www.imaniuzuri.com

Cheryl A. Wall, a distinguished critic in the field of African American literary studies, is Board of Governors Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English at Rutgers University and the author of *A Very Short Introduction to the Harlem Renaissance* (2016). Wall is also the author of *Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers, Lineage, and Literary Tradition* (2005) and *Women of the Harlem Renaissance* (1995), and the editor of *Changing Our Own Words: Criticism, Theory, and Writing by Black Women* (1989). She has edited two volumes of writing by Zora Neale Hurston for the Library of America — *Novels and Short Stories* (1995) and *Folklore, Memoirs, and Other Writings* (1995); with Linda Holmes, she co-edited *Savoring the Salt: The Legacy of Toni Cade Bambara* (2008).

Deborah Willis is University Professor and Chair of the Department of Photography & Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University and has an affiliated appointment with the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Social & Cultural Analysis, Africana Studies, where she teaches courses on photography and imaging, iconicity, and cultural histories visualizing the black body, women, and gender. Her research examines photography's multifaceted histories, visual culture, the photographic history of Slavery and Emancipation, contemporary women photographers and beauty. She received the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship and was a Richard D. Cohen Fellow in African and African American Art, Hutchins Center, Harvard University and a John Simon Guggenheim Fellow. Professor Willis received the NAACP Image Award in 2014 for her co-authored book (with Barbara Krauthamer) *Envisioning Emancipation*. Other notable projects include *The Black Female Body A Photographic History* (2002); *Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers—1840 to the Present* (2002); *Posing Beauty: African American Images from the 1890s to the Present* (2009); *Michelle Obama: The First Lady in Photographs* (2009), a NAACP Image Award Literature Winner; and *Black Venus 2010: They Called Her 'Hottentot'* (2010).

Francille Rusan Wilson is an intellectual and labor historian whose research examines the intersections between black labor movements, black intellectuals, and black women's history during the Jim Crow era. Her book, *The Segregated Scholars: Black Social Scientists and the Creation of Black Labor Studies, 1890–1950* (2006) is a collective biography of the

world and works of fifteen scholar-activists. *The Segregated Scholars* was awarded the Letitia Woods Brown Memorial Prize for the best book in black women's history by the Association of Black Women Historians. Wilson's works in progress include a study of the impact of racism and sexism on black women lawyers and social scientists before the Civil Rights Act and a history of black history movements, 1890–2015. She is Associate Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity, and History at the University of Southern California and the current National Director of the Association of Black Women Historians.

Paulette Young, Cultural Anthropologist and Curator, is an independent scholar who lectures and provides ethnographic and archival research for cultural, educational, and business institutions. She is an educator and advisor in the visual and performing arts for a diverse range of museums, galleries and community-based organizations. Young has trained educators to integrate the arts of Africa and the diaspora in classroom curricula within the United States and at educational and cultural institutions abroad, including Japan, Germany, France, Kenya and Ghana. She holds a PhD from Columbia University. Young's research is concerned with the ways that women of African descent articulate power and meaning through the visual and verbal arts. She has been a visiting scholar at the Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia University where she developed and taught seminars incorporating film, literature, drama and the visual arts in courses entitled 'Visualizing African American Culture', 'Women and the Visual Arts in Africa' and the 'Diaspora and Africanisms in American Culture'. Prior to receiving her doctorate she was a museum educator and associate at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC, where she worked exhibitions and programs featuring modern artists including Jacob Lawrence, Constantin Brancusi, Georgia O'Keeffe, Alfred Stieglitz and Man Ray. Young is Director of the Young Robertson Gallery in New York City. The gallery specializes in fine arts from Africa and the African Diaspora, with a focus on traditional African fine art, textiles and photography.

Introduction:

Women and Migration[s]

This edited volume *Women and Migration* examines the role photography, art, film, history, and writing play in identifying and remembering the migratory activities of women. The reader will explore a wide range of topics from interdisciplinary perspectives, including concepts of place, memory, globalization and the arts, photography and mobility, travel writing and food, experiences of refugees, the Caribbean Diaspora, border crossings, slavery and involuntary migration, displacement, marriage, indigeneity, pleasure, love, politics, war and family stories. To bring some order to this rich heterogeneity, the book is divided into eight parts that reflect these themes. Our authors, who come from many different nations, explore, interpret and reimagine ways in which we can discuss ideas and develop theories about migration. The interdisciplinarity of this project is rooted in its approaches to history, art, visual culture, and politics.

Part One, *Imagining Family and Migration*, offers the reader intimate personal narratives of migration. We learn how travel across borders and oceans affects families, and we learn more about the authors' connections to and re-articulations of homeland — as well as the corporeality of migration. Ellyn Toscano writes about silences and secrets within the family, exploring an unknown story about her grandmother's migration from South Carolina to a Home for Destitute Colored Children in Rye, New York when she was six years old. 'Between Self and Memory' is a story about racial passing, racial identity and a family secret in which Toscano writes about the consequences of deracination, concealment and the self-fashioning of transitive identities. Utilizing memoir, history

and visual culture, 'The Impermanence of Place: Migration, Memory and Method' by Anna Arabindan Kesson reflects on her journey from Sri Lanka (her birthplace) to Australia and how that experience of migration shaped her scholarship. In 'A Congolese Woman's Life in Europe: A Post-Colonial Diptych of Migration', Sandrine Colard describes the photographs of her mother in her family photo album, as she chronicles her mother leaving the Congo, studying in Europe and getting married to Colard's Belgian father. Colard compares photographs of herself as a student and a professional with those of the young couple on their wedding day. Kathy Engel's 'Migrations' is a memoir-poem of the cultural work she has pursued over her lifetime working with women living in the United States, South America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and in South Africa. Engel includes her own discovery of what it means to migrate, something she learned not by direct experience but by listening to stories as a child and working with women who were fleeing violence.

Part Two, *Mobility and Migration*, gives the reader an insight into the creative methods used by artists to portray the transient and transcendental qualities of being in motion. This section explores the materials that women carry with them, while also probing the idea of 'woman' as the carrier of memories, stories, emotions, traditions, culture and religion. Marianne Hirsch's 'Carrying Memory' explores the connections between three distinctly twenty-first-century projects by women artists responding to mobility and migration: Argentinian artist Mirta Kupferminc, Kenyan/US artist Wangechi Mutu, and Chinese artist Yin Xiuzhen. All three turn to the archive to explore how women carry the burden of a painful past in a way that attempts to look to the future. 'Making Through Motion, Art Practice Manifesto' explores how memory and metaphor shape Wangechi Mutu's practice. Mutu connects her life and migration to three generations of women in her family, drawing out themes of empowerment and independence. Karen Finley's 'Strange Set of Circumstances: White Artistic Migration and Crazy Quilt' reflects on her activism as an artist who was censored by the US during the 1990s. She discusses her own participation in the white migration that brought about the gentrification of low-income neighborhoods and considers how she benefited from censorship, having received recognition at the expense of the silencing of artists of color and the erasure of the cultural heritage of immigrant communities. Cheryl Wall's 'Nora

Holt: New Negro Composer and Jazz-Age Goddess' reflects on Holt's extraordinary life and the connections between movement and female self-invention.

In *Understanding Pathways*, the third section of the book, the authors offer insights into migrant experiences through images and documentation. The reader will encounter a diverse set of stories centered on the authors' approaches to researching, making and interpreting images that in some cases reveal and in others obscure preconceptions about identity, ethnicity and transnationality. '*Silsila: Linking Bodies, Desert, Water*' is a series of photographs by the Palestinian-Iraqi artist Sama Alshaibi. Alshaibi, whose family was exiled from two homelands, spent her formative years migrating across Middle-Eastern countries as a political refugee. She argues that any understanding of the socio-economic and political upheavals that Middle-Eastern women experience is complicated by problematic historical and contemporary depictions of them in photographs, which often reduce their challenges to what they wear. Alshaibi's photo essay offers an overview of various strategies she pursues in her own work to decode and subvert familiar images of Middle-Eastern women, while using a personal vernacular to describe her relationship with the many countries and cultures that have formed her identity. Jessica Ingram's 'My Baby Changed My Life: Migration and Motherhood in an American High School', expands on her social practice as a photographer committed to social change. Ingram photographed and worked closely with students at Hilltop High, a public high school for pregnant teenagers in the Mission District of San Francisco. Ingram portrays Hilltop as a crucial safe space for young women and their children who have emigrated to the United States.

Lorie Novak's 'Visualizing Displacement Above the Fold' looks at the placement of articles in the *New York Times* to explore how gender, displacement and migration are visualized and, at the same time, to highlight what is not photographed. In 'Unveiling Violence: Gender and Migration in Right-Wing European Populism' Debora Spini emphasizes how migrant women are constructed as 'others' and further how their bodies become the locus of discourses of domination that either turn them into prey or commodities. Maaza Mengiste's 'A Different Lens' is a meditation on how photography reshapes memory, using photographs taken by Italian colonial forces in Ethiopia from 1935–41 to understand more about how war was experienced by women and children — those

villagers who did not make it into the history books. Isolde Brielmaier's 'Reinventing the Spaces Within: The Early Images of Artist Lalla Essaydi' highlights the critical role of the artist and her engagement with women in setting the stage for a broader discussion about migration. Kellie Jones's 'Swimming with E. C.' places the artwork of Elizabeth Catlett in the context of the political history of artists and others who worked between Mexico and the United States. Catlett's themes have remained consistent over time: celebrations of women — their power, their politics, their bodies, their bond with their children, and their culture. Her contribution can, in many ways, be considered part of the recent history of self-portraiture in art through the lenses of migration, photography and performance.

The essays in part four, *Reclaiming Our Time*, reveal narratives in which the intrinsic significance of women of color have been overlooked and ignored. Their authors critique debates about the legacy of colonialism and racism, and put forward new models to dismantle preexisting structures of power. In 'Kinship, the Middle Passage, and the Origins of Racial Slavery' Jennifer L. Morgan offers a revised perspective of the forced migration of women. She is concerned with how the seventeenth-century slave trade sets in motion a set of violent practices and assumptions that have particular implications for enslaved women. Bettina Love's 'Black Women's Work: Undoing Character Education' critiques concepts of civic engagement by Black women as they marshal new possibilities that focus on Black joy and Black radical imagination. Editha Mesina's photographic essay 'Gabriela NY and Justice for Mary Jane Veloso' focuses on a Filipina organization called Gabriela NY, a grassroots human rights feminist organization that advocates for migrant workers. Allana Finley's 'Women and Migrations: African Fashion's Global Takeover' shares her journey through African's diverse fashion industry, and chronicles her dedication to bringing African creatives into the global market. Treva B. Lindsey's 'What Would It Mean to Sing A Black Girl's Song?: A Brief Statement on the Reality of Anti-Black Girl Terror' focuses on Black femme insurgency as a contemporary liberation praxis that advocates for justice for Black women.

The essays in part five, *Situated at the Edge*, focus on women whose stories have been marginalized or forgotten in the histories of migration. Pamela Newkirk's 'Freda Washington's Forgotten War on Hollywood' is a revelatory account on this overlooked actress who was

one of Hollywood's and Broadway's pioneering African-American leading ladies. Newkirk highlights aspects of her noteworthy civil rights activism in the United States and abroad. Vanessa Perez Rosario's essay 'Julia de Burgos, Cultural Crossing and Iconicity' focuses on de Burgos's life, death, poetry, activism, and legacy, while highlighting the escape routes she created to transcend the rigid confines of gender in Puerto Rico in the 1930s. Sirpa Salenius examines a Black American female abolitionist's European travel in the nineteenth century in 'Sarah Parker Remond's Black American Grand Tour'. Remond participated in transatlantic struggles for social justice, moving beyond the borders of her nationality, race, and gender. Her travels and her detachment from her previous set of social conditions enabled her to propose a progressive model of Black womanhood — one of independence, intellectualism, and personal and professional success. Arlene Davila's 'Making Latinx Art: Juana Valdes at the Crossroads of Latinx and Latin American Art' addresses how the political economy of contemporary art markets impact the making of Latinx and Latin American art. Patricia Cronin's essay 'Moving Mountains: Harriet Hosmer's Nineteenth-Century Italian Migration to Become the First Professional Woman Sculptor' is a pioneering work that combines hand-painted images with art historical research to reveal the complexities of Hosmer's career, reputation, and legacy.

Expressing how identities shift through mediated sources such as film, music, and the internet, part six, *Transit, Transiting, Transition* explores mobility through alternate realities. Roshini Kempadoo's 'Urban Candy: Screens, Selfies and Imaginings' explores the itinerant imagery of her art project *Face Up* for the appropriateness of its response to current neoliberal politics and popular media. Kempadoo questions how difference is viewed when focusing on the Black women's body across the world. In 'Controlled Images and Cultural Reassembly: Material Black Girls Living in an Avatar World' Joan Morgan analyses the line between what is considered 'the real' self and what exists in digital space, suggesting that this division is at best blurred and more likely illusory. Sarah Khan's 'Supershero: Amrita, Partitioned Once, Migrated Twice' is an exploration of migrant stories through food. She illustrates Indian women farmers in their working environments and tells the story of farmers through the eyes of a seriously playful and playfully serious super shero, Amrita Simla. The Shero is neither

oversexualized nor over-covered. She demonstrates agency based on her own experience, intellect, and humanity. In the essay 'Diaspora, Indigeneity, Queer Critique: Tracey Moffatt's Aesthetics of Dwelling in Displacement' by Gayatri Gopinath we experience identity and aesthetics through the same frame of different histories of dispossession and displacement, colonialism and racialization — without rendering them equivalent. Kalia Brooks Nelson's 'The Performance of Doubles: The Transposition of Gender and Race in Ming Wong's *Life of Imitation*' highlights Wong's work and the reception of gendered-racial narratives that are distributed through the international reach of Hollywood image culture, and received by audiences in other parts of the world. Wong's video intervenes in the cinematic depiction of racial passing, and the limitations that are enacted through this form of psychological doubling.

Part seven, *The World is Ours, Too*, is informed by mobility and desire, which frame studies of women traveling and finding their voices in countries and spaces from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first century. Francille Rusan Wilson's 'The Roots of Black Women's Internationalism' examines Black women activists' travel and writing from the late nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century, and considers how their exposure to international debates on decolonization, women's rights, and missionary work helped to reshape the worldviews of Black American women's organizations, and expanded their conception of the possibility of sisterhood and common struggles across continents. Tiffany Gill's "'The World is Ours, Too': Millennial Women and the New Black Travel Movement' recounts how Black women in the early years of the civil rights movement built a 'travel movement' and explores how, in the early twenty-first century, the Black Lives Matter crusade has seen its resurgence. In this iteration Black millennial women, those 18–35 year olds who, in true millennial fashion, think they are the first to engage in this phenomenon, are at the forefront. Gill's essay explores the history of a movement that began in the 1940s and has a great deal to teach us about the tensions between political activism, leisure culture, and global freedom struggles. Paulette Young's essay "'I Want to do Something and be Something; I Want to Make a Name!'" Performing a Life: Mattie Allen McAdoo's Odyssey from Ohio to South Africa, Australia and Beyond, 1890–1900' on musician Mattie Allen McAdoo, explores the ways in which Mattie

navigated her role as wife, performer and African-American woman during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Young examines her migration from a student and musical prodigy in Ohio and a teacher in Washington, D.C., to her travels as an international performer and her return to the US as a race woman. Her presentation of self through professional photographic portraits taken in South Africa, Tasmania and the United States is a central visual component of this effort. Sharon Harley's chapter "I Don't Pay Those Borders No Mind At All": Audley E. Moore ('Queen Mother' Moore) — Grassroots Global Traveler and Activist' expands the conversation about female activism by showing that gender roles and class identity played a major part in shaping Black women's activism, vision, and travel at home and abroad. Cheryl Finley's 'Löis Mailou Jones in the World' examines the work, life and influence of Löis Mailou Jones as they relate to the themes of travel and migration — both literally and figuratively. As an artist and designer, Jones practiced, taught and utilized theories of travel and migration, most notably in her Art-Deco-era textile designs inspired by Art Nouveau and Chinoiserie, and the paintings from her Africa Series (1950s–1980s) inspired by her travels to Haiti in the 1950s and Africa in the 1960s and 1970s.

Part eight, *Emotional Cartography: Tracing the Personal*, features Grace Aneiza Ali's 'The Ones Who Leave... the Ones Who Are Left: A Guyanese Migration Story', which offers a personal reflection on artists' experiences in Guyana. These particular experiences reveal universal tensions; they unveil the act of migration as a constant site of engagement and angst and explore what it means to be an immigrant in our twenty-first-century world. Through three distinct approaches — conceptual, portraiture, and documentary — three Guyanese artists unpack what drives one from their homeland as well as what keeps one emotionally and psychically tethered to it. Photographer Alessandra Capodacqua's 'The Acton Photograph Archive — Between Representation and Re-interpretation' mines a unique photography collection by selecting portraits of women that align with the standards of mid-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century portraiture whereby women were represented as symbols of beauty and purity. She focuses on the gaze of these women, arguing that it conveys different messages because their expressions could not be controlled by the photographer as they could by a painter, for instance. M. Neelika Jayawardane's 'Reconciliations at

Sea: Reclaiming the Lusophone Archipelago in Mónica de Miranda's Video Works' explores traditions of travel writing via memoir and film. Alessandra Di Maio's essay 'Minor Transnational Literature: Cristina Ali Farah's Somali Italian Narratives' investigates Farah's narratives and her use of language. Misan Sagay reflects on her scripting of a love story for an international television series in 'GUERRILLA — Black Resistance Narrative Reinvented', which tells the story of a politically active couple whose relationship and values are tested when they liberate a political prisoner and form a radical underground cell in 1970s London. Gunja SenGupta's 'Migration as a Woman's Right: Stories from Comparative and Transnational Slavery Histories' explains that transnational history has yielded the important insight that migration makes meaning and that civic identities transform in transit from one place to another. This essay is woven from the archival traces of women on the margins, enslaved and free, who, through flight or emigration, appeared to seek reinvention. By nudging, navigating, narrating, and sometimes reshaping the contours of international borderlands, these women wrote themselves into the records that made and make history. Imani Uzuri's 'The Sacred Migration of Sister Gertrude Morgan' is based on the New Orleans street preacher, visual artist, musician and mystic who migrated from Georgia to New Orleans in 1939.

This book, featuring the contributions of forty-two women, began life during a conference and exhibition convened by Deborah Willis and Ellyn Toscano on the campus of New York University in Florence, Italy in June 2017. The initial workshop took place at New York University's Villa La Pietra in Florence, an ideal place to initiate this project because this site has been a nucleus for discussions about migration. In addition to the authors included in this volume, other participants in the workshop included Paula Giddings, Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Sandra Jackson-Dumont, Karen Shimakawa, and Allyson Green. NYU Florence, through the programming of La Pietra Dialogues, has had a strong record of exploring migration since its inception in 2008, through conferences, talks and exhibitions, reflecting and responding to the unfolding crisis of hundreds of thousands of people arriving on the shores of Italy across the Mediterranean Sea from Africa, and many tragically perishing — drowning — in the desperate attempt to reach Europe. Even before the most recent wave of migration, African migrants were a common sight on the streets of Italy's cities, provoking

surprise in students who had come to study in Italy influenced by a tourism-driven preconception of Italians. Since the sinking on 3 October 2013 of a ship less than a mile from the Italian island of Lampedusa, resulting in the death of more than 300 people believed to have been from Eritrea and Somalia, the attention of the world was focused on migration to the Mediterranean. Increasingly, that attention has become hostile.

In June of 2018, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), created in 1950 in the aftermath of the Second World War to help millions of Europeans who had fled or lost their homes, reported that an unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have been 'forcibly displaced' from their home. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18, and slightly less than half of whom are female.¹

As Toni Morrison observed in *The Origin of Others*, 'Excluding the height of the slave trade in the nineteenth century, the mass movement of peoples in the latter half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first is greater than it has ever been. It is a movement of workers, intellectuals, refugees, and immigrants, crossing oceans and continents, through customs offices or in flimsy boats, speaking multiple languages of trade, of political intervention, of persecution, war, violence and poverty'.²

Our perspective on migration is necessarily broad: the account of the migration of women comprises the totality of many stories. Women have been part of global and historical movements of peoples to escape war, to avoid persecution, for work, for security; we have been uprooted, stolen, trafficked, enslaved. We have moved rationally, for an education, a job, health care. We have been pushed off our land by climate change. We have moved and migrated for deeply private and personal reasons — to reach our potential freely, to lead a meaningful life, to secure a future for ourselves and our families. We have sailed, flown, driven and walked. Some of us have not survived the journey.

In this introduction we use the term migrations, using the expansive nature of the term to connote the geographic, legal, political, historical,

1 UNHCR, Figures at a Glance, <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

2 Toni Morrison, *The Origin of Others* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2017), pp. 93–94.

temporal or other definitions. We include diasporas, internal movements and displacements, and international and transnational migrations. Ultimately, we leave it to our authors to respond to the term as they are inspired, hoping that diverse perspectives will enhance our collective understanding.

In the following essays and art projects, each author addresses questions and concerns that stem from varied experiences of migration from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first. Each chapter builds on current scholarship that focuses on women, migration, and citizenship, and explores perceptions of identity, race, gender, family, and work by examining the global movements of women.

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PART SIX

TRANSIT, TRANSITING, AND TRANSITION

26. Urban Candy: Screens, Selfies and Imaginings

Roshini Kempadoo

As I stepped off the 436 bus that was heading to New Cross, a young Black man was being refused entry.

Even though it was stationary and at the bus stop.

Very few of us knew why.

In protest, he stood in front of the bus, challenging the bus driver to pull out and drive. The bus driver revved the engine and inched forward. The man, the driver, bus passengers and I were watching the impasse wondering what would happen next.

Smartphones were out videoing the scene, recording the shouts, arms outstretched across the bus windscreen, recording the engine revs — ready to post and share with others elsewhere what was to happen next.

Author's note, 24 November 2011, Lewisham, London

I have a keen sense of being, listening and observing, watching out for other folk, and generally 'minding myself', and this tunes me — or should I say fine-tunes me — into the city as I journey through it in a state of transit, transiting, transition. A heightened sense of being in the physical space, whilst on my smartphone networked to others and with a *screen* sense of elsewhere, feeds the soul and the imagination, which is readily alert, mindful, enriched. Two conditions of the self

co-exist and contest each other — being on the phone and being on the move. As I travel in the urban space, smartphone ready, mobile-screen-obsessed, I physically move through a network of urban sites from one place to another and back again — coffee bar, train, bus, work, pub, home — within temporal, perpetual, transitory and relational spaces of the ‘now.’ Meanwhile the attraction and use of the smartphone proposes a utopic mirror-like site deemed to be a ‘placeless place’¹ that is virtual, connected and extended. Our bodies, Nicholas Mirzoeff notes, ‘[...] are now in the network and in the world at the same time.’²

This is to introduce the idea of *Urban Candy*, as given in the title, as a state of becoming: identities are in formation and in motion, in an ongoing relationship to the smartphone screen. As a cornucopia for the eyes, *Urban Candy* is considered a seductive, hypervisualised space of self and screen associated with the city, a perpetual line of sight, an excessive physical and virtual urban experience and environment. This became my impetus for creating the screen-based artwork *Face Up* in 2015. Central to this is the racialised and diasporised networked body on the move, precarious in her condition and affective in the performative encounter with herself and others. The artwork is constituted as six silent stop-animations that combine still images, graphics and fictional texts as vertical-format screen projections in the gallery space.³ They are conceived as *alternative idents*, a term originally (and ironically) associated with the promotional video sequences created by television companies as identification videos. These short animations of no more than two minutes each are created as a shared self-branding exercise, popular practice that deploys the look and feel of the smartphone interface. They are all fictional repertoires. The mobile screen, the smartphone reimaged in *Face Up* corresponds to the popular space of Black feminist art and performance that Uri McMillan sees as being ‘highly charged, mixed, and clashing spaces where cultural identities are imagined, stylized, theatricalized, and rendered “mythic.”’⁴ McMillan’s allusion to the ‘mythic’ qualities of Black feminist art is in

1 Michel Foucault, ‘Des Espaces Autres’ [Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias], Jay Miskowiec (trans.) in *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité*, 5 (1984), 46–49.

2 Nicholas Mirzoeff, *How to See the World* (London: Pelican Books, 2015).

3 I commissioned writer Erica Masserano for the fictional texts for *Face Up*.

4 Uri McMillan, *Embodied Avatars: Genealogies of Black Feminist Art and Performance* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), p. 207.

reference to the late Stuart Hall's use of the term. Hall perceives mythic as being a hybridized space of being and 'a theatre of popular desires, a theatre of popular fantasies. It is where we discover and play with the identifications of ourselves, where we are imagined, where we are represented...'⁵

Face Up was first shown in the Lethaby Gallery, London in 2015, curated by Paul Goodwin. The artwork was subsequently included in the exhibition 'Unfixed Homeland' at the Aljira Gallery, New Jersey in 2016, curated by Grace Ali. In the following sections of this visual essay, I explore two of the animations from *Face Up* entitled *Nana* and *Deirdre*. I offer three provocations as commentaries to the itinerant imagery and visual experience of the artwork. I consider *Face Up* to be a critical artwork created in response to current extreme rightwing tendencies apparent in popular media. It is a contribution to feminist practices, questioning difference and exposing racism that is currently being directed at the physical and symbolic Black woman's body.

First Provocation

Her Body is Political: The Smartphone as a Creative Knowledge-Making Device

The artwork considers the smartphone as a visualizing object and extension to her being. It is a technological prosthetic with the ability to transform, amongst other things, our contact with each other, as a socializing device. Equally, the phone's expanded functionality allows for extending an intimate knowledge about each other and ourselves, our sexual relationships, about our bodies, or our emotional state of being. As a haptic sensory device it allows us to share and develop and reconfigure knowledge about ourselves and our behavior, it becomes hyper-familiar with gestures, desires, appearances and countenance.

Each ident in *Face Up* is associated with imagined characters who are occasionally visualized on the screen using stop-frame animation of persons in performance. The action sequences were staged by actors

5 Stuart Hall, 'What Is This "Black" in Black Popular Culture?', in Gina Dent and Michelle Wallace (eds.), *Black Popular Culture: Discussions in Contemporary Culture* #8 (Seattle: The New Press and the Dia Center for the Arts, 1992), pp. 21–33 (p. 32).

for the camera and taken in continuous shooting mode. They were shot in the green screen studio to edit with different backgrounds, making use of post-production software to edit the footage sequence. Each ident reflects both the immediacy of the person's smartphone screen, providing a glimpse of the imagined conversations via instant messaging or the visual content of what she might be viewing, whilst evoking a sense of the character as she navigates the city. In other words, the ident at times reflects her screen content and at other times provides distance through the visualized sense of the character herself. The creation of a *mise-en-scène* for each character is established. Photographs of her possible urban surroundings are construed in order to imagine the character on the bus, on a pavement, on a train platform, in a coffee bar or pub/bar as Fig. 26.1 illustrates.

The ident entitled *Nana* (see Figs. 26.1–6) is written as an internal monologue of personal reflection. Nana is evoked as someone in reflexive refashioning mode, in a persistent performance of self-affirmation, or what Deborah Willis describes as a process of continuously creating a 'revised self-image.'⁶ A visual rendering of Nana in an animated sequence gives a sense of her, as well as instant text messaging to friends, glimpses of her viewing preferences for shopping, beauty tips, and online dating interests. The narrative appears on the screen as if the screen itself is an active smartphone in which material is being continuously shot, shared, posted and reflected upon. Emphasis is placed on the relationship between the visual content of interest to her, and herself imagined. In other words, Nana's ident actively reflects, as Tina Campt suggests, 'how black people image and how they imagine themselves.'⁷

6 Deborah Willis, 'The Sociologist's Eye: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Paris Exposition', in David Levering Lewis and Deborah Lewis (eds.), *A Small Nation of People: W.E.B. Du Bois & African American Portraits of Progress* (New York: The Library of Congress, Amistad, HarperCollins Publishers, 2003), pp. 51–78.

7 Tina M. Campt, *Image Matters: Archive, Photography and the African Diaspora in Europe* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012), p. 5.



Fig. 26.1 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Nana.
© Roshini Kempadoo.



Fig. 26.2 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Nana 01.
© Roshini Kempadoo.



Fig. 26.3 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Nana 05.
© Roshini Kempadoo.



Fig. 26.4 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Nana 11.
© Roshini Kempadoo.



Fig. 26.5 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Nana 09.
© Roshini Kempadoo.



Fig. 26.6 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Nana 07.
© Roshini Kempadoo.

The ident is concerned with the visual/textual language of the first person that allows the 'resonances to reverberate between the I and the we' as Alisa Lebow notes.⁸ A more complex subject position and perspective is construed in order to create and be:

'I see myself seeing myself,' I/i am [...] alluding to [...] the play of mirrors that defers to infinity the real subject and subverts the notion of an original 'I.' A writing *for* the people, *by* the people, and *from* the people is, literally, a multipolar reflecting reflection that remains free from the conditions of subjectivity and objectivity and yet reveals them both.⁹

Second Provocation

Her State of Emergency: Visual Registers of Violence

The ident projections created as *Face Up* are imagined senses of everyday urban spaces as networked and complex evocations of both embodied and symbolic identities. Set within the present, they register the scenescapes of London, the US and elsewhere, to engage with ways in which people of color make sense of, and are subjected to, the extreme and tragic narratives of violence, war, and the effects of migration. Necessarily then, the work is concerned with the state of emergency,¹⁰ that is, ways in which state and individual violence and racism are enacted on Black bodies as militarization, national counter-terrorist conditions and war-technology capabilities shape our daily lived experiences. Events and circumstances such as: the Grenfell Tower fire in London, June 2017 with an estimated 80 deaths and over 70 persons injured, with a total of 151 homes destroyed; the 22 refugee camps in Turkey, home to at least 217,000 displaced

8 Alisa Lebow (ed.), *The Cinema of Me: The Self and Subjectivity in First Person Documentary* (London and New York: Wall Flower Press and Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 2.

9 Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Women, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), p. 22.

10 Awam Amkpa, 'Introductions: Welcome — Black Portraiture{s}II', unpublished paper delivered at the conference 'Black Portraiture{s}II: Imaging the Black Body and Re-Staging Histories', Florence, 28–31 May 2015.

persons in 2014 (UNHCR); or the crossing by boat of trafficked persons (mostly travelling from North Africa and the Middle East) across the Mediterranean to Europe, having reached unprecedented levels (112,018 persons between 1 January to the end of July 2017) are examples of the violent conditions forced on Black folk.¹¹

Smartphone editing techniques are adopted and developed in the artwork *Face Up* to create the idents, transitioning from one photograph to another, one narration to another or a video to another. These are techniques we are very familiar with and they have been normalized as we engage with media and communicate using smartphones; they include swiping in order to view the next piece of media, sharing emoticons, expanding images, contracting and closing webpages, and seeing other functions and media on the screen, whether pulling up from the bottom or pulling down from the top. The active practice of viewing and engaging with material constitutes the artwork's aesthetic, format and movement. Smartphone technologies and social media are inextricably linked to the way in which newsworthy events — whether created as authenticated news items, half-truths on personal blogs, or evidence collected as personal data — are circulated and go viral immediately. Viral video footage already published and in circulation that has been posted and shared is also used to create the artwork. Central to this project, then, is the reappropriation and reuse of found and published imagery. Material that is already sourced, already in circulation, things that go viral are all at work here. I am reminded of Hito Steyerl's commentary about the ideological value of the 'poor image,' or Sean Cubitt noting the fascination with the spectacular, the bejewelled, finished, seamless post-produced high quality image.¹² In *Face Up*, I was drawn to create what I describe as unreconstructed imagery, appropriated from the familiar, the badly edited, the over-compressed, the poor quality. Fig. 26.3 for example, is a screenshot taken from the ident Nana as familiar found video

11 The UN Migration Agency: International Organisation for Migration, 'Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 112,018 in 2017; 2,361 Deaths', International Organisation for Migration, 2017, <https://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrant-arrivals-reach-112018-2017-2361-deaths>

12 See Hito Steyerl, 'In Defense of the Poor Image,' *e-flux*, 10 (November 2009), [n.p.]; Sean Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect* (Boston: The MIT Press, 2004).

footage, reappropriated and reused, of the brutal violence towards Shakara Murphy in 2015, the teenage student at Spring Valley High School, South Carolina, USA who was body-slammed by Ben Fields, the schools resource officer.¹³

Third Provocation

Her Narratives: Migration, Memory, and History

Making use of domestic photography including portraiture, self-portraits and family snapshots allows a focus on the photographic representation of women, which, as Gillian Rose and Campt point out, contain representations of gendered postures, visual displays of intimacy and power and an acknowledgement of the mobility of photographs.¹⁴ The smartphone then becomes a way of envisioning knowledge and a kind of sensory apparatus in which, as Donna Haraway proposes, the ‘topography of subjectivities is assumed to be “multidimensional.”’¹⁵ The starting point for the artworks is rooted in the city, reflecting my own experience as I travel across London, or else influenced by eavesdropping on other peoples’ partial conversations. Ear-wiggling, overhearing other peoples partial conversations, is the urban norm; so too is the daily routine of peering at your screen and that of others whilst moving through the city. These imagined narratives are based on overhearing, participating and overseeing on the move. This is a partial, situated, envisioned point of view of

13 Video detail: October 2015. There was an altercation at Spring Valley High School, South Carolina, in which Richland County Sheriff’s Deputy Ben Fields was caught on camera body-slaming a young female student. Shakara Murphy was placed in a chokehold, flipped over in her seat, then dragged and thrown across her classroom before being handcuffed by a South Carolina school officer. Niya Kenny and Shakara both faced misdemeanour charges at the time, which were later dropped. See newspaper article: Charlie Atkin, ‘Spring Valley High Assault: Sheriff Claims Video Shows Student “Punched” Officer’, *Independent*, 28 October 2015, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/spring-valley-high-assault-sheriff-claims-video-shows-student-punched-officer-a6711676.html>

14 Gillian Rose, *Doing Family Photography: The Domestic, the Public and the Politics of Sentiment* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

15 Donna Haraway, ‘The Persistence of Vision’, in Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.), *The Visual Culture Reader: Second Edition* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 678–84 (p. 681).

the lived experience of hearing and viewing the lives of others occurs through extended networked technology. I view and read between the lines, gleaning a minimal understanding of what has happened in a distant situation, or what the circumstances might be. The stories are based on a whim or hunch, imagining fictitious endings to narratives that continue without your presence and knowledge. Stories are started and in a sense neverending; they are fluid and nearly always contain what-if scenarios or what-happens-next potential endings.

Particularly pertinent to the ident video entitled *Deirdre* (Figs. 26.7–26.9) is the way in which the narrative is conceived as if we may be overhearing part of a conversation between London and elsewhere — Guyana, as it turns out.

Deirdre checks her hair using the laptop screen and switches her earplugs from the phone to the laptop. She is in her regular coffee bar near Regent Street around the corner from work, waiting for a Skype call. It is what she suspected [...] her cousin in Georgetown has got worse and needs medical treatment. Ordering another flat white, she downloads and forwards the visa forms, looks up airline tickets and checks her bank balance. Her credit card balance has maxed, but she has managed to reserve flights for her Aunt and cousin from Cheddi Jagan International to Gatwick on the new one.¹⁶

The internal monologue appearing on the screen in quick succession is soon replaced by a *half-conversation*, that is, hearing or rather reading on the screen Deirdre's part of the conversation she is having with her cousin in Georgetown, Guyana on skype. The silent, visual, written narrative unfolds in the form of a conversation to reveal a deep familiarity with, and the commonality of, the diasporic experience, familial economics and the historical trajectory of Black labouring women's bodies as integral to sustaining the public health service in the UK.

16 Author extract from the character description for *Face Up*.

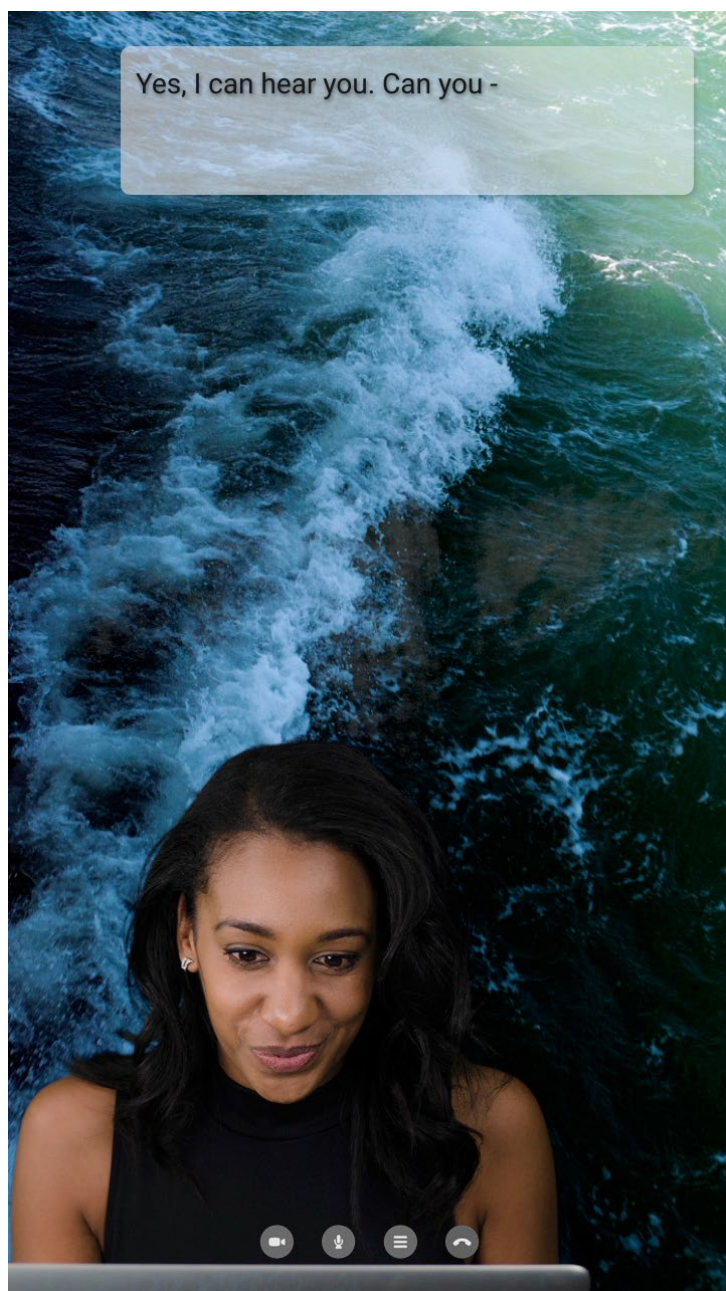


Fig. 26.7 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork *Face Up*, 2015. Deirdre 04.
© Roshini Kempadoo.



Fig. 26.8 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork 'Face Up', 2015.
Deirdre 05 © Roshini Kempadoo.

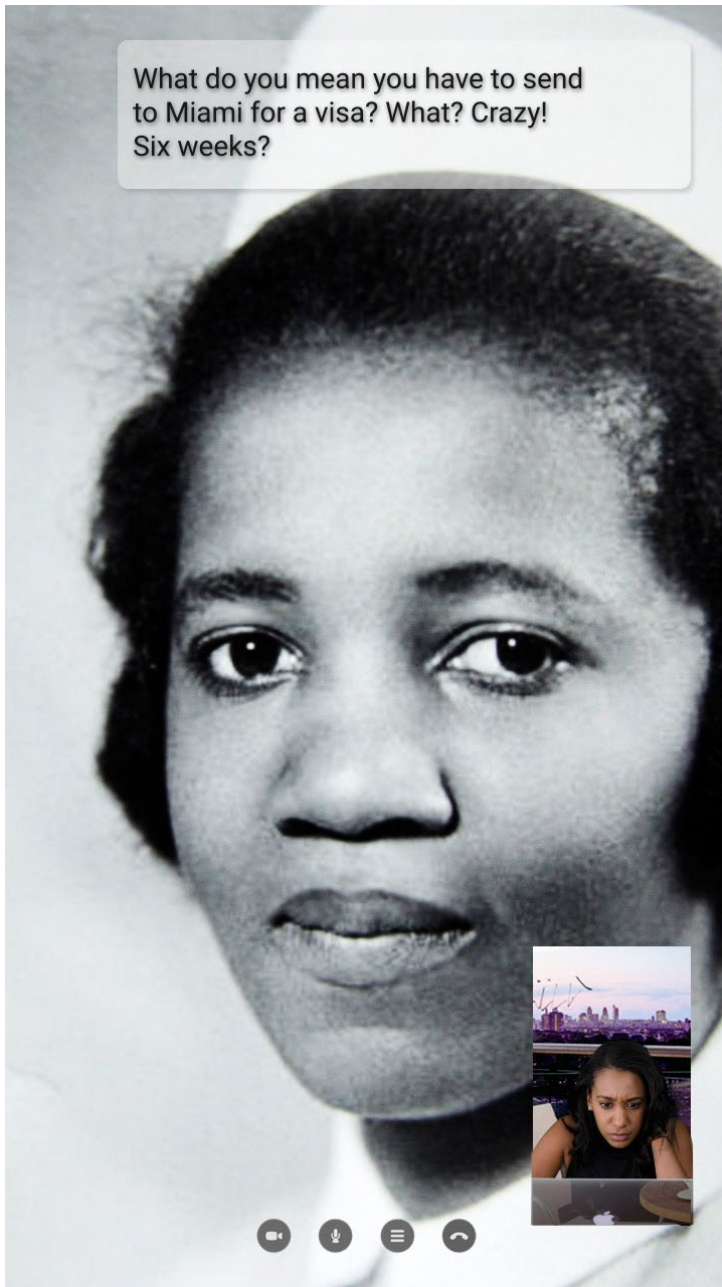


Fig. 26.9 Roshini Kempadoo, Screen still from the artwork 'Face Up', 2015.
Deirdre 06 © Roshini Kempadoo.

As we experience the swipe, cascade and enlargement of published photographs and news items across the screen, Deirdre's ident video references the contemporary politics of the current UK government as it sets about privatizing the health care system, subjecting it to corporate law and financial markets conceived as '[...] being merely descriptive of an ideal state of nature.'¹⁷ The state-funded National Health Service (NHS) Stuart Hall, Doreen Massey and Mike Rustin note, was the biggest civil and social project associated with the postwar years, with migration at the heart of its success. Referenced too is the Windrush generation of the late 1940s and 1950s, my parents' generation (see Fig. 26.4), who formed the first significant mass-migration of Caribbean persons to Europe, encouraged and recruited to migrate to the UK to become NHS health workers and settle as British citizens.

Deirdre's narrative indicates the near and far through in-text references and photographs. These include references to time difference, UK visa restrictions (particularly onerous for persons travelling to the UK with less money and living in a British ex-colony), images of Caribbean landscapes and architecture juxtaposed with London street scenes, hospital architecture and ambulances. The ident video focuses on the contested scenario that is so central to our precarious existence in relation to health, and the welfare and safety of our families, extended friendships, or other persons we would feel compelled (and want) to help. My imperative to create *Face Up* is a '[...] reorganizing aesthetic experience, [in which] [...] artworks compel us to transition from recognizing the self's fundamental social being to considering its ethico-political imperatives,' as T. J. Demos notes.¹⁸

17 Stuart Hall, Doreen Massey and Michael Rustin, 'Framing Statement — after Neoliberalism: Analysing the Present', in Stuart Hall and Michael Rustin Doreen Massey (eds.), *After Neoliberalism? The Kilburn Manifesto* (London: Lawrence & Wishart: Soundings Collections, 2013), pp. 9–23 (p. 10).

18 T. J. Demos, 'Being Political/2010 (First Published in Deutsche Guggenheim Magazine, No.12 (Summer 2010) 8–13', in Ian Farr (ed.), *Memory: Documents of Contemporary Art* (London and Cambridge, MA: Whitechapel Gallery and MIT Press, 2012), pp. 216–19 (p. 219).

Conclusion

Face Up is concerned with engendering perspectives in which the self is conceived as social. Its reorganizing visual strategy is to appropriate and extend smartphone aesthetics, with their highly active and sensory networked environment, interface and normalized tendencies to encourage movement, transition and change. My idea has been to develop an aesthetic of intimacy about families and our everyday lived experience, which is concerned with pressing political perspectives. The idents are of imagined narratives and appear as glimpses of possible personal experiences as each imagined woman shares, likes, comments on, and gains knowledge about herself and others through a mediated space. They are created to develop different aesthetics and concepts that may presumed to be theories in the flesh as proposed by Cherrie Moraga.¹⁹ That is a feminist view of the world that does not advocate turning away from, but toward, the bodies of women of colour as a project of emotional investment and support.

19 Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back, Fourth Edition: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1981; New York: Suny Press, 2015).

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Chapter 25

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Women and Migration

Responses in Art and History

EDITED BY DEBORAH WILLIS, ELLYN TOSCANO
AND KALIA BROOKS NELSON

The essays in this book chart how women's profound and turbulent experiences of migration have been articulated in writing, photography, art and film. As a whole, the volume gives an impression of a wide range of migratory events from women's perspectives, covering the Caribbean Diaspora, refugees and slavery through the various lenses of politics and war, love and family.

The contributors, which include academics and artists, offer both personal and critical points of view on the artistic and historical repositories of these experiences. Selfies, motherhood, violence and Hollywood all feature in this substantial treasure-trove of women's joy and suffering, disaster and delight, place, memory and identity.

This collection appeals to artists and scholars of the humanities, particularly within the social sciences; though there is much to recommend it to creatives seeking inspiration or counsel on the issue of migratory experiences. As with all Open Book publications, this entire book is available to read for free on the publisher's website. Printed and digital editions, together with supplementary digital material, can also be found here:

www.openbookpublishers.com

Cover image: Sama Alshaibi, Sabkhat al-Milh (Salt Flats) 2014, from the "Silsila" series, Chromogenic print mounted on Diasec, 47 in. diameter. Courtesy of the artist and Ayyam Gallery.

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