THE DISCOMFORT OF WOR-KING DECOLONIALLY

THE GENESIS OF THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL AT THE BERLIN GLOBAL VILLAGE



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FOREWORD BY MINISTER OF STATE CLAUDIA ROTH FOR THE PUBLICATION ON THE "DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL"

PATRON OF THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL PROJECT



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Claudia Roth at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

First and foremost: My heartfelt thanks and great respect to everyone who made this project possible, who worked for many months on the idea and realization of the "Decolonial Memorial", as well as its extensive accompanying outreach and educational program! Thanks to the Berlin One World Center "Berlin Global Village e.V.", the jury, the contributors to the symposium, and last but not least, the numerous artists who submitted their designs and ideas for this memorial from around the world.

The "Decolonial Memorial" is no end in itself. It is much more than just a memorial. It initiates awareness processes and is accompanied by an extensive outreach and educational program. I wholeheartedly congratulate the winning artistic team with the outstanding design "EarthNest"! Placed in front of the entrance at Berlin Global Village, the open, bronze nest invites intercultural encounters and encourages a communal engagement with the colonial past and its resulting consequences for the present – not just on a surface level, but in the truest sense of the word, also beneath the surface. For far too long, concerning colonialism there has been a blank spot in our memory culture. We need to make the invisible visible and grow from it, and we need to decolonize our thinking, our language, and, last but not least, raise the awareness of places connected to this subject matter.

So far, there are hardly any such spaces, but now the Berlin One World Center offers such a space – and through its artistic perspective, it can reach a whole new and diverse audience. Art does touch all of us. As a "transporter" of history and its consequences, it sensitizes, provokes and motivates us! Exactly that is why I am very pleased to have become a patron of the "Decolonial Memorial". Exactly that is why I co-financed this important project from the federal cultural budget.

FOREWORD BY BERLIN SENATOR FOR CULTURE AND SOCIAL COHESION, JOE CHIALO

PATRON OF THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL PROJECT



Photo: Hans-Christian Plambeck

Joe Chialo
Berlin Senator for Culture and Social Cohesion

Memory needs spaces. As the former capital of the German Reich, Berlin was the political center of German colonial rule. There are many places in Berlin where Germany's colonial past can be examined and experienced through civic engagement.

As part of Berlin's decentralized memorial landscape, the Decolonial Memorial on the grounds of Berlin's Kindl-Brauerei is a new, important site for addressing German colonial history. Unlike memorial and informational plaques, the potential for aesthetic engagement with German colonialism and its consequences can be explored and tested here.

The very process of designing the memorial has involved exploring new paths toward a decolonial memory practice and thereby contributed to the development of a decolonial aesthetic in public space. The EarthNest design by international artist group The Lockward Collective was chosen and realized through a global art competition that included Communities of Color as well as artists from the Global South. It is a work of art that takes a standpoint opposite that of the colonial approach to memorialization characteristic of the 19th century and creates space for remembrance, coming together, diversity, and insight.

The Decolonial Memorial that has been created here at Berlin Global Village picks up on the connection between German colonialism and development aid as one aspect of colonial history and its effects in the present. It brings with it the opportunity to create a vibrant space where global justice, acceptance of diversity, and a variety of perspectives can be debated and disseminated—helping to develop the conditions for social cohesion and enabling the emergence of a shared space of global learning and dialogue.

ART FOR A MORE JUST FUTURE

THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL AT BERLIN GLOBAL VILLAGE

Armin Massing Managing Director of Berlin Global Village



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing attended the second jury meeting as an expert

As is so often the case when someone dares to do something genuinely new, at first, we did not really understand what we had gotten ourselves into with the Decolonial Memorial project. The process: an international, two-stage, anonymized art competition. The budget: €750,000 for the realization of the artists' project; €750,000 for the competitive process and a comprehensive education, outreach, and public relations program. Precedents: none. Not in Berlin, not internationally. Motivation: high. Learning curve: steep. Challenges: far more than anticipated.

Now, at the completion of the project, we can say it was worth all the work. We feel deeply grateful to all the people who brought their ideas, time, vigor, and expertise to the process for a Decolonial Memorial at Berlin Global Village.

Now standing between the two buildings of Berlin Global Village: the EarthNest by The Lockward Collective. The artists describe it as "a work of decolonial healing, a communal temple that brings communities together to reclaim their history" and "a living monument that honors and preserves the memories of our ancestors and dreams of a world where many worlds can flourish." We are happy that, after lengthy discussions, the international expert jury chose this particular work. It fits extremely well with Berlin Global Village and its community-based, future-oriented approach.

Why is Berlin Global Village engaging in a project like this at all? Berlin Global Village is the place in Berlin where development, migrant, and diasporic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) collaborate on various issues related to global justice, sustainability, and diversity. By the time it finally opened in 2022, the NGOs had been working together for over ten years to establish the center. Decolonization was always an important subject in that process: without it, equitable global development is inconceivable.

This focus on overcoming colonial and racist structures is meant to be lasting in the long term—and at the same time, the combination of an artwork with a comprehensive outreach program has the potential to communicate much more broadly with and within different social groups than would otherwise be the case.

The memorial engages with colonialism as an essential basis of Global North-South relations in a way that draws on the power of art whilst engaging in a decolonial perspective. With the installation of the work in a public space, the intention is to foster a process that encourages decolonial consciousness. To that end, the project was also supported by innovative public relations work. The Decolonial Memorial marks Berlin Global Village as a site of reflection on and action towards decolonization for both Berliners and international actors.

It does this against a background of a blank space: the absence of the history and con-



Photo: Sedat Mehde

Armin Massing and Molly Stenzel (Deputy Managing Director Berlin Global Village) at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing and Angelina Jellesen at the opening of the EarthNest

temporary significance of colonialism as a subject in German museums, schools, public space, and political debates. By contrast, the Decolonial Memorial distinguishes itself by creating and marking a space for discussion and learning, informed by expertise and pedagogical approaches to issues of global learning. Here, questions about contemporary power relations and their historical origins are raised.

The Decolonial Memorial project serves as a model in Berlin and beyond. It found new ways of making colonial history visible as an important aspect of the city's transnational



Photo: Sedat Mehder

From left to right: Jury member Gary Stewart, Armin Massing, Elfriede Müller and Michaela Zischek celebrate the first jury decision

past and present, in both substance and methodology, in particular by making the presence of migrant and diasporic perspectives the memorial's focus.

People and groups concerning themselves with or who are particularly affected by colonialism and its historical and present-day repercussions are important actors and audiences. This should go without saying-but in the German context it rarely does. Now, located in the courtyard in front of Berlin Global Village, the Decolonial Memorial is accessible to the public, and, as an intervention in public space, it is aimed at a wide spectrum of visitors interested in municipal and cultural history and politics. The work invites the broadest possible audience, regardless of age, origin, education, or place of residence thus Berliners as well as tourists — to visit the grounds and grapple with the subject matter. In terms of its aesthetic realization, the character of the announced artwork was uncharted territory when it came to rendering decolonial aesthetics in public space. In cooperation with artists around the world, the tender process explored the possibilities of a decolonial aesthetic in the present historical moment. The 244 submissions from artists across the globe demonstrated and brought



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Claudia Roth and Armin Massing in conversation at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

together an incredible abundance of ideas and approaches. We invite everyone to browse the project website and engage with the many inspiring proposals. They represent a real wealth of stimulating perspectives and contributions to the debate.

It was important to us to have the broadest possible support for the Decolonial Memorial, including in political terms. We are pleased to have achieved that. The patrons of the Deco-Ionial Memorial are Federal Commissioner for Culture and Media, Claudia Roth (the Greens), and Joe Chialo (CDU), Berlin Senator for Culture and Social Cohesion. We are incredibly pleased to have the support of both. It highlights the Decolonial Memorial's importance and public profile as an art project that contributes to culture of remembrance in a way that is unprecedented, in Berlin, Germany, or abroad. The district of Neukölln has also supported the project wherever it could. District Council Member for Culture Karin Korte

(SPD) participated as an expert in both jury meetings and the exhibition of the 20 finalists' designs for the Decolonial Memorial at Museum Neukölln. We believe that this support across party lines and all levels of government is crucially important. Engagement with decolonization by society as a whole is still our declared position. There is still a lot to do to install decolonization in a truly sustainable and plural way.

The unexamined history of colonial violence leads to systemic racism up to the present day. It can only be dismantled when there is comprehensive social engagement with colonialism and coloniality.

In her poem die farbe der macht ("the color of power"), Afro-German poet, scholar, and activist May Ayim got to the heart of the practical implications in the way that society in general has thus far refused that engagement:

nicht die farbe der haut die farbe der macht entscheidet für oder gegen das leben

not the color of the skin the color of power decides for or against life

May Ayim, from her collection nachtgesang (1996)

Now that the project is complete, we at Berlin Global Village would like to sincerely thank the many partners without whom this project would not have been possible. They are introduced at length in the publication that follows, with some of them presenting themselves in their own words.

Even now, we are impressed by the extent of the response that we have already been able to provoke with the Decolonial Memorial. Over 240 submissions from artists around the world is a particularly high number for an art competition. All the events throughout the course of the project were very

well attended, sometimes to the point of overflowing. We hope that in the ongoing education and discussion program we will be able to translate this interest into productive engagement with the subject on the part of society more broadly. The EarthNest, with its concept of a "living memorial," is extremely well suited for that. That matches our original intention: to commission a decolonial artwork that contributes to art for an equitable and just future.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing and Johara Sarhan at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

FOREWORD

DECOLONIAL ART AND A MULTIDIRECTIONAL CULTURE OF MEMORY

THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL: NEW, DIVERSE NARRATIVES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Which histories are commemorated? This is one of the central social and political questions of the 21st century. Berlin Global Village only was able to align this competition along the lines of a multidirectional, decolonial culture of memory based on the perspective of civil society because of longer, historical processes crucially important to be acknowledged here:

The Decolonial Memorial is situated within a tradition of resistance against German colonization.

This anti-colonial resistance was carried out specifically by People of African Descent (PAD), and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPoCs) across the world.

In the 1980s, the New Black German Movement (Neue Schwarze Deutsche Bewegung) continued this tradition (ADEFRA e.V., ISD-Bund e.V. since 1986). Federal meetings of the Initiative of Black People in Germany/ISD-Bund e.V. (Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland) are taking place for nearly 40 years. Black History Month Berlin (1990–1998) was a collaboration of African organizations and Black Gls, leading to the establishment

and support of alternative literary, media, artistic, and academic cultures of knowledge.

This brought together anti-colonial resistance against apartheid in Africa, Asia, South America, and Australia, the USA, England, and France, and resistance against the racist neo-pogroms occurring in reunified Germany (early 1990s).

Self-organized refugee groups such as "Karawane" and "The Voice" drew attention to the genocides in Namibia and Tanzania and fought against deportations and Residenz-pflicht (the restrictive regulation of refugees' places of residence and freedom of movement within Germany (1998).

Following the World Conference Against Racism (Durban, 2001), the Black Media Congress Berlin was established as tool for digital literacy (2001–2004).

The May Ayim Award (2004) initiated as a German UNESCO project to commemorate the trade of enslaved people (2004) was the first Black international German literature competition.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michael Küppers-Adebisi, member of the jury



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Adetoun and Michael Küppers-Adebisi at the exhibtion opening of the 20 final designs

Since 2006, the Komitee für ein Afrikanisches Denkmal in Berlin (Committee for an African Monument in Berlin / KADiB) organized annual marches in support of a national monument.

In the field of art, important groundwork was laid by SAVVY Contemporary (since 2009), Black Europe Body Politics BE.BOP (2012–2018), Each One Teach One (since 2012), and the Black Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art and Discourse (since 2012). Alliances of Black and white NGOs around the Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag e.V. organized Berlins' first decolonial street renaming and founded Berlin Global Village e.V. (2011).

Additionally, these alliances have drawn attention to inhumane collecting practices through campaigns such as "No Amnesty on Genocide" and "No Humboldt 21", which established decolonial provenance research as standard for archives and museums and initiated the return of human remains and artifacts.

Since 2019, Decolonize Berlin and Dekoloniale established decolonial civil society structures, applying both local and global perspectives to colonial legacies in history, culture, and the present day.

The Decolonial Memorial creates a space for reflection and remembering centering around collaborative approaches to development and a dialogical knowledge exchange, focusing on empowering affected communities.

The flagship project is based on civil society and will inspire urgently needed follow-up

projects in other cities and a highly necessary national Decolonial Monument in the capital city of Berlin. This step towards overcoming one-dimensional historical narratives, allows for spaces of cultures of remembering and diversity as a key value of the 21st century.

FOREWORD

FOUR YEARS EARLIER

FROM IDEA TO PROJECT

How does one visualize history and the process of decolonization? How do you remind yourself that there can be no global justice without decolonization?

These questions were posed by Michael Küppers-Adebisi (Diversity Advisor at Berlin Global Village at the time) and Armin Massing (Managing Director of Berlin Global Village) in the spring of 2019. The Berlin Global Village, which today houses 50 development and migrant-diasporal organizations and initiatives, was still in the planning stages. Today, the new Berlin Global Village consists of a renovated Altbau and a newly constructed building, linked together by a spacious foyer.

Michael Küppers-Adebisi suggested using this courtyard for an artistic intervention on the topic of decolonization. The intention was to commission an artwork that would generate questions without providing answers while also provoking dialogue by offering opportunities for insight and remembrance.

By deciding on a memorial rather than a monument, the Berlin Global Village aimed to create a visible symbol that would provide a starting point for an active and vibrant interaction. Consequently, it is enriched with continuing educational and outreach programs concerning the topic of decolonization.

From Idea to Project Application

The idea was approved by the board members (now the shareholders) of the Berlin Global Village: Akinola Famson (Afrikarat Berlin-Brandenburg e.V.), Maimouna Ouattara (moveGLOBAL e.V.), and Sylvia Werther (Berliner Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag, BER e.V.) in Summer 2019. With this support, Armin Massing and Michael Küppers-Adebisi set about making the idea of a Decolonial Memorial a reality. Michael Küppers-Adebisi drew on his network and expertise in the art world, while Armin Massing contributed his comprehensive experience in politics and government funding.

At the time, the erection of the new building had just begun, and the renovation of the Altbau had entered the intense planning phase;

in late summer 2019, the capacities of the team of the Berlin Global Village already exhausted—the team was just too small to realize such a grand project. Still, it was clear that the process of securing funding for the Deco-Ionial Memorial would take time and thus had to be initiated as quickly as possible. The Berlin Global Village renovation was scheduled to be completed by 2021, and while the new building was finished on time, the completion of the old building was delayed until 2022. In 2020, Armin Massing began to approach relevant politicians to spark interest in a Decolonial Memorial. Soon important reinforcement was found: The constituency representative, member of the Bundestag for the district of Neukölln, at the time Dr. Fritz Felgentreu (SPD), shared the enthusiasm. He made sure that the financial support for the Decolonial Memorial was installed in the federal budget of 2020.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Sylvia Werther, Maimouna Ouattara and Akinola Famson (shareholder representatives of the Berlin Global Village) at the second jury meeting

In addition to the political commitment, there was also support from prominent people such as Shermin Langhoff, director of the Maxim Gorki Theater, Thomas Krüger, president of the Federal Agency for Civic Education, and Lanna Idriss, then managing director of Amnesty International Germany. This support was enormously helpful during the first phase of lobbying for the project, since at that time Berlin Global Village had yet to become active in the world of cultural policy. Furthermore, Elfriede Müller, Head of the Office for Art in Public Space of the bbk berlin, supported the project from its initial stages with actions and advice.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Tahir Della and Óscar Ardila in the audience at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

Beyond the challenges involved in securing funding, the Decolonial Memorial team also had to take into account important conceptual considerations that would be important for the project's success. The project aimed at stimulating critical thought and discussion about colonialism and posed questions about the complexities of decolonization.

Most of the work around decolonization and anti-racism is achieved and realized by Black or migrant-diasporal organizations. The Decolonial Memorial was meant to be part of these existing efforts and discussions. The Decolonial Memorial was not to be seen as competition to the efforts of Berlin's Black civil society, nor the central memorial for the victims of colonialism, racism, and the slave trade proposed for Berlin's Mitte district—analogous to the Holocaust Memorial, among others, close to the Bundestag.

Thus, a circle of supporters was formed with eight Black and migrant-diasporal organizations. These have a symbolic ownership of the Decolonial Memorial. It was important to the project team to point to the work done by others over previous decades, work that was to prove critical for the success of the Decolonial Memorial project.

The Berlin Global Village sees the Decolonial Memorial as a necessary step towards something bigger—like creating a central, national memorial—and views Neukölln as appropriate. Neukölln possesses numerous links to Berlin's colonial past, such as the Hererostein at the Garnisionsfriedhof and the Lucy-Lameck-Straße, the renamed, former Wissmannstraße. Neukölln's district government, from the initial stages, has been very committed, particularly Karin Korte, District Councilor for Culture, has advocated for it tirelessly and, later, partook in every jury session as expert advisor.

In December 2020, it became clear that Berlin Global Village would in fact receive half of the project budget. A major success: the Decolonial Memorial was to receive €750,000 in financial support from the German government, on the condition that the remaining 50 percent would be drawn from another source of funding. The search for additional funding opportunities continued. The application to the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin (German Lottery Foundation) in April 2021, which had appeared promising, was rejected in October 2021, despite the support across party lines.

That was a heavy blow for the project and sparked renewed lobbying efforts. The German government's offer to supply 50 percent of the funding was only guaranteed for two years, after which it would lapse. The follo-

wing years, 2021 and 2022, were devoted to intense lobbying at the state and district levels. Support came above all from Berlin's Senator for Culture Klaus Lederer (Die Linke), Senator for Senator for Finance Daniel Wesener (The Greens), from the SPD, as well as Finance Daniel Wesener (The Greens), from the SPD, as well as Tamara Lüdke, the SPD's spokesperson on development policy in the House of Representatives, special district representatives for Neukölln. It was clear that the federal state of Berlin would have to step in, since no other funding body, foundation, or organization in Germany would be able to provide funding at this scale for a project on the topic of decolonization. A means of holding onto the federal funding needed to be secured. It was true that the Decolonial Memorial had been discussed during the negotiations over the 2022 budget, but it nonetheless remained unclear for a long time whether it would be possible to secure a dedicated budget item. The Berlin Global Village had to ensure the funding from the federal government by matching it with federal state funds.

Armin Massing approached everybody—regardless of administrative level—who might possibly be willing to support the Decolonial

Memorial. This was a novelty for Berlin Global Village, but the strategy paid off, getting this unusual and very ambitious project rolling. After two years of intense lobbying at the state level, the work bore fruit. The state of Berlin approved half the funding, €750,000, from the cultural budget.

First Steps Towards Realization

With funding finally secured, the project now had to be realized. The initial estimates as to what a project of this kind might realistically cost were crucial, since the Decolonial Memorial was to involve not only an art competition and its realization but also a major education and outreach program.

With the Decolonial Memorial, Berlin Global Village was venturing into uncharted territory in numerous aspects. Now the task was to see how the funding that was being provided could be structured. In light of federal and state legal provisions and planning laws, the funding streams were divided up: everything concerning the competition, education and outreach, and the jury procedures was assigned to the funding from the German Federation (Beauftragte der Bundesregierung



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Tamara Lüdke (Berlin House of Representatives), Armin Massing and Alexander Schudy (BER e.V.) at the BGVestival

für Kultur und Medien), whilst at the same time understanding that the artwork would be a state matter. There were no blueprints for the endeavor. Solidification was prepared in the winter of 2022; the project application was submitted to the Ministry for Culture and the Media in January 2023.

From then on, everything took place under immense time pressure, given that realization was planned for 2024. Approval for early commencement was received on March 1, 2023, enabling the project to start on the exact same day. Such authorization comes with a certain risk: project staff are hired, and the work begins even before the official grant notification is received. Notwithstanding the risk, the project absolutely had to commence so as to ensure that the competition phase of the contest could be finalized by January 2024 and the schedule for the realization of the artwork by the end of that year would be kept.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Karin Korte and Dorothee Bienert at the second jury meeting

The call for submissions to the art competition was published in March 2023. The project team began by asking how the project's structures could be designed in such a way that they would reflect a decolonial disposition, rather than simply benefit established structures. The attempt was made to create as many additional modes of access as possible, to make increased use of oral and visual traditions of communication, and to make use of established structures in the Global North. The call for submissions was translated into five languages (German, English, French, Spanish, and Kiswahili), and the video by

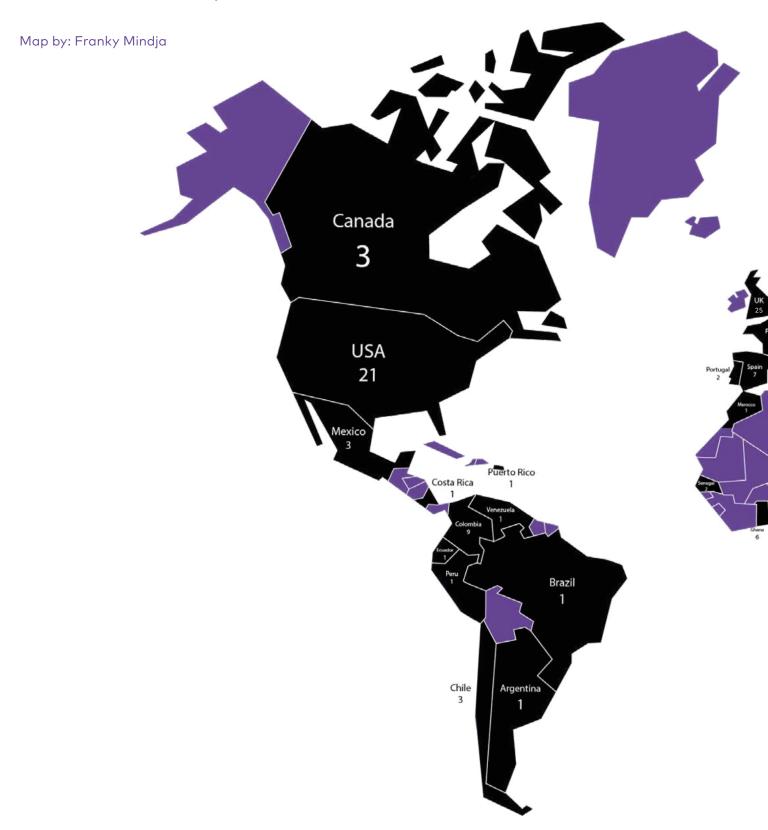
young Afro-German filmmaker Joshua Kantara of Kantara Productions was distributed internationally via social media, especially in regions that were once under German colonial rule. On Facebook alone, the video received around 1.5 million views.

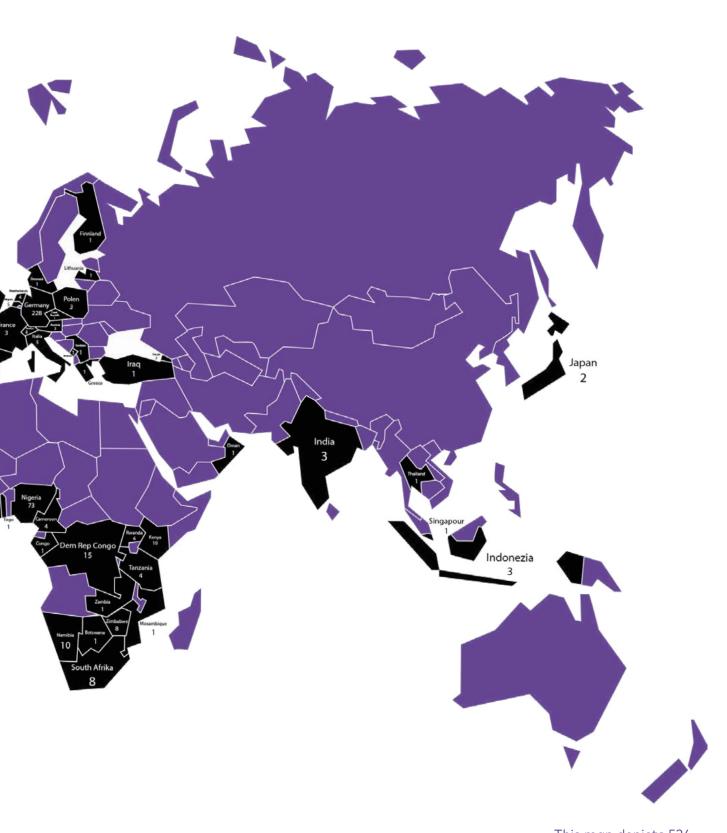
The call was also distributed via the The Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste (IGBK), which is connected to all national artists' associations worldwide. Since it was a global art competition with two phases, something that had never been done in Germany before, there would have to be two competition languages, German and English. Due to limited budgeting, further languages could not be offered.

After a long and exciting process, the labor of persuasion ultimately succeeded. The project gained support, visibility, and approval in the political field and grew with every challenge. Following this historical synopsis of the project, the next section will provide details as to the parameters and legal provisions under which the art competition was realized.

REGISTRATIONS

671 registrations were turned in to the art competition





This map depicts 524 admitted registrations





TRANSPARENT PROCESSES, CLEAR GUIDELINES

THE RULES AND FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS OF THE ART COMPETITION TENDER



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elfriede Müller, Stefan Krüskemper and Katinka Theiss at the first jury meeting

After intensive lobbying at both federal and state levels, the Berlin Global Village secured the necessary funding for the project. This support enabled the Berlin Global Village to host a major art contest. Compliance with procurement rules [Vergaberecht] ensures the economical and efficient use of public funds, equal treatment and non-discrimination, as well as transparency and equity within the competition. The procedures outlined in the "Guidelines for Art in Architecture and Public Space for the State of Berlin" [Leitfaden Kunst am Bau und Kunst im Stadtraum für das Land Berlin] were used as a starting point for the design of an international, anonymous, two-stage contest for the Decolonial Memorial.

The project was divided into two parts, due to funding from two different sources (federal and state): the contest as well as the support and educational program were funded by the Federal Government through the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM) with €750,000. For the construction of the artwork an additional €750,000 were provided by the state of Berlin through the Senate Department for Culture and Social Cohesion (SenKultGZ).

To warrant the substantial amount of taxpayer funding and the expectations attached to it, the contest had to meet the following standards: anonymity, an open call for submissions, and a two-step process. Additionally, the

Berlin Global Village insisted on promoting the art contest and making it internationally accessible. For this reason, English was added to the project language alongside German. Part of the project's goal was to involve the public in the process of creating the artwork and to keep them informed about the project's progress. To this end, the project team was obliged to plan public events, to actively engage different audiences, and make the project's progress transparent.





Photo: Sedat Mehde

Interpreters Laura Appeltshauser and Serra Al-Deen translated the jury meetings and all the larger events of the project

To meet the requirements, the project team sought the assistance of external coordinators to manage the contest itself. They also ensured that the Berlin Global Village, as the sponsor, had no direct contact with the applicants in order to maintain anonymity. Any communication between the project team and the submitting participants had to take place through the external coordination team, with the warning that direct contact would result in the exclusion of the participants from the art contest.

Special attention was given to the international request for submissions, aiming to reach communities in the Global South. A particular emphasis was placed on informing and encouraging artists from former German colonies

ART COMPETITION

to participate. The call for submissions clearly stated that only artists could participate, to prevent commercially oriented companies from taking advantage over less profit-driven artists.

The specifications for the artwork were purely organizational in nature. Perspective, style, medium, and subject were left entirely to the artists. The resulting heterogeneity of designs proved to be both a blessing and a challenge. The decision on the artwork to be realized as a "Decolonial Memorial" on the premises of the Berlin Global Village was made by a committee of experts.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Joshua Kantara and Khalifa (both Kantara Productions) shooting the documentary on the Decolonial Memorial

An extensive promotional campaign was launched for the global art contest, providing low-barrier access to registration. Promotional materials were published in five languages, and a promotional video as call for submissions was created to use visual means to encourage participation. This approach proved to be very successful: A total of 671 individual artists and art collectives registered.

In the first phase, all properly registered participants were asked to submit an artistic idea in the form of a sketch and conceptual considerations. Initially, there was no expectation of mature designs or technical details. Only the idea, medium, and theme were to be clearly communicated. Twenty of these ideas were selected for a second phase. Based on these ideas, the twenty selected artists were



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen (Project Manager Decolonial Memorial) at the EarthNest construction site in front of the Berlin Global Village

asked to anchor the initial ideas into a production reality. Over the course of four months, the initial artwork was to be developed into detailed designs for realization. The artists all received compensation to make this possible. The revised project presentations were again presented to the jury to determine the Decolonial Memorial.

The tender of the art contest was handled anonymously. Neither the jury nor the Berlin Global Village as the sponsor were informed about the origin or identity of the participants until the decision was made. To ensure anonymity, the project team worked with external coordinators Óscar Mauricio Ardila Luna and Stefan Krüskemper, who specialize in public art contests.

Without the support of the external coordination team, including Elfriede Müller, Katinka Theis, and Salwa Aleryani, performing many crucial tasks throughout the process, the contest would not have been possible.

MANY HANDS...

MILESTONES AND PARTNERS OF THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL PROJECT

Once the funding had been secured, the workload for the Decolonial Memorial grew exponentially. As the project sponsor, the Berlin Global Village assembled a team to implement and coordinate the contest, the supporting and educational program, and the realization of the artwork. Now, the first milestones had to be met under time pressure. This included preparing tender notes, disseminating registration information, and ensuring that the infrastructure could handle a flood of digital registrations. Since the project began in March 2023 and registration closed on May 7, 2023, campaigns had to be executed quickly to engage both local and global networks. Yet the effort and hard work paid off: successfully, the project was able to register 671 applications for the tender. While the external coordination team was busy reviewing, approving, and sending out tender notes, the project team began building the infrastructure. During the summer, with the help of the agency HENKEL-HIEDL, the project team not only created a corporate identity for the Decolonial Memorial but also published an informational and promotional brochure. This brochure displayed the project's progress as well as the vision and environment in which the Decolonial Memorial would emerge.

Transparency of processes was a central concern from the inception of the project. The creation of the memorial not only had to adhere to transparency to meet the requirements for projects public funding but also to document the creation of such a memorial and, above all, render the project replicable. The project website too is intended to provide this information permanently. This posed a challenge for both the project team and the programming team led by Philipp Zedler.

Fall also proved to be eventful. The first jury meeting followed fast in September, as well as the symposium in October. Between processing invoices and continuously working on the website, the final jury meeting in January and the announcement of the winners of the tender had to be prepared. In the midst of contract negotiations and exhibition preparations, the project team continued to welcome visitors as people and organizations voiced interest in the project's work.

With the new year 2024, the Blackademy e.V. started development of the education program. Once the concept had been drawn and the education material drafted, the modules were field-tested with the appropriate age groups, adjusted, and then prepared to be made available. These education materials can be downloaded for free from the project's website. Interactive modules tailored to the WeltRaum, the digital and analog learning space of the Epiz Association (Epiz e.V.), are also available there.

The construction work for the EarthNest finally began with the start of the summer holidays in July 2024. The completion of the construction had to be celebrated, of course. The opening ceremony took place on November 14th, 2024, on the eve of the 14Oth anniversary of the start of the Berlin Conference. As 2024 drew to a close, the project also concluded. Therefore, this publication serves as a report on the efforts made, just as the previously active website will serve as an archive for the efforts of the project Decolonial Memorial.

Introduction of the project team

The Berlin Global Village Decolonial Memorial project team was able to draw on the expertise of the following individuals:





Armin Massing Executive Director, Berlin Global Village

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing studied history, philosophy, and public law in Freiburg and Madrid. He worked for various newspapers and magazines as a journalist. As a consultant and executive director of the Berlin Development Policy Council (Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag e.V.) (2004 to 2013), he coordinated various decolonial alliances (including No Amnesty on Genocide) and was instrumental in the first decolonial street renaming in Berlin (May-Ayim-Ufer, 2009). Armin Massing was a policy advisor and executive director of the Forum Fair Trade Association (Forum Fairer Handel

e.V.) from 2013 to 2016. He has been dedicated to expanding Berlin Global Village as its executive director since 2017. Armin Massing has been involved in the development of the Decolonial Memorial project from the very beginning, has led the communication with political decision-makers for funding, and has been responsible for the funding applications. Since the beginning of the project, he has been actively involved in the operational management of the project activities and has participated as an expert in the jury meetings.



Angelina Jellesen Project Manager, Decolonial Memorial

Angelina Jellesen received her master's degree in American Studies from the Obama Institute for Transnational American Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University. She also holds a master's degree in film studies from the University of Mainz. Her academic work focuses on pluralistic historical narratives and ideological criticism. Her focus is on propaganda studies in time-based audiovisual media. Since her arrival in Berlin, she has been professionally involved in project work within Black political civil society. Here, she worked for the Africa Council Berlin-Brandenburg Association (Afrika-Rat Berlin Brandenburg Ass

Photo: Michaela Zischek

denburg e.V.), Decolonize Berlin Association (e.V.), and the Central Council of the African Community in Germany Association (ZAGD e.V.). As a volunteer, she organizes lectures, film screenings, and critical discussions during Black History Month in Berlin (ISD Berlin) and Mainz (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Mainz). She is also active in the African Network for Education and Entertainment Association (ANEE e.V.) and has been involved with the Nippon Connection Association (Nippon Connection e.V.) in the past. As Project Manager for the Decolonial Memorial, she made anything and everything her business.

Michaela Zischek Public Relations and Social Media Officer, Berlin Global Village

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michaela Zischek studied political science and communications in Augsburg and Oslo and worked for several years as a PR consultant for political communications in Berlin advertising agencies. Most recently, she coordinated social media and digitalization in the One World Work office of the Association of One World Regional Networks in Germany (AGL e.V.) and advised development policy associations on digital communications. For the

Decolonial Memorial, she was responsible for the conception and implementation of the website www.dekoloniales-denkzeichen. de, corporate design, and functioned as chief editor of the social media channels. She also supported events such as the symposium and opening night of the exhibition and coordinated the production of publications and promotional materials for the project.

Mariana Moreno Hevia Student Assistant, Berlin Global Village



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Mariana Moreno Hevia studies social sciences at the Humboldt University in Berlin. With a strong interest in intersectional (de)coloniality, migration, and feminism, she joined the Decolonial Memorial team and contributed significantly to the project's success as an assistant. She supported event management,

administration, and overall project controlling, wrote project reports, and minutes. She assisted with the project's public relations, and handled communication with project participants, including artists and jury members.

PROJECT TEAM



Pearl Abbey-Obaro Freelance New Media

Photo: Michaela Zischek

Pearl Abbey-Obaro completed her master's degree in Journalism and Communication Studies in Berlin and Helsinki. In her research, she focused on the power and influence of media in the construction and maintenance of "race." Her journalism experience was gained at various publishing houses between 2014 and 2016. Following this, she expanded her knowledge of strategic online marketing at advertising agencies in Berlin from 2017 to 2020. Since then, she has been responsible for digital cam-

paign work targeting the German market at the development policy organization ONE. She has also been working independently as consultant and manager in digital communication beginning in 2023. She serves both private clients, such as author Tupoka Ogette, and public project sponsors. Strategically and creatively, she supported the Decolonial Memorial on social media over the last few months of the project.



Jonathan Strauch Student Assistant, Berlin Global Village

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Jonathan Strauch studied saxophone in Dresden and Paris and is active as a musician in various projects in Germany and internationally. To obtain a second degree, he is studying social sciences at the Humboldt University in Berlin. His role as assistant to the Decolonial Memorial project team combined several of his interests and enabled him to deepen his

knowledge in art, decolonization, democratization, and NGO work. Within the project, he supports events, maintains contact with service providers, artists and partners, writes texts, and occasionally takes on manual tasks.

Coby Bernstein Financial Officer for 2023, Berlin Global Village.

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Mandy Ózdi Financial Officer for 2024, Berlin Global Village



Mandy Ózdi began her career as an advertising saleswoman and has worked in various agencies and companies in Berlin's creative industry for the past 20 years. She provided advice and support in the areas of financial management and people and culture management. Recently,

Ózdi has specialized in organizational development with a focus on agile methods. At Berlin Global Village, and especially at the Decolonial Memorial project, she brings her expertise in

financial management and systemic coaching.



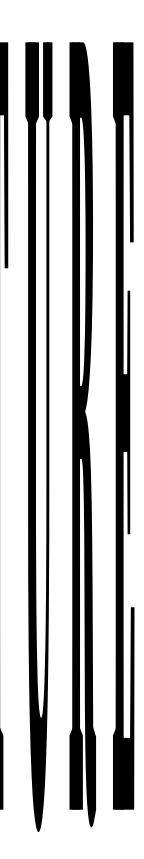
Photo: Sedat Mehder

As Dipl-Ing., industrial engineer, Konrad Retzer has worked as a project manager on various construction projects. After working on railroad projects with the Deutsche Bahn in various parts of Germany, he managed construction groups in Berlin for many years before encountering Berlin Global Village in

connection with the construction of the One World Center. He has been responsible for overseeing the renovation and furnishing of Berlin Global Village since 2020. Further, he supported the Decolonial Memorial project in tenders and awarding contracts for construction services.







INTRODUCTION OF THE EXTERNAL COORDINATION TEAM

We are very pleased with the support of the external coordination team, which handled many crucial steps during the course of the art contest. Among other tasks, they guaranteed the anonymity of the contestants necessary for the tender. We would like to thank you for the pleasant collaboration!

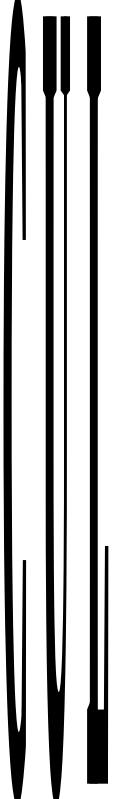
Elfriede Müller Director of the Office for art in public spaces at Kulturwerk GmbH of bbk berlin



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elfriede Müller studied in Freiburg and received her doctorate in history and literature from the Technical University of Berlin. She spent some time in Paris (1980 to 1986) and has lived in Berlin since 1993. She was the director of the Office for Art in Public Spaces at the berufsverband bildender künstler*innen berlin e. V. (professional association of visual artists in berlin, bbk berlin e. V.) and the editor of the annual magazine kunststadt stadt-kunst from 1994 to 2024. She has been

involved with the Decolonial Memorial project since its inception and was an expert on procedural issues for the jury deciding on a "Decolonial Memorial." She has published on contemporary art, critical theory, the intellectual history of the left, and Roman Noir.





Óscar Mauricio Ardila Luna Curator, Writer, Visual Artist

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Óscar Mauricio Ardila Luna holds a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts, a Master's Degree in Art History (both from the Bogotá State Academy of Fine Arts), and an MFA (Institute for Art in Context, UdK Berlin). His focus as an artist and writer includes transnational work, participatory art, public space, and the culture of remembrance. He coordinates building art (Kunst-am-Bau) contests. He has been part of a research group on public art in Latin America since 2015. He has been co-director

of the artists' initiative named Citizen Art Days Association (e.V.) since 2017. His responsibilities within the international art contest "Decolonial Memorial" included – together with Stefan Krüskemper – planning and implementation of the process, communication with participants, creation of the contest documents, and curation of the final exhibition.



Stefan Krüskemper Visual Artist, Author, Contest Coordinator

Stefan Krüskemper holds a diploma in architecture (University of Dortmund) and completed postgraduate studies in art and public space (Academy of Fine Arts Nuremberg). He is a freelance artist who realizes international art projects (urban art, integrative art strategies) and coordinates and pre-evaluates art contests. He was a member of the Art Advisory Board for the State of Berlin from 2015 to 2024 and has been its chairman since 2020. He has taught at the Interim Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology in Banga-

lore, the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg and the Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences in Bonn. His responsibilities within the international "Decolonial Memorial" art contest included – together with Óscar Ardila Luna – the planning and implementation of the process, communication with the participants, design of the contest documents and curation of the final exhibition.

EXTERNAL COORDINATION

Salwa Aleryani Visual Artist



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Salwa Aleryani is an artist who works primarily with sculpture and installation. Her work engages with sites and infrastructures and their histories through constellations of found and made objects. Over the years, her practice has taken shape in a variety of educational, exhibition and site-specific contexts nationally and internationally. She holds an MFA (Savannah College of Art and Design, USA) and has been an intermittent guest lecturer at the Studium Generale UdK (University of

Art) since 2021 and a mentor at the *foundationClass at the Weißensee Academy of Art Berlin since 2023. For the Decolonial Memorial, she was a member of the preliminary review team, tasked with ensuring the anonymity of participants and providing summaries and presentations to assist the jury in their selection process.

Katinka Theis Visual Artist and Coordinator of Building Art (Kunst am Bau) contest



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Katinka Theis focuses her artistic work on the treatment of objects, drawings and public art. Since studying sculpture at the Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences in Bonn from 1996 to 2000, she has lived and worked in Berlin. She completed a master's program in "Spatial Strategies" at the weißensee kunsthochschule berlin (weißensee Academy of Art Berlin) from 2007 to 2009 and has since participated in numerous national and international exhibitions and public space projects. She taught in the Fundamentals degree

program in the Faculty of Cultural Studies at the University of Witten/Herdecke from 2014 to 2020. She has been active in various art commissions since 2018. She has been working as a coordinator for building art (Kunst am Bau) contests since 2019. She assisted the team with the coordination and preliminary review of the contest designs in the process for a "Decolonial Memorial."

BERLIN'S CONTEST CULTURE IN A DECOLONIAL CONTEXT

ÓSCAR MAURICO ARDILA LUNA (CURATOR, WRITER, VISUAL ARTIST) AND STEFAN KRÜSKEMPER (VISUAL ARTIST, WRITER) EXTERNAL CONTEST COORDINATORS



External coordinators Stefan Krüskemper and Óscar Ardila at the second jury meeting

Photo: Sedat Mehder

The realization of the art contest for the Decolonial Memorial was a novelty in Berlin's contest culture and posed new challenges for all involved. Resources, competitive structures, forms of communication, the promotion of participation, and the mediation of new conceptual aspects were supposed to be appropriate in a global context. Adherence to the principles of transparency, anonymity, and equality, which are clearly defined in Berlin's contest procedures, ensured the implementation of high standards on an international level. In addition, the call for entries was published in English, German, Spanish, French, and Swahili through international artist associations and networks to reach artists worldwide. Dissemination and communication of the terms were evidently successful, as 244 designs out of the 671 registrations were examined in the first phase. Submissions came from Africa (25 percent), Asia (2 percent), Europe (58 percent), and North and South America (8 percent). There was no further differentiation as to the diasporic backgrounds of the artists from Europe. Through digital means, anonymity could be consistently maintained and none of the submitters were disadvantaged by long or non-existent mail routes, for example.

The exciting process revealed the limits of what was thought to be feasible. The art contest opened up new paths for addressing complex pasts in the culture of remembrance. Through the representation of ritual spaces, diverse cosmogonies, environmental relationships, and themes of reconciliation and resilience, the artists brought new ideas, formats, and materiality to the contest culture. These approaches address different meanings of remembrance in a decolonial context.

¹ For the purpose of the tender, the category "Europe" excludes admissions from Germany. These were collected separately.

INTERACTIVE UNIVERSALISM IN THE REALIZATION OF A DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL

Elfriede Müller

Head of the Office for Art in Public Space at the Kulturwerk GmbH of the bbk berlin e.V. (Professional Association of Visual Artists Berlin) (1994 to 2024)

The mainstream mindset of the state culture of remembrance seems to be gradually accepting that Germany and Berlin are sites of colonial imperialism. However, the impact on state art contracts is still modest. The globally open two-phase art contest called Decolonial Memorial, announced by Berlin Global Village, represents a qualitative leap forward in the context of political initiatives concerning remembrance. Like similar projects, this was a big leap into the unknown and a long process involving many people.

During the ten-year development of the new building for a center to house migrant diaspora NGOs in Berlin-Neukölln, the idea arose to give artistic expression to these activities and thus create a unique place of remembrance for decolonial aesthetics that the world has not seen before. Initiator Michael Küppers-Adebisi and Berlin Global Village's executive director Armin Massing took up the idea in 2018 and contacted federal and local politicians as well as experts in art in public spaces, including the Neukölln Department of Culture and the Office for Art in Public Space (BfKiöR) in the workshop (Kulturwerk) of bbk berlin e.V. (Professional Association of Visual Artists Berlin). Their compelling idea was quickly met with enthusiasm—although everyone who heard about it wondered why it had taken so long for this to occur. The project is of national importance, as it aims to finally take responsibility for extractive and annihilative colonialism and to give this intention an aesthetic expression.

Since Berlin's modest financial resources were insufficient for artistic designs in urban spaces, and since this did not fall into the classic category of art in construction (Kunst am Bau), the initiator of the contest turned directly to the Federal Cultural Committee and quickly found support from the SPD and the Green Party. Parallel to the impressive

and sustained advocacy efforts, Berlin Global Village and the Office for Art in Public Spaces developed the parameters for a global contest: the necessary costs, the infrastructure, a suitably qualified jury representing the decolonial currents in contemporary art, and the opportunity for all visual artists from the entire and especially the postcolonial world to participate. For the Office for Art in Public Spaces, which has been in existence since 1977, this cooperation was anything but routine. Even though we support more than 50 art contests a year, we had never seen anything like this.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elfriede Müller at the second jury meeting

Not only was the topic and dimension extraordinary, but so was the seamless, intensive, inspiring, and "free from fear of administration" cooperation. In a lengthy process, both federal and state governments decided to finance and mediate the contest, each providing €750,000. The execution was entrusted to Berlin Global Village as the initiator and the experts, who followed the democratically established rules of the Directive on Planning Contests (RPW 2013) and the Construction Directive (Anweisung Bau, ABau). Communicating these complex regulations internationally was a particular challenge. The two experienced coordinators, Óscar Mauricio Ardila Luna and Stefan Krüskemper, put together a team with Salwa Aleryani and Katinka Theis,



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elfriede Müller and Armin Massing in conversation

who navigated the process in close coordination with the initiator and the Office for Art in Public Space.

Although there have been so-called international or Europe-wide contests in the area of remembrance politics, none of them can be compared to the Decolonial Memorial. In fact, most initiatives to date have not sought to engage the whole world. Because creating a level playing field for a global community of artists is an enormously challenging endeavor that can only succeed if every effort is made. Even seemingly trivial issues such as different postal routes and shipping conditions in different countries, or the use of a single script, can prevent a level playing field. Some of these hurdles were only identified during implementation.

We addressed these issues by allowing ideas and designs to be submitted digitally only, and by providing an internationally distributed video on how to participate. The effort paid off with success: there were 671 registrations, of which 540 met the requirements, and 273 ar-

tists submitted their ideas in the first phase, with 244 being admissible for review. The distinguished international jury was aware of the historical dimension of this process and acted with great seriousness and concentration. The jury meetings lasted a total of three days.

Ultimately, the highest quality design, EarthNest by The Lockward Collective, was recommended for implementation. It seemed as if the jury had long been a well-oiled collective that was more than up to the political challenge of the task. According to Seyla Benhabib, we can speak of an interactive universalism that aims at a lifeworld encounter with others through the cultivation of common practices and the creation of a common world-the Global Village. The historical window for a Decolonial Memorial of this magnitude in Berlin was limited and would probably not be possible or politically feasible today, given the rise of the extreme right, xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism.

THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL AS PART OF DECENTRALIZED MEMORY WORK ON COLONIALISM

DECOLONIZE BERLIN ASSOCIATION (E.V.)



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michael Küppers-Adebisi welcomes Merel Fuchs (Decolonize Berlin e.V.)

Although the German Empire officially rejoined European colonial expansion with the Berlin Conference on Africa (1884/85), German-speaking scientists, researchers, and merchants had already played a significant role in creating a racist worldview that legitimized and morally justified the systematic and brutal exploitation and annihilation of people through colonial rule.

Very few people in Germany are aware of the brutality of the German colonial regime in the African, Pacific, and Asian colonies: in addition to the genocide of the Herero, Nama, Damara, and San in Namibia, anticolonial resistance was brutally crushed elsewhere whether in Tanzania, where up to 300,000 people died during the Maji-Maji War, or in China, where anti-imperial resistance during the so-called Boxer Rebellion was crushed by a Western alliance of eight countries. Military violence was an important factor, but not the only one: the destruction of social structures, the theft of ancestral and cultural property, and the economic exploitation of people and nature through forced labor and plantation

economies shocked the social fabric and continue to have social and geopolitical repercussions to this very day—both in the former colonies and in the former colonial powers.

Work on colonial continuities, such as structural and institutional racism in Germany or neocolonial economic relations, is hampered by the lack of discussion on Germany's involvement in imperialism and colonialism. Therefore, a critical examination of German colonialism must be firmly anchored in the culture of remembrance and in educational institutions. It is essential that there is a shift in perspective that puts those affected at the center of the discourse: Black, African, diasporic, and migrant communities in Germany as well as people in former German colonies have always resisted exploitation and colonialism. Only through a radical change of perspective and a comprehensive social commitment can decolonization processes be successful. Therefore, in urban spaces formed by and during colonialism, it requires repeated exposure to decolonial ideas to break these colonial continuities.





terns of thinking, to (un)learn, and to trigger internalized decolonialization processes.

Photo: Sedat Mehder

SUPPORTING NETWORK

OUT OF THE COMMUNITY

COOPERATION PARTNERS OF THE PROJECT DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL

The art competition for a Decolonial Memorial is embedded in a network of groups working with the historical and present repercussions of colonialism. These initiatives advocate for a comprehensive examination and reappraisal of Germany's colonial crimes and their reverberations up to the present day. The Decolonial Memorial sees itself as a project in which development politics and migrant diaspora organizations are allied. This collaboration is the

driving force behind the project and led to the realization of the Decolonial Memorial project. The following NGOs are part of the project as cooperation partners and symbolically share responsibility for the Decolonial Memorial.



AfricAvenir Association (e.V.)

¬africavenir.org/en

AfricAvenir International is a politically independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to political education and the production and dissemination of knowledge from an African perspective in both Africa and Europe. The headquarters in Douala, Cameroon, were founded in 1985 by Prince Kum'a Ndumbe III. The German chapter followed in 2000, the Namibian chapter in 2007, and the Beninese chapter in 2012. There is an informal chapter in Vienna, and chapters are planned in France, Senegal, the United States, Canada, and Brazil.

Current projects:

Decolonize the Schools:

Understanding Colonial History – Unlearning Racism": the education project promotes the reduction of racism in everyday life and the curriculum of Berlin schools. With a focus on colonial history, racism is understood and addressed as a system of power and a continuation of colonial rule.

School workshops:

the workshops sensitize students to the issues of racism and colonialism.

Training for teachers:

the professional development sessions provide reflections, background information, and teaching materials.

Networking meetings for parent & child: consultations, empowerment, and networking meetings.

Consultation:

on questions and hurdles that may arise in the process of unlearning racism.



Afrika-Rat Berlin-Brandenburg Association (e.V.) ¬afrika-rat.org

The Africa Council is a network and advocacy group for associations, organizations, initiatives, and people of the African Diaspora in Berlin and Brandenburg. The Africa Council was founded in 2005 by 24 associations and currently has 36 member organizations. The main task of the Africa Council is to consolidate and represent the common interests of the African Diaspora living in Berlin and Brandenburg. In the spirit of international understanding, strengthening a pluralistic society and participating in social, professional, and labor integration, the umbrella organization promotes cooperation among member associations, organizations, projects, groups, and people of the African Diaspora. The Africa Council is committed to the equal and solidary coexistence of all people in the states of Berlin and Brandenburg.

The Africa Council has been the sponsor of a One World Promoter since 2022. The One World Promoters Program supports organizations, initiatives, and thus many people in their efforts for global justice.

One World Promoters are experts who work nationwide on various aspects of development policy engagement. There are eight Promoters in Berlin. Development policy issues often affect the lives of many migrants, migrant diaspora organizations, and migrant initiatives. It is therefore all the more important that they shape the field and that their knowledge and perspectives are recognized and considered as important parts of the discourse.

AFROTAK TV cyberNomads ⊅afrotak.tv

AFROTAK TV cyberNomads coordinate interdisciplinary knowledge management in the fields of education, media, art, and science, offering an alternative to colonially influenced continuities of Western defined power. The goal is to dismantle political-cultural and intersectional barriers for migrants, BIPOC, and PAD in Germany and worldwide.



Projects:

May Ayim Award (1st Black German International Literary Award, UNESCO), Black Media Congress (BMC) in Berlin, Black Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art and Discourse (UN Decade for People of African Descent), Black Womanhood reLoaded, Nija Awareness Truck, Encyclopedia Africana Germanica. Projekte:

May Ayim Award (1. Black German International Literary Award, UNESCO), Black Media Congress (BMC) in Berlin, die Black Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art and Discourse (UN-Dekade für People of African Descent), Black Womanhood reLoaded, Nija Awareness Truck, Encyclopedia Africana Germanica.



⊅berlin-global-village.de/de/ dekoloniales-denkzeichen/netzwerk/ kooperationspartner/berlin-postkolonial/



The Berlin Postcolonial Association is an initiative of descendants of the colonized and colonizers who have been working together since 2007 to critically engage with colonialism pursued by Berlin, Germany, and Europe. Key areas of engagement include a critical approach to colonialism in public spaces, the repatriation of ancestors from anthropological collections, the return of stolen cultural treasures, and the payment of reparations to victims of colonialism, particularly the genocide of the Herero and Nama.

Since its inception, the association has been organizing commemorative city tours. Berlin

Postcolonial has produced several traveling exhibitions. Since 2017, the permanent exhibition "zurückgeschaut | looking back" has been featured at the Treptow Museum in Berlin. It is dedicated to the history and aftermath of the "First German Colonial Exhibition." In cooperation with the Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD) Berlin, the association organized the first "Transnational Ovaherero and Nama Congress" in 2016, and in 2017, the transnational conference called "Prussian Colonial Heritage. Sacred Objects and Human Remains in Berlin Museums."

DaMigra Association (e.V.) 7 damigra.de/en



Since 2014, DaMigra has been active as a nationwide, origin-independent, politically independent and women-specific umbrella organization, which acts as the voice and representative of more than 60 migrant women's organizations and represents their interests in politics, the public sphere, the media, and the economy throughout Germany. DaMigra's guiding principle is empowerment and the fight against racism, sexism, and social inequality.

It also focuses on combating racism, sexism, and social inequality. Accordingly, the umbrella organization opposes all forms of discrimination against people, whether based on social and ethnic origin, gender, race, sexual identity, disability, age, or worldview. DaMigra refers to European and international human rights conventions.

Current projects:

Women Rais.ed provides critical education opportunities and empowerment for women and girls affected by racism and strengthens civil society actors in the fight against racism.

#together! empowers and strengthens migrant women's self-organizations, creating networks and dialogues.

Gemeinsam MUTig (Courageous Together) supports women with refugee and migration experience in a practical and needs-oriented way, helping them to improve their opportunities for social participation and to come closer to living together locally.

MY TURN aims to ensure that women with a migrant background, who are formally low-skilled and in need of increased support, participate to a greater extent than previously in qualification measures and subsequently take up sustainable socially insured employment, self-employment, or vocational training.



Decolonize Berlin Association (e.V.)

>decolonize-berlin.de/en



The Decolonize Berlin Association is committed to a critical examination of the history and present of colonialism and racism, the recognition and addressing of colonial injustices, and a societal decolonization. The association was founded in 2019 out of a civil society network of Black, diasporic, postcolonial, and development policy groups in Berlin. This al-

liance continues to exist and is supported by the commitment of more than 100 individuals. Decolonize Berlin is the coordinating body for a citywide approach to addressing Berlin's colonial past.



Initiative of Black People in Germany Association (e.V.) ⊅isdonline.de

The Initiative of Black People in Germany Association (Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland Bund e.V.) is a non-profit, registered association. ISD's mission is to represent the interests of Black people in Germany and to advocate for justice in a migration society. ISD exposes and combats racial discrimination, disadvantages, and exploitation. It provides space and activities for Black children and youth. It promotes Black political projects. ISD promotes an anti-racist attitude in all areas of society.

ISD respects and responds to the diverse experiences and backgrounds of Black people, while highlighting and making tangible the possibilities of solidarity and collective action. The initiative invites people to use individual and collective experiences as a resource for political reflection and social engagement. It organizes meetings such as the annual national meetings and regular networking meetings and realizes events such as the Black History Month, the Homestory Germany exhibition or the European Network Meeting for People of African Descent & Black Europeans. ISD does not see itself as the sole representative of Black people in Germany, but rather as part of the Black community with all its NGOs, initiatives, associations, and projects.

Current projects:

Tear this down is a joint project by ISD and the Peng! Collective. The map records colonial traces in public spaces throughout Germany.

The Competence Network against Anti-Black Racism (KomPAD – Kompetenznetzwerk Anti-Schwarzer Rassismus) aims to deepen the work against Black racism, to strengthen empowerment offers, and to establish sustainable structures. The ISD focuses on the areas of daycare and school, implements educational and consulting services as well as informational events on anti-Black racism, creates spaces for exchange and empowerment, and networks with actors, organizations, and initiatives in this field.

SEKIBU stands for: Black empowerment in children's books. It is a multi-member BIPOC collective that supports Black people and PoC in Germany who write children's and young adult books where inclusion and diversity are standard.



moveGLOBAL Association (e.V.) 7moveglobal.de

The moveGLOBAL Association (e.V.) was founded in 2013. The "move" in the name stands for the words equating to "Migrants Orienting - Networking Empowerment" (Migrant*innen Orientieren Vernetzen Empowerment). Then as now, the umbrella organization aims to create public spaces for Berlin's migrant organizations where their concerns can be heard. In order to achieve this, moveG-LOBAL considers an anti-colonial, anti-racist, and diversity-oriented approach essential in the implementation of projects and in the interaction with its members. Although the association's statutes limit membership to those whose organizational headquarters are in Berlin, the association and its members' fields of activity are of global relevance.

Current projects:

Empowering Migrant Voices for Local Integration and Inclusion:

the focus of the project is to strengthen the political participation of people with a migration background, especially participation in the development and implementation of local integration strategies.

One-world promotors program:

the promoters of moveGLOBAL advise and accompany migrant actors, black communities, PoC self-organizations, migrant-diasporic organizations (MDOs), as well as committed individuals and development policy actors.

Residing instead of staying (reloaded):

in the area of housing, moveGLOBAL is committed to improving the social participation of refugees and migrants.

SUPPORTING NETWORK

LIVING RESISTANCE AND MEMORY

MNYAKA SURURU MBORO ON THE URGENCY OF RECKONING WITH OUR COLONIAL HISTORY

Interview with Mnyaka Sururu Mboro, Executive Board Member and Co-founder of Berlin Postkolonial e.V.

In conversation with Michaela Zischek, Decolonial Memorial Project Team, Berlin Global Village

Michaela Zischek: Mr. Mboro, the Berlin Postcolonial Association (Berlin Postkolonial e.V.) is one of the partners that cooperates with and co-owns the Decolonial Memorial. What does this mean for your organization?

Mboro: It means a lot to us. When I came to Germany and wanted to fulfill my grandmother's mission to bring back Mangi Meli's head, I was aware of German colonialism in German East Africa. But no one here was interested. If there had been a Berlin Global Village, a Decolonial Memorial, I could have turned to it for support. But that didn't exist then. We don't talk enough about a reckoning with German colonialism, even today. There has been improvement since we started to raise the issue, but the aim has not yet been met. Now that there is such a memorial, even those who do not want to talk about it must see the symbol.

Michaela: The issue can no longer be ignored?

Mboro: Exactly, but something bigger is also needed. We have been working intensively towards a permanent memorial, a place of learning, a place of remembrance for all of Germany since 2005. You cannot remember enslavement and colonialism properly if there is no central place for it. There are many memorials in Berlin, but none that commemorate colonialism. Instead, if you walk along the Museums Insel, for example, you will see that the palace of the colonial rulers has been rebuilt. What are they trying to tell us? What I find so painful is that only those who brutally participated in the slave trade are remembered. These criminals are honored here, even with street names. But where is our memorial?

Michaela: So, do we need more places, like the Decolonial Memorial, that, instead of the colonial perpetrators, honor the people existing under colonialism and highlight their stories?



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Mnyaka Sururu Mboro in conversation with Armin Massing at the kick off event for the Decolonial Memorial

Mboro: Yes, but that's not enough. We need the central memorial and more support for additional memorials. They wouldn't allow us to put up plaques at Wilhelmstrasse 92, where the Berlin Conference on Africa took place. In the end we had to finance them ourselves. The plagues are destroyed time and again, and we restore them over and over again. We also need permanent places for educational work. We need spaces to tell these stories, to hold events and exhibitions. Because in Germany people still believe that the Germans were not involved in colonial crimes. You just don't talk about it. I have experienced this in schools as well. Even the teachers say that this didn't happen in Germany. Instead, people remember the Große Kurfürst Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg, who made his money in the slave trade.

Michaela: Can the Decolonial Memorial be a place of resistance also?

Mboro: Well, once we raise the issue, it already is resistance. If the memorial also deals with what happened then, it automatically has to do with resistance. Instead of remembering colonial criminals, we now remember people who fought against colonialism and slavery. That in itself is an act of resistance.

Michaela: What do you expect from politicians?

Mboro: In addition to a central memorial and more spaces for educational work, we need a comprehensive reckoning with history. In addition, we must ensure that colonialism and the



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Gary Stewart, Angelina Jellesen, Aissatou Binger and Mnyaka Sururu Mboro at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

reckoning with slavery are included in school curricula. I know this is difficult because each state has its own school system. But first we can look at what is possible here in Berlin and Brandenburg. I know of countries in Africa, for example, where these issues are taught in history classes. And I always wonder why they don't talk about it here. In our project, when students from Zanzibar and Potsdam exchange views on German colonialism, it is interesting to observe: the students from Zanzibar, of course, know about the Conference on Africa and cannot believe it when they realize that their partner students from Potsdam know nothing about it.

Michaela: This is very sad.

Mboro: Yes, and I still wonder: Why is nothing being done? In addition to the lack of a historical reckoning with colonialism and slavery, this also has to do with racism. I encounter it every day. And yes, there is a large portion of white people who are not racist. Yet you cannot feel these experiences. And you don't want to feel it either. And then people are surprised that the AfD has become so strong. But racism has always existed. People just didn't have the opportunity to show it openly. But we always felt



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Mnyaka Sururu Mboro and María Linares at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

it. I hope that the memorial will make it possible to bring the issue of racism closer to people in a very direct and practical way. Maybe then it will be more understandable. Because racism is so terrible, we cannot ignore it. And you cannot talk about colonialism without talking about racism. If we are to live and work together, these subjects must be brought to the table. As long as they are ignored, there can be no true community.

Michaela: One last question: is there a piece of advice you would like to give as the Decolonial Memorial project moves forward?

Mboro: It's not enough to build the Decolonial Memorial. It's not enough, but it's a start. It is the beginning of a memorial, a place of remembrance for enslavement and colonialism. My wish is that we continue to work in this direction. We must not stop and say: we have already done something. We have begun to build a road that will lead us to a memorial, a place of learning and remembrance. But now it is our task to build this road well. Because it rains a lot and if the road is not solid, it will be washed away by the rain. And when the road is gone, we will have much more work to do.

Michaela: Thank you so much!

MORE THAN 500 YEARS OF COLONIAL RULE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Tahir Della

Board Member and Spokesperson, ISD – Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland Bund e.V. [Initiative of Black People in Germany Association]

I In general historiography, the so-called Congo Conference of 1884/85 in Berlin, to which the then German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck invited other colonial powers such as France, Belgium, and England, is considered the beginning of Germany's involvement in European colonialism.

This perspective also includes the view that Germany was "only" a colonial power for 30 years, since it lost all its colonies after World War I, and that the German Empire was "more humane" in its treatment of the colonized than other European colonial powers—even actively opposed slavery.

This revisionist and minimizing perspective is the reason why Germany's participation in European colonialism is still hardly or not at all part of public historical consciousness. Even though millions of people were dis-

placed, raped, enslaved, or killed in the name of the German Empire.

In fact, as early as the 16th century, German merchants and sailors (such as the Fugger and Welser colonies in present-day Venezuela) were involved in the imperial conquest, destruction, and exploitation of the Americas.

State involvement in Germany's colonial crimes began as early as the late 17th century and continued into the early 18th century with the "founding" of the Brandenburg-Prussian colony and the construction of the fortress Groß Friedrichsburg on the coast of presentday Ghana. The slave trade became the main source of income for the Brandenburg-African Company (Brandenburgisch-Afrikanische Compagnie, BAC): the BAC kidnapped an estimated 15,000 to 24,000 people from Africa and brought them to the Americas and Europe between 1680 and 1711, about 10 to 15 percent of whom did not survive the journey. Although state involvement in colonialism was not revived until the Congo Conference in Berlin, racist/imperialist ideas were already deeply rooted in society and had become part



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Tahir Della and Sylvia Werther at the exhibtion opening of the 20 final designs



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Tahir Della, Armin Massing, Molly Stenzel, Óscar Ardila, Angelina Jellesen and Johara Sarhan at the BGVestival

of German identity. The ideological "ground-work" had already been laid by philosophers such as Kant with his race theory and Hegel with his philosophy of history. Their theories served to ideologically legitimize dehumanization, slavery, and colonialism. Private actors from the church, academia, and commerce were already deeply involved in the European "colonial project."

By the end of the Congo Conference, the entire African continent (with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia) was divided among the European colonial powers. In 1914, the German Empire possessed the third largest colonial territory after Great Britain and France, stretching from colonies in Africa to those in the Pacific and China. The colonial system aimed to destroy the social structures in the colonies on various levels: economic (plantation agriculture, land theft, mining, etc.) as well as cultural (e.g., through the destruction of social structures, assassination of kings/leaders, theft of cultural heritage, destruction of cultural knowledge, and missionary work). Another indication of Germany's late acknowledgement of its colonial past is the genocide of the Ovaherero, Nama, Damara, and San in

former German Southwest Africa, now Namibia. German colonial rule in Namibia began in 1884 with the proclamation of the protectorate and land theft by Adolf Lüderitz, and was characterized by brutal repression of the local population and systematic settlement by European settlers (settler colonialism). In 1907, the Ovaherero and Nama rebelled against land expropriation and the German colonial regime. The ensuing genocide, commanded by General Lothar von Trotha, claimed the lives of 65,000 to 85,000 Ovaherero (about 80 percent of the Ovaherero) and about 10,000 Nama. In addition to those killed in battle, many died in concentration camps, from forced labor and disease, and from lack of supplies. This genocide is considered the first of the 20th century.

Resistance to colonial rule was brutally suppressed throughout the world. During the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900 to 1901), which was preceded by an anti-imperialist, anti-Western, and anti-Christian uprising in China by the so-called Boxer Movement (Yihequan/Yihetuan), the Western colonial powers joined forces to violently suppress the resistance. Thousands of Chinese were killed, entire re-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Tahir Della at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

gions devastated, and cultural treasures looted. Even today, some of the bones looted during the war are still in German institutions. In German East Africa, today's Tanzania, resistance to German colonial exploitation and dehumanization was also bloodily suppressed in the Maji-Maji War (1905 to 1907), with bones taken to the German Empire for racist "research." Up to 300,000 people died during the war, including an estimated 15 Europeans, 73 Black Askaris, and 316 auxiliaries on the German side. The war is considered one of the largest colonial wars in the history of the African continent and was characterized by "scorched earth" tactics which caused famine.

Colonial regimes were based on racist ideologies that justified the oppression and exploitation of colonized peoples. These racist structures and beliefs have long-term effects—both on geopolitical relations and on the bodies, minds, and souls of people.

The relationship between colonialism and racism is complex and far-reaching. Racism is visible in public spaces as well as in institutions, structures, and laws, and, despite all its complexity, is obviously a vestige of the colonial past.

Thanks to the tireless self-organizing work of those affected, as well as postcolonial and decolonial initiatives, this has now become clear: the colonial past, its continuities, and its powerful effects have become a societal issue that we can no longer ignore when it comes to addressing future challenges and shaping a just and inclusive society.

Colonial knowledge and thought structures, trade relations, and spheres of movement shape our everyday lives. Issues such as flight, migration, climate change, and other current challenges are the direct result of more than 500 years of colonial rule and thus vestiges of the colonial past.

VIOLENCE, EXPLOITATION, AND OPPRES-SION CHARACTERIZED GERMAN COLONIA-LISM (1884 TO 1919)

Amina Hikari Fall
Executive Board member of AfricAvenir
International Association (e.V.)

Expansion into Africa and the Pacific was driven by economic interests, geopolitical rivalries, and racist ideologies. Social Darwinism and racial theories of the 19th and early 20th centuries justified brutal practices in German Southwest Africa (today Namibia), German East Africa (today Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda), as well as in Cameroon and Togo. Indigenous peoples were oppressed, cultural structures destroyed, and economic resources exploited.

A shocking example of German colonial violence is the genocide of the Herero and Nama in German Southwest Africa (1904 to 1908). After the Herero and later the Nama rebelled, the German "Destruction Strategy" ordered the systematic extermination of the ethnic groups. This included the expulsion of the Herero into the Omaheke Desert, where many died of thirst, and the internment of thousands of Ovaherero and Nama in concentration camps. It is estimated that 65,000 Ovaherero and 10,000 Nama died.

The Herero and Nama uprisings are also examples of the courage of colonized peoples. Other examples include the Maji-Maji Rebellion (1905 to 1907) in German East Africa and the Dagomba uprising (1896) in Togo, which, although unsuccessful, demonstrate the indomitable will of the people to achieve freedom.

In Cameroon, King Kum'a Mbape of "Hickory Town" (today Bonaberi), also known as "Lock Prison Bell," and grandfather of AfricAvenir International's founder Prince Kum'a Ndumbe III, led the first resistance. As the only king of the Duala, he refused the so-called "Treaty of Protection" of 1884, which led to the destruction of his palace and the theft and removal of one of his most important symbols of authority, the "Tangué," to Munich (today

in the Museum of the Five Continents). Many Duala later rebelled under the leadership of King Rudolf Duala Manga Bell of "Bell Town," who was eventually executed.

The consequences of German colonialism are felt to this day. The borders of Africa, established at the Berlin Congo Conference (1884 to 1885), are a source of ongoing conflict. The destruction of traditional structures and the introduction of colonial administrative structures led to long-term instability.

In Germany, the debate on the return of looted art and human remains is one example of the growing importance of dealing with colonial legacies. However, there is still a lack of comprehensive acknowledgement in the public sphere and in education policy.

RESISTANCE ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

MIGRANT RESISTANCE IN BERLIN

Dr. Soraya Moket

Deputy Managing Director of DaMigra Association (e.V.), Project Manager of the DaMigra project women rais.ed

The history of migrant resistance in Berlin is deeply rooted and diverse. It has been characterized by different phases of migration and has faced different challenges. The first migrant workers, the so-called "guest workers," were recruited from Turkey, Italy, Greece, the former Yugoslavia, North Africa, and further countries after World War II, in the 1960s. They were brought to work in Germany, especially in West Berlin. Germany's economic miracle owes much to these people. Without their contributions, Germany would not be what it is today. They were considered temporary workers, but many stayed permanently and brought their families with them. From the outset, their participation in German society was fraught with numerous obstacles that gave rise to early forms of resistance.

Precarious working conditions, exploitation, and discrimination were the daily companions of migrants and led them to resist at their own initiative. Looking at Berlin from a feminist intersectional perspective, one can observe complex and overlapping forms of multiple discrimination that play a crucial role in the struggle for social justice. The "Children of Kreuzberg" movement and other youth groups actively fought against racism and discrimination. Particularly strong was the resistance to the German government's deportation policies as deportations and racist attacks increased. To express this resistance, migrants and supporters from the dominant society organized themselves; demonstrations were organized, support groups formed, and legal assistance was provided to people facing deportation.

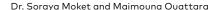
Central actors in the resistance were migrant women. They fought against social isolation and patriarchal structures in their own communities, as well as in the German majority society. For sexism and classism, among other isms, reach into the post-immigrant communities. Their multiple discrimination as women and migrants meant that they were often overlooked. Therefore, to support each other and assert their rights, they organized into networks and associations.

Feminist, migrant resistance started to gain prominence and importance in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Women like Semra Ertan fought for the rights of migrant women and actively opposed racism and discrimination. The activist set herself on fire in Hamburg in 1982 to draw attention to the discrimination and racist treatment of migrant women in Germany. Her death led to a widespread public discussion about racism and the living conditions of migrants and migrant women in Germany. These women fought against the double burden of paid work and unpaid domestic work, as well as (domestic) violence and exploitation.

Migrant resistance in Berlin developed a new dynamic in the 1990s. After the reunification of Germany, social and economic disparities worsened, affecting migrants in particular. During this time, numerous migrant organizations were formed to defend their rights and protest against growing racism.

This period and the following years were marked by acts of violence against migrants, including murders. Among them the murder of the Angolan asylum seeker Amadeu Antonio Kiowa in 1990, the pogrom riots in Rostock-Lichtenhagen in 1992, and the murder of Marwa El-Sherbini in 2009. Such cases underscored the urgency of confronting racist violence. Women's organizations and feminist groups became increasingly involved. They created safe spaces for women who had been victims of violence, provided legal assistance, and advocated for better protection laws.

The early 2000s and the following decade saw a further diversification of migrant resistance. Further communities, such as Vietnamese, Eastern European, and African migrants, brought their own experiences and perspectives to the resistance. Movements such as the Refugee Protest March to Berlin in 2012 highlighted the precarious living conditions of asylum seekers and demanded the right to asylum and humane treatment. The tradition of feminist migrant resistance con-





tinued throughout this period. Women from different migrant communities joined forces to fight against multiple discrimination. Initiatives such as "Women in Exile," "DaMigra," and their member organizations played a central role.

DaMigra networks, qualifies, and supports migrant women's organizations and at the same time consolidates the interests of migrant and refugee women in order to make them heard and visible at the federal level. The rights of refugee women, who are particularly vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence, play a central role. Above all, DaMigra and its member organizations emphasize the need for an intersectional perspective that centers around the specific experiences of women.

Today, the resistance of migrants in Berlin is more diverse than ever. Initiatives such as "Kein Mensch ist illegal" ["No Person Is IIlegal"], "Initiative Schwarzer Menschen in Deutschland" ["Initiative of Black People in Germany"], and many others continue to stand up for the rights of migrants and support each other. They fight against institutional racism, for better working conditions, equal educational opportunities, and humane asylum policies. The "Black Lives Matter" movement has resonated strongly in Berlin, mobilizing thousands of people, with the feminist intersectional resistance ever-present. Black women and women of other marginalized groups are central to the movement. They stand against racist police violence, discrimination, and social injustice. This movement is proof that the struggle against racism is inextricably linked to the struggle against sexism and other forms of oppression.

In summary, migrant resistance in Berlin has a long and diverse history. From the first guest workers to the protests of the 1980s and today's movements, there has been an ongoing struggle for justice, equality, and recognition. From a feminist intersectional perspective, the migrant resistance in Berlin shows how women have played and continue to play a central role in the struggle for social justice despite multiple forms of discrimination. Their struggles and successes are an important part of Berlin's history. They underscore the need to integrate feminist and intersectional approaches into social movements to create a more just and inclusive society. This resistance has shaped Berlin's society and continues to contribute to the creation of city more diverse and just.

ART AS A TOOL FOR DECOLONIAL WORK

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.

Adetoun Küppers-Adebisi President

Until the 1990s, art and knowledge production occupied separate spaces. Access was shaped by intersectional barriers. As early as 1870, musicians of African descent were present in Germany. Blues, jazz and later hip-hop are their musical interventions. In 1982, Jean-Michel Basquiat (USA, Puerto Rico), inspired by punk, street art and graffiti, is the youngest artist ever to appear in Kassel – for documenta 7. Decoloniality is a discursive approach from South America. Decolonial aesthetics and Afrofuturism seek ways to develop independent discourses and aesthetic outcomes from 500 years of dominance by Western knowledge cultures. The festival mondial des arts nègres heralds a turning point in Dakar in 1966. Mental, collective and sensual survival in harmony with nature seems possible. This can be seen early in the German diaspora with EL Loko (Togo) and Mo Edoga (SA). Beginning in 1971, El Loko develops his visual alphabet. After the Second World Black and African Festival of

Arts and Culture in Lagos in 1977, Edoga recycled construction timber and driftwood for his Signal Tower of Hope (documenta 9) in 1992. Efforts to use non-Western forms of communication and content for orientation increase. At the Martin-Gropius-Bau in 2001, Okwui Enwezor and Chika Okeke-Agulu focus on the decolonial and political aspects of the "short century" of African independence and liberation movements (1945-1994). In 2002, Enwezor curates the Kassel documenta for contemporary art. AFROTAK presents a multimedia Afro-German spoken word performance at the Martin-Gropius-Bau in 2003. The Haus der Kulturen (House of World Cultures) hosts a transcultural Who's Who around the Black Atlantic, and AFROTAK participates with the German UNESCO project for the recognition of the slave trade and its abolition (May Ayim Award, 2004). Her Black Womanhood reLoaded (The 10 Commandments of Afrofuturism) premieres in 2013. Okwui Enwezor is appointed director of the Haus der Kunst in Munich in 2011 and of the Venice Biennale in 2015. In response to structural racism, he resigns from his



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michael Küppers-Adebisi and Adetoun Küppers-Adebisi, Chairwomen of AFROTAK TV cyberNomads

position at the Haus der Kunst in 2018. Savvy Contemporary's journey to becoming its own institution begins in 2009. Chika Okeke-Agulu curates "Who knows tomorrow" in 2010, which massively decolonizes public spaces in Berlin (Alte and Neue Nationalgalerie, Hamburger Bahnhof, Neuwerdische Kirche). Walter Mignolo and Alanna Lockward found Black Europe Body Politics (BeBOP) in 2012. AFRO-TAK participates as a media partner. In addition, they found the Black Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art and Discourse (BBB) to artistically curate issues of individual anti-racism and collective reparations after colonial genocide. AFROTAK and ARTEFAKTE intervene with the "Anti-HumboldtBox" at the Villa Romana, Florence (2013), the autumn Biennial of the Gorki Theater (2017), and the Intersectional Conference of the Berlin Global Village (2018). AFROTAK hosts the Africana Germanica documenta as part of the BGV Summer Festival 2017. In 2018 and 2020 - in partnership with the Black Berlin Biennial - BGV presents large-scale decolonial façade installations addressing the Social Development Goals (SDGs), Oury Jalloh and genocide. In 2023, the request for Decolonial Memorial proposals is published, at the instigation of AFROTAK, internationally and historically for the first time, also within the broader German cultural circle of artists in the world colonized by Germany. The Decolonial Memorial is now a reality and was realized by the Alanna Lockward Collective. Congratulations!

HOW MEMORY CULTURE COMES TO LIFE

THE SYMPOSIUM ON THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL AT BERLIN GLOBAL VILLAGE

The project team for the Decolonial Memorial held the kick-off event in the fall of 2023 to draw attention to the city of Berlin and the district of Neukölln as an intersection between decolonial approaches and visual arts. The event at Berlin Global Village addressed Berlin's residents, civil society, and organizations involved in development policy and the migrant diaspora, as well as artists, BIPOCs, and PADs. The aim was to bring the different target groups together to discuss art in deco-Ionial contexts. This kick-off event, a thematic symposium on decolonial art and the culture of remembrance, brought more than 350 interested people to Berlin Global Village on October 31, 2023.

Armin Massing, Executive Director of Berlin Global Village, opened the symposium with a warm welcome, emphasizing the importance and impact of the art project for the memory culture in Berlin and Germany, as well as internationally. There is a consensus that development cooperation and any other work dealing with global North-South politics today is not sustainable without the understanding and consideration of the colonial past



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michael Küppers-Adebisi at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

and its continuities. Berlin Global Village, Berlin's One World Center, is now taking the step to manifest this physically.

These words were followed by an inspiring greeting from Claudia Roth, Minister of State for Culture and the Media and patron of the Decolonial Memorial project. The Minister singled out civil society actors, particularly people from the African diaspora, and thanked them for their commitment and perseverance. She praised the artistic approach of the Decolonial Memorial and described art as



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing at the Symposium on Decolonial Art



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Jury member Gary Stewart gives the keynote at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

"the natural opponent of all despots!" Claudia Roth emphasized her promise to make dealing with the colonial legacy a cultural priority of her office.

Joe Chialo, Senator for Culture and Social Cohesion, and patron of the Decolonial Memorial project, also spoke. In a video message, the Senator described the significance of the project as "an important step for Berlin." He emphasized the inclusion of artists from formerly colonized countries and territories, who, through the contest, had the opportunity to address German colonial crimes and thereby shape the memory culture in Berlin and Germany.

The audience was then introduced to the history of civic engagement and related orga-

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Photo: Sedat Mehder

Vicky Amankwaa Birago (Anton Wilhelm Amo Erbschaft e.V.) in dialogue with Claudia Roth and Armin Massing

nizations in Berlin. Michael Küppers-Adebisi, Diversity Advisor at Berlin Global Village at the time, gave a comprehensive introduction to the history of the Decolonial Memorial project. He explained the goals and progress of the project, emphasizing the importance of questioning and confronting the colonial past critically.

Gary Stewart then explained why this form of reappraisal is a factor in the Decolonial Memorial art contest. In his keynote, the artist and lecturer at Queen Mary University of London explained the collaboration between the project team and the jury. He shared his experience as a juror for the art contest with the audience. In addition to the uniqueness of the Decolonial Memorial project, Stewart emphasized the fundamentally inclusive nature of the pilot project: "it is refreshing to be part of a project that is not only performati-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Johanna Schulze (BKM) in conversation with Leonard Konrad Adomako and Roy Adomako

SYMPOSIUM ON DECOLONIAL ART



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The panelists from left to right: Monilola Olayemi Ilupeju, Matthias Henkel, host Kira Bouaoud, Hn Lyonga, Sylbee Kim and Ibou Diop

ve." The Decolonial Memorial shows that it is time to evolve Hall's motto from "think globally, act locally" towards "think globally, act globally."

The symposium for the Decolonial Memorial art contest began in the afternoon and featured an evening program. Encounters and exchanges were intentionally encouraged and accompanied by a round of diverse foods provided by Bantabaa Food Dealer, while Berlin Global Village also introduced itself to the public with guided tours and walkabouts. The exhibition "Who Works at Berlin Global Village?" provided further insight into the diverse

work of the organizations and associations housed in the building. As part of a guided tour, Minister Claudia Roth also held personal talks with representatives of the initiatives and organizations.

Further, the artist Rafaella Braga could be observed working. The artist impressed the audience with a live painting session in the Patrice Lumumba Gallery. The Berlin-based Brazilian artist, known for her large-scale works, created an impressive painting during the event, which is now on permanent display at Berlin Global Village.



Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elfriede Müller and Óscar Ardila in conversation at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

A full house at the Symposium on Decolonial Art



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Claudia Roth, Susanna Kahlefeld and Aissatou Binger with Geraldine Hepp (both Carneval of Cultures, Berlin) in conversation at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

In the Paulo Freire Room, which was transformed into a movie theater for the symposium, curator Nnenna Onuoha presented her short film program "SET IN STONE: FOUR POSITIONS ON HISTORY, ITS MONUMENTS AND THEIR AFTERLIVES" in collaboration with Barazani. Onuoha showed selected short films, documentary material, and fictional discussions about Germany's approach to the memory culture as a perpetrator nation. Amongst these films, loans from The Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama, were featured in a moving and unique screening.

A thematic focus of the evening was art as an engine of the decolonial memory culture. This thematic complex was reflected in the panel "Art of the Global South in German Exhibition Spaces," which took place in the packed Miri-

am Makeba Hall. The stimulating discussion, moderated by Kira Bouaoud, brought together the perspectives of the panelists from different viewpoints on this very question. This resulted in a kaleidoscope of positions from Dr. (habil) Ibou Coulibaly Diop of the Stadtmuseum Berlin Foundation, Dr. Matthias Henkel of the Museum Neukölln, hn. lyonga of the Gropius Bau (Neighbor in Residence), the freelance artist Monilola Olayemi Ilupeju, and Sylbee Kim, board member of bbk berlin e.V. (professional association of visual artists in Berlin). The development, conditions, and hopes for the art of the Global South in Berlin and thus in Germany were discussed intensely. Thereby highlighting the challenges and opportunities associated with presenting art from the Global South.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Karin Korte, Angelina Jellesen, Gary Stewart and Tamara Lüdke at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

Dr. Ibou Coulibaly Diop, who is currently working as a project manager with the Berlin Senate to develop a concept for a citywide culture of remembrance, emphasized that it is essential to not only bring Black artists to the stage to entertain people but also to ensure that Black artists shape both the stage and society. It is important that artists from the Global South not only become visible in German exhibition spaces, but also find the conditions under which they can become part of these institutions.

The program concluded with a performance of "Dance meets Opera meets Memory" by MFA Kera and Kameron Locke (vocals), Thomyas and Anita Castro (dance), and Julia Kny (composition).

Berlin Global Village was illuminated by encounters, discussions, and exchanges until late into the night. Not only did the conference rooms on the ground floor of the building serve as venues, but the foyer, Begegnungscafé, and corridors were filled with animated conversation and shared laughter.

With a lively DJ set by DJ Prince (M.I.K.) at the bar of the Afrika Yetu Association (Afrika Yetu e.V.), the guests were able to celebrate in a relaxed atmosphere into the night.



Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Monilola Olayemi Ilupeju



Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Sylbee Kim

Ibou Diop

hn. Lyonga



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Dancer Anita Castro. In the background the live painting by Rafaella Braga

Resonance and outlook

The symposium was a great success and far exceeded the expectations of the project team. Originally planned for 100 people, Berlin Global Village attracted more than 350 visitors. The interest and lively participation, as well as the discussion of the event on social media, prove that the decolonial culture of remembrance and the art of the Global South are no longer niche interests.

We thank all the participants and supporters who contributed to the success of this event.

If you missed the symposium or would like to recall the speeches and discussions, you can find video recordings on the Berlin Global Village YouTube channel:



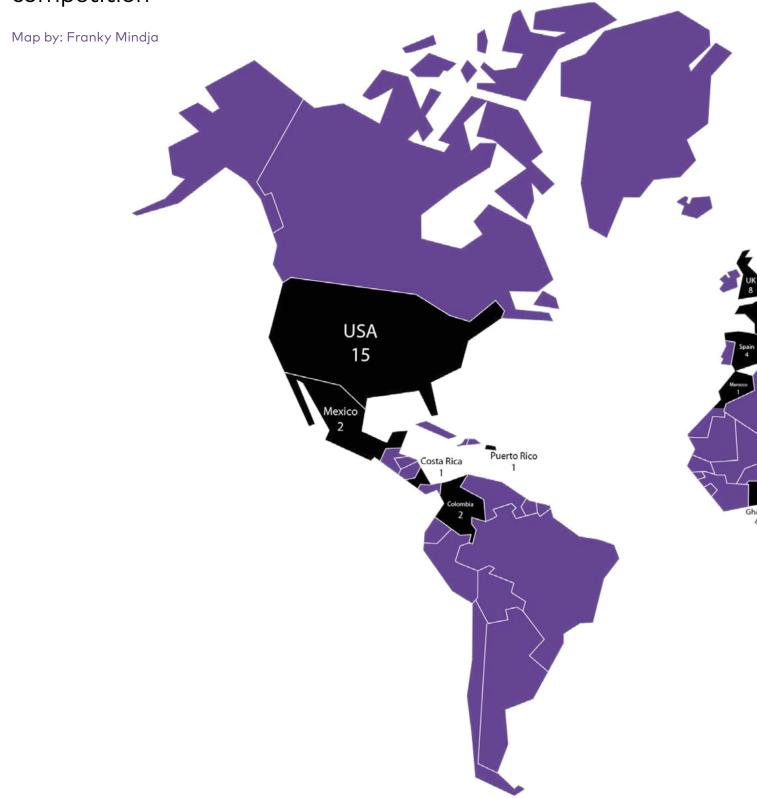
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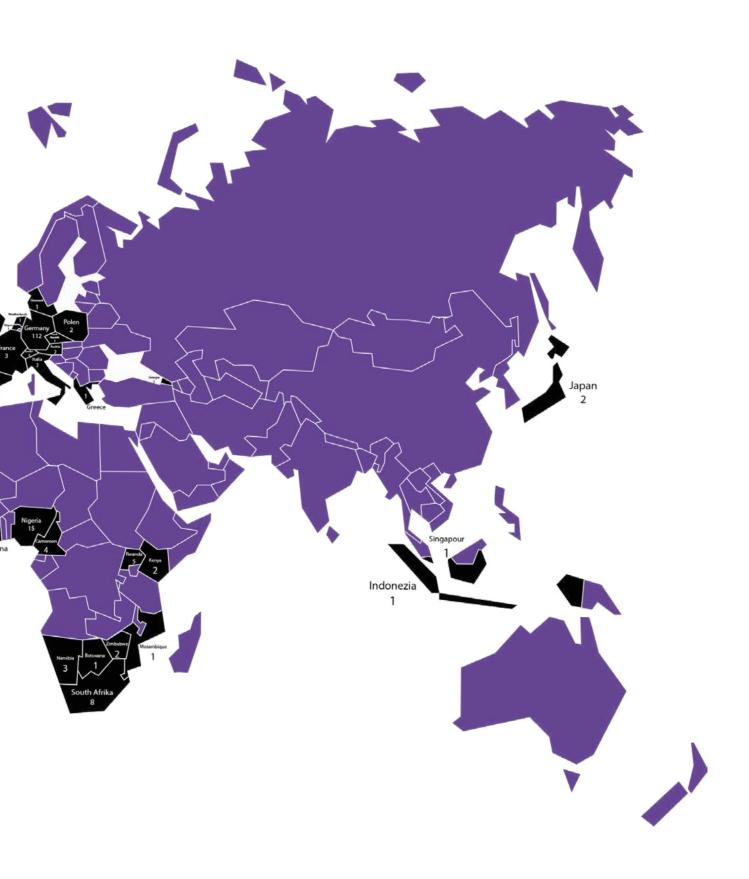


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SUBMISSIONS

244 designs were submitted and approved in the first phase of the art competition





DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES AND INTERACTION

THE JURY OF THE ART COMPETITION FOR THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL

Every contest depends on the expertise of the jurors. This too is true in the context of the Decolonial Memorial. Berlin Global Village was truly delighted to be able to assemble such a high-caliber and comprehensive, competent group of jurors. The decision-making process on the Decolonial Memorial art contest was carried out by:

Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu Princeton University, Visual Artist Specialist Juror

Photo: privat

Chika Okeke-Agulu is an artist, critic, and art historian specializing in the indigenous, modern, and contemporary art history and theory of Africa and its diaspora.

He is the Director of the African World Initiative and Robert Schirmer Professor of Art and Archaeology and African American Studies at Princeton University. He was Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford University (2022 to 2023) and is a Fellow of the British Academy. Okeke-Agulu is also co-editor of Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art and writes the blog Ofodunka. As a curator, Okeke-Agulu has organized numerous significant exhibitions like Samuel Fosso: Affirmative Acts (Prince-



ton University Art Museum, 2022). Furthermore, he serves as an advisor to the Hyundai Tate Research Centre and Tate Modern (London), The Africa Institute (Sharjah), and the Museum of West African Art (Benin City). He served on the International Jury of the 60th Venice Biennale (2024). His many awards include the Frank Jewett Mather Award for Distinction in Art Criticism (CAA, 2016). In his role as chair, Chika Okeke-Agulu led the jury sessions for the Decolonial Memorial project and played a crucial role in the selection and evaluation of the artistic designs.



María Linares Visual Artist Specialist Juror

María Linares is an artist born in Bogotá, Colombia, who lives and works in Berlin. She specializes in video works and participatory art actions about prejudice and racism in/for/about public space.

Her works often aim to surprise people in urban spaces and actively engage passersby in an exchange. She has received several awards, including grants from "Kunst im öffentlichen Raum der Landeshauptstadt Dresden" (2017), "Madrid Procesos," and the Berlin Senate (2011). From 2015 to 2022, she completed her Doctorate in Fine Arts at the Bauhaus Univer-

Photo: Sedat Mehder

sity in Weimar. Linares is an active member of various committees, including the Advisory Board for the Arts (BAK) of the Berlin Senate (2015 to 2022) and the Commission for Art in Public Space in Berlin (since 2017). She is President of the International Society of Fine Arts (IGBK, since 2020) and Speaker of the German Artists' Association (Deutsches Künstlerbund e.V.) (since 2022). María Linares co-chaired the jury for the Decolonial Memorial art contest.

Gary Stewart Queen Mary University Of London, Visual Artist Specialist Juror

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Gary Stewart is a versatile artist, academic, producer, and curator involved in pioneering initiatives and projects around the world that explore and interrogate social and political issues of identity, culture, technology, and creativity.

Inspired by pop culture, archives, history, and mythology, his work creates spaces for connections with disenfranchised groups in society and provides ways for them to construct their own spaces of memory so that their voices can be heard. From 1995 to 2010, he was the Head of New Media at the Institute of International Visual Arts in London. In 2011,

he founded Dubmorphology, an interdisciplinary artist, research, and performance group in London. Stewart has led international art projects as a lead artist and curator for the British Council and led a student mentoring project as part of Tate Exchange at Tate Modern. He teaches at Queen Mary University of London and Goldsmiths College, University of London, and is the recipient of a research award from the University of Greenwich looking at diversity and experimental sonic practice.

Kristina Leko Berlin University of the Arts, Visual Artist Specialist Juror



Photo: VLSmithson

Kristina Leko is an interdisciplinary artist, activist, and educator.

Her participatory and collaborative practice focuses on interaction and (self-)empowerment through alternative narratives in public space. She works in the areas of urban intervention, documentary film, performances, happenings, and exhibitions. Since 2013 she has been teaching Social Art Practice at the Berlin University of the Arts (Universität der

Künste), Institute for Art in Context. In her seminars and research projects, she has worked on topics such as labor and migration history at the intersection of colonial history, post-migrant and postcolonial urbanities, cultural representation, and the culture of remembrance. Since 2018, she has been a member of the jury for public art in the city of Stuttgart and was recognized for her contributions to social innovation in the collaboration for the culture of remembrance.



Sylbee Kim Bbk Berlin, Visual Artist Specialist Juror

Photo: privat

Sylbee Kim is a South Korean video artist based in Berlin.

Kim's video installations experiment with digital and physical making processes to imagine sociopolitical grounds for less destructive ways of living and dying. Kim's display structures and handling of audio-visual languages propose a pluralistic perception of our reality. She held solo exhibitions in Cologne (MÉLANGE), Prague (Nevan Contempo Gallery), and Seoul (Insa Art Space) and participated

in group exhibitions at Gwangju Biennale, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, Seoul Mediacity Biennale (SeMA), Kunstverein Göttingen, and Neuer Berliner Kunstverein. Kim has received grants from Stiftung Kunstfonds, Arts Council Korea, and the Berlin Senate. She was a resident artist at Gasworks, London and was the first Asian board member of berufsverband bildender künstler*innen berlin.



Dr. Mithu Melanie Sanyal Author Specialist Juror

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Mithu Sanyal is a novelist, academic, literary critic, columnist, and broadcaster.

Her work has been published by international newspapers, including The European, The Guardian, DIE ZEIT, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Neue Züricher Zeitung, and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. She is a jury member for the Friendenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels (Peace Prize of the German Book Trade) and the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize. Her books include a

cultural history of the Vulva (2009) and Rape. Aspects of a Crime (2016) and the essay Mithu Sanyal on Emily Brontë (2022). Her debut novel Identitti (2021) was shortlisted for the German Book Award. Her latest book Antichristie on the armed resistance against British colonialism at the beginning of the twentieth century was published in autumn 2024.

Michael Küppers-Adebisi Consultant/Initiator of the Decolonial Memorial Specialist Juror

Photo: Joshua Kantara

As a writer and performance artist, Michael Küppers-Adebisi focuses on the intersections of visual art, cultural and media activism.

As a founding member of Berlin Global Village (2012 to 2018) and the Decolonize Berlin Association (e.V.) (since 2018), he initiates urban, decolonial interventions. He is co-founder of the Black Media Congress Berlin (2002 to 2004),

the May Ayim Awards (UNESCO, 2004), and the Black Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art and Discourse (UN Decade for People of African Descent, since 2012). He is the project initiator of the Decolonial Memorial (2017 to 2023) and was the project coordinator (May 2023 to September 2023), jury member (specialist juror), and project consultant (2024) for the Decolonial Memorial.

Sonja Hohenbild Barazani.berlin, Visual Artist Juror on standby



Photo: privat

Sonja Hohenbild is a cultural worker who engages with coloniality and its roots in various roles, media, and collectives.

She studied visual arts at the Braunschweig University of Arts (HBK) and the Berlin University of the Arts, and communication for development at the University of Malmö. Her work focuses on multidirectional memory, thought-provoking memorials, and processes of resistance and healing. She is part of BARAZANI.berlin at the SPREEUFER project space.



Karin Korte District Councillor for Culture Neukölln Expert

Photo: privat

Karin Korte began her career as a social worker in the Regional Service of the Berlin-Neukölln Youth Welfare Office.

She went on to direct a day center for people with disabilities in Berlin-Buckow. She went on to run cultural programs for elderly people in Kreuzberg on behalf of the district office. Other positions in her career include serving as the first Migration Commissioner of the Neukölln district in 2002 and as Director of

Gropiusstadt from 2006 to 2018. She was also a member of the Berlin House of Representatives, where she served as the SPD's spokesperson on integration policy and worked on committees for culture, civic engagement, and participation. Since 2018, she has been District Councilor for Education, Culture, and Sports in Neukölln.



Dorothee Bienert District of Neukölln, Head of Culture Department Expert

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Dorothee Bienert is a curator and cultural ded tl

manager who has headed the Culture Department of the District of Neukölln in Berlin since 2023.

An art historian and Slavist, she has initiated and organized cultural projects at the intersection of art and society throughout Europe. She has curated exhibitions for Berlin and international institutions and, together with a women's collective in Berlin-Wedding, foun-

ded the project space uqbar, whose program she was co-responsible for until 2023. From 2013 to 2022, she curated the program of the Gallery in Körner Park (Galerie im Körnerpark) and the Gallery in Saalbau (Galerie im Saalbau) in Berlin-Neukölln, and in 2021, she founded a new experimental cultural space in a historic toilet facility on the Neukölln shipping canal: Kunstbrücke am Wildenbruch. Since 2018, she has been a member of the Berlin Council for the Arts.

Anne Lampen Architectural Office Anne Lampen, Architect of the new building of Berlin Global Village Expert

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Anne Lampen studied at the Technical University of Berlin and worked as a junior partner at the architecture firm WSP, where she was involved in careful urban renewal in Berlin-Kreuzberg and the maintenance of renovated buildings.

With the founding of her own firm, Anne Lampen Architects (Anne Lampen Architekten), she expanded her focus to include ecological building, housing associations, cooperatives, building groups, private investors, and social



sponsors. In 2007, she developed the award-winning series of houses, and since 2008 she has been realizing high-quality individual houses, villas, settlements, multi-storey residential buildings, and cultural buildings. Anne Lampen is the architect of the new Berlin Global Village building in Berlin and has been a member on the board of the Association of German Architects (Bund Deutscher Architektinnen und Architekten, BDA) since 2015.

EXPERTS



Armin Massing Executive Director of Berlin Global Village Expert

See information in the introduction of the project team.

Photo: Sedat Mehder



Elfriede Müller Office for Art in Public Space of Kulturwerk GmbH of bbk berlin Expert

See information in the introduction to the external coordination team.

Photo: Sedat Mehder



Stefan Krüskemper Visual Artist, Writer, Art Contest Coordinator Expert

See information in the introduction to the external coordination team.

Photo: Sedat Mehder



Óscar Mauricio Ardila Luna Curator, Writer, Visual Artist Expert

See information in the introduction to the external coordination team.

Photo: Sedat Mehder

BETWEEN APPRECIATION AND CRITIQUE

Search for the 20 Finalists



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Kalifa shooting the first jury meeting: Kristina Leko, Sylbee Kim, Mithu M. Sanyal, Gary Stewart, María Linares and Michael Küppers-Adebisi

On September 16 and 17, 2023, the jury met for the first jury session of the Decolonial Memorial at Berlin Global Village. Previously, all project communication and coordination had taken place virtually. Now, this was the first time the judges met in person. The atmosphere was exciting as the art contest took on a more concrete form with the session in the Miriam Makeba Hall.

The jury was international, with a diverse range of expertise and perspectives, and inclu-

ded renowned art historians, artists, writers, and theorists: Dr. Mithu Melanie Sanyal, Gary Stewart, Sylbee Kim, Kristina Leko, Michael Küppers-Adebisi, María Linares, and Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu as jury chair – together they brought the decolonial approach of the project into the decision-making process.

Thanks to the competent support of the Paraphrasis team as interpreters and the reliable translation technology from Ellerbrock, it was possible to hold the session in both Ger-



Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Katinka Theiss at the first jury meeting

Akinola Famson and Dorothee Bienert at the first jury meeting



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Prof Dr Chika Okeke-Agulu and María Linares at the first jury meeting

man and English. This gave all the jurors the opportunity to express themselves in their preferred language and, at the same time, make the complex thought processes comprehensible to everyone.

Thanks to effective dissemination, the contest had gained a significant reach during the registration phase. The art contest's external coordination team presented 244 eligible designs to the jury. With great perseverance and concentration, the jurors selected 20 designs for the final round.

One week prior to the jury session, a digital meeting was held with the entire jury to allow for introductions and to explain the rules of procedure. This made it easier for the jurors to get right to work after they arrived.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Gary Stewart at the first jury meeting

All the designs were presented on the first day. The external coordination team conducted a highly professional preliminary review. The four-person team reviewed all the designs and divided them into blocks of ten. For each idea submitted, a two-minute presentation was prepared with one to two accompanying images and an explanation of the content. In this way, each work was given an equal opportunity to be considered. The art contest process was anonymous. Thus, the jury was not informed of the identity of the applicants. In this first introduction, each draft had to receive at least one vote from a judge to advance to the next round. This eventually led to too many designs qualifying for the next round, so the judges reduced the selection to those designs with at least two votes. 13 designs remained.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Kristina Leko at the first jury meeting

Since the jury wanted to select 20 designs, some of the works eliminated on the first day had to be reconsidered on the second day. Thus, began rounds of discussion and deliberation. Thereby negotiating fundamental questions such as "What can decoloniality mean today?" and "What are decolonial aesthetics?". There were intense debates about the visualization of chains and the depiction of suffering people. The jury decided that colonial trauma should not be the desired visual language for the Decolonial Memorial, and it should not contribute to re-traumatization. In the end, another 11 designs were selected, bringing the total to 24.

On the final day, the remaining 24 designs were deliberated in depth, and the jurors shared their individual impressions of the selected works. This made it possible to formulate differentiated perspectives and additional comments for or against the respective works. Finally, the designs were ranked from 1 to 24. The top 20 were selected, and the remaining four were placed on a waiting list.

In addition, the jury included a number of highly qualified experts who were able to evaluate the designs from architectural or structural points of view. Anne Lampen of Anne Lampen Architects, Dorothee Bienert, Head of the Culture Department in the District of Neukölln, and Karin Korte, Neukölln District Councilor for Education, Schools, Culture and Sport, supported the jury with their expertise.



Photo: Sedat Mehde

Michael Küppers-Adebisi at the first jury meeting

This support was critical to the success of the project, as structural considerations had to be taken into account when evaluating ideas on a case-by-case basis. Some of the proposed ideas involved breaking through the building's facade, while others required consideration of weight.

The experts also assisted the jurors in formulating recommendations and comments for the artists. Suggestions were made for necessary adjustments to make the ideas feasible, including budget adjustments, calls for compliance with escape routes, information on historic preservation, and suggestions for materials. At the end of the session, a ceremonial toast was given. However, some of the jurors had to leave immediately. As quickly



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Salwa Aleryani at the first jury meeting

and intensely as they came together, they left with positive impressions of what they had learned and contributed to the process. It was exciting for everyone to see how the

It was exciting for everyone to see how the finalists would develop their ideas.



Photo: Sedat Mehde

Sylbee Kim and Kristina Leko at the first jury meeting

ANONYMITY VS. CONTEXT

IN THE GLOBALLY OPEN, ANONYMOUS, TWO-PHASED ART CONTEST FOR THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL IN BERLIN-NEUKÖLLN



Photo: Sedat Mehder

María Linares at the first jury meeting

By María Linares Edited by Dr. Rüdiger Loeffelmeier

"It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories."

Donna Haraway (Haraway 2018, 23)

Internationally announced contests for art in architecture are not very common. Beyond the necessary funding, this is certainly due to an important characteristic or selection criterion in such art in architecture projects: contextual relevance. Especially for the contest to realize a decolonial memorial, the inclusion of international narratives, thoughts, descriptions, stories... was absolutely crucial. Here, the perspective of seeing, telling, describing... was of particular importance.

The Kenyan writer and cultural theorist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, who is convinced that the way we see something is strongly influenced by

how we relate to it, set out on a "quest for relevance"—as he calls his search for a "liberating perspective" in African literature that would enable Africans to define themselves in relation to themselves and, from there, to others in the world. Ngũgĩ notes that African children and youth, through their encounter with literature in colonial schools or universities, come to know the world as defined and reflected from a European perspective. Their worldview molded by Europe. Therefore, Africa does not occupy the center but exists as an appendix or satellite, on the "periphery." (Ngũgĩ 2017, 152–162)

His central question is then:

"From what perspective do we see the world?" (Ngũgĩ 2017, 160)

Especially in the field of literature:

"If there is a need to study the historical continuity of a single culture, why can't it be African? Why can't African literature be the focus, so that we can see other cultures in relation to it?" (Ngũgĩ 2017, 155)



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The jury chairman Prof Dr Chika Okeke-Agulu and his deputy María Linares at the first jury meeting

Ngũgĩ is indignant that long after independence, Kenyan and African students are exposed to foreign cultural values uncritically, which are not only irrelevant to their needs but also devalue African cultural heritage. This phenomenon exceeds literature. It extends to all other fields of culture and education.

His "Search for Relevance," published along with other essays in the book Decolonizing the Mind, is a plea for national or regional liberation as a prerequisite for genuine international and democratic equality among peoples, bringing justice, progress, and peace. (Ngũgĩ 2017, 170–174)

Ngũgĩ's thoughts and challenges are certainly relevant not only to the African continent and not just in the field of literary studies, as he notes himself. They are of extraordinary importance in all former colonies where "internal colonialism" continues to take root.

In the first phase of the globally open, anonymous, two-phase contest, we as a jury were confronted on the one hand with the question of whether we could decolonize our own understanding of art and follow Ngũgĩ's appeal

with our expertise in this particular process of selecting a "decolonial" memorial, and on the other hand with a large number of designs that, as will be shown, turned out to be expressions of internal colonialism. By "we" I mean the experienced professional jurors Kristina Leko (Berlin University of the Arts, visual artist), Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu (Princeton University, visual artist), Gary Stewart (Queen Mary University of London, visual artist), and myself, María Linares (visual artist), as well as the associate jurors Michael Küppers-Adebisi (representative of the organizer and project sponsor of Berlin Global Village gGmbH, visual



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Óscar Ardila, Stefan Krüskemper and Katinka Theiss at the second jury meeting



Photo: Sedat Mehder

María Linares, Armin Massing and Michaela Zischek at the second jury meeting

artist) and Dr. Mithu Melanie Sanyal (author). As Prof. Dr. Walter Mignolo (Duke University) had to excuse himself, Sylbee Kim (permanent alternate, visual artist) joined the session with voting rights. We were supported by experts such as architect Anne Lampen, whose architectural firm designed and implemented the new building for Berlin Global Village, Armin Massing (managing director of Berlin Global Village gGmbH), Karin Korte (District Councilor for Culture in Neukölln), and Elfriede Müller from the Office for Art in Public Spaces of Kulturwerk GmbH in the professional association of visual artists in berlin (bbk berlin). For the second phase, visual artist Sonja Hohenbild served as the permanent alternate. For both phases, Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu was proposed and unanimously elected as jury chair, as I was proposed and unanimously elected as vice chair.

Designs for the first phase of the contest had to be submitted digitally by August 13, 2023. From a total of 273 submissions, 244 designs passed the preliminary review and were accepted into the contest. The remaining 29 submissions were either late or incomplete and were therefore not accepted. The jury met for the first time on September 16 and 17, 2023.

One of the major challenges in the selection process was to counteract the structural disadvantages created by colonialism, which are reflected in art as well as in all areas of our society. For example, the jury unanimously decided to learn the continent of the submitters before the preliminary review to ensure a balanced selection, and that approximately 30%

of the designs selected for the second phase would come from the Global South. However, it was also explicitly discussed that the diaspora in Europe and North America should not be disadvantaged by a higher percentage.

I learned the term "internal colonialism" from Bolivian sociologist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui. It is used globally to refer to structural political and economic inequalities within a country/ former colony. The term refers specifically to the characteristic of the internalized subjugation of colonized peoples to the hegemony of Eurocentrism and the mimetic repetition of Eurocentric patterns. Since the 16th century, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPoC) have been forced by European colonizers, first in the American colonies and then globally, to imitate a foreign culture and even to be ashamed of their own culture. Therefore, power and domination relations in the colonies continue in an internalized form even today. As in colonialism in general, in "internal colonialism" the justification of unequal relations of power and domination is supported by racist arguments.

Internal colonialism has many different faces or expressions that make it invisible. Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, for example, talks about how the hypocritical discourse of multiculturalism in former colonies contributes to maintaining the heaemony of (white) elites by illegalizing and eradicating through forced deforestation the legal coca leaf markets of indigenous populations who are already marginalized by the label of "indigenous." Rivera Cusicanqui writes: "For a long time, my work has been concerned with the idea that we are dealing with a case of ongoing internal colonialism in the present of our countries." In "internal colonialism," words play a special role, she says, because they are not there to name something but to obscure something—such as talking about equality when a large part of the population is denied its rights as "indigenous people." (Rivera Cusicanqui 2018, 82, 42)

Of the 244 designs meticulously presented to us on September 16 for the preliminary review, many bore witness to an unreflective internal colonialism, in which representations of re-victimization hindered our own efforts to questi-



CONTEMPLATING JURY DUTY

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Prof Dr Chika Okeke-Agulu and Sonja Hohenbild at the second jury meeting

on colonial continuities in the understanding of art and made the jury's task even more difficult. One juror commented that they could no longer stand to see chains or representations of enslaved people. I could no longer bear Mercator's map of the world map—with its claim to include "the whole world." This representation reproduces a profound form of 16th-century Eurocentrism. And suddenly, after a second round of evaluation, we were left with only 13 selected designs, even though the goal of the first phase was to select up to 20 designs and

four alternatives, or 24 designs in total, for the second phase of the contest.

Of course, the jury could have chosen to select only thirteen designs, but we were well aware that art in architecture has historically been a means of promoting artists and should continue to function as such today. So, requests were made for re-evaluation, and another round of evaluation was scheduled to give up to 20 artists or artist groups and four alternates the opportunity to participate in the second phase of the contest.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Dorothee Bienert and Anne Lampen at the second jury meeting



Photo: Sedat Mehder

María Linares and Maimouna Ouattara during the panel discussion at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

For this second phase of the contest, the jury met on January 27, 2024. Since the first session in September 2023, events in Germany and around the world had added to the urgency of the contest.

Now, the focus was on the elaboration of the original idea, so the artistic quality of the design had to be assessed in the context of its feasibility and the compliance with all technical requirements.

In this respect, the development of the designs was particularly fortunate. While many of them were just utopian ideas in the first phase, in the second phase, they were incredibly well worked out in terms of their feasibility.

However, the challenges for the judges remained tremendous. While the first phase of the contest was characterized by questions of decolonizing our understanding of art and internal colonialism, the second phase required

a balancing act between the anonymity required in contests and the need for contextualization in order to better understand the individual designs. In 2024, we can no longer ignore the relevance of context in art production, especially because, as mentioned at the beginning: "How we see something—even with our own eyes—depends very much on how we relate to it." (Ngũgĩ 2017, 153)

Right in the first chapter of Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene, Donna Haraway recounts that she learned from social and cultural anthropologist Marilyn Strathern in The Gender of the Gift (a study based on ethnographic research in the highlands of Papua New Guinea) that "it matters what ideas we use to think other ideas." (Haraway 2018, 23)

Donna Haraway expands the idea: "It's not just about the ideas that lead us to think of other ideas, but also about concerns, narratives, thoughts, descriptions, connections, stories, etc."

The evaluation of 20 designs in the second phase (244 in the first phase!) that explicitly addressed decolonization remained extremely challenging without knowledge of how they were contextualized.

Nevertheless, participation in the jury sessions during both phases was very exciting and incredibly pleasant, thanks to the good preliminary review and the intensive exchange in the aforementioned expert group, as well as the excellent support of the Berlin Global Village team. In connection with this-apropos of my situating—I would like to refer to a very personal experience that I really enjoyed during these days: The catering food reminded me of food from my childhood... I just felt "at home." Fried plantains, cassava, beans, a chickpea and vegetable filling wrapped in banana leaves even, that tasted intensively like the Colombian tamales of my childhood. When I asked the cook where these dishes came from, she said Gambia. I had thought that they could have come from the Caribbean coast. As a result of the transatlantic trade in enslaved people, there are amazing connections within the Global South.

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¹I deliberately avoid the word "homeland" because it is regularly used by conservative and far-right positions to promote a closed, homogeneous, and static understanding of culture, which needs to be countered.

A DECOLONIAL CONVERSATION ABOUT THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL¹

After the jury selected 20 artistic designs in the first session, the artists were asked to elaborate and develop their ideas in the second phase of the art competition. During this phase, all participating artists had the opportunity to engage in an online questionand-answer colloquium. There they could ask questions about the jury's comments, the next steps, and the specifications for the prepared designs.

In the following text, the 20 final designs are reviewed and situated within a decolonial aesthetic by Professor Walter D. Mignolo, one of the leading thinkers in decolonial theory.



QR-Code to the digital exibition of the 20 final designs



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Prof Dr Walter Mignolo visits the Berlin Global Village

Walter D. Mignolo Duke University

After examining the twenty finalists' designs, I couldn't resist imagining a scene with twenty unique entrances to the Berlin Global Village headquarters, each with its own memorial. I imagined an immersive Decolonial Memorial Field inviting visitors to reflect on the past and present of Western colonial expansion around the globe since the sixteenth century. Visitors would be invited, furthermore, not only to reflect on five hundred years of Western colonial expansion, an exercise that could be pursued from various historical, sociological, economical, ideological, anthropological, and psychological angles, but also to reflect decolonially about it.

What would it mean to reflect "decolonially" on five hundred years of colonial expansion, instead of in the available existing disciplinary options in the human and social sciences? How might a Decolonial Memorial Field provoke the visitors' senses and thoughts, immersed in a field of diverse sculptures, images, and words on the floor and their accompanying narratives? This question echoes one of the stated goals of the Berlin Global Village, "to promote the decolonial investigations of coloniality."

¹ This is a fictional situation where the characters read from and comment on from the official description of each project. Sometimes their reading has quotation marks. Their comments are a mixture of official information and their own free interpretations of them. It is a decolonial fictional text delinking form from academic colonial restrictions.

My own reflections on the imaginary reflections of a visitor's reflections recall the motivation behind the Decolonial Memorial. The Decolonial Memorial is "an artistic project of Berlin Global Village—a center hosting NGOs working on developmental policy and migrant diaspora that investigate decolonization." The Berlin Global Village's artistic project was enacted by means of a well-organized, carefully managed, and anonymous evaluation of proposals submitted through a worldwide competition of individual artists and artistic groups.

Evaluation was based on a dozen criteria, the first four are relevant to the conversation that follows: firstly, artistic quality of the proposal; secondly, design idea/guiding concept; thirdly, design implementation and space quality; fourthly, engagement of the work with decolonization, architecture, the history of the site and/or the institutional framework, considering proportion, scale, technique, materiality, and coloration; correspondence between the work and the shape of the space. While points one and three underscore quality and require considering the actual space for the project, points two and four relate to the Decolonial Memorial's main concern: the authors' and works' engagement with decolonization. As in any competition, applicants are conditioned by the stipulated criteria. In this case, the criteria are locked in two key words: artistic and decolonial. The two words are not necessarily connected, for artistic projects do not have to be decolonial, and decolonial projects do not have to be artistic.

I wonder how these two criteria would play out for visitors to my imaginary Decolonial Memorial Field where all twenty finalists' projects were built. Would the visitors concentrate on the artistic quality or the decolonial aspect of the work? The idea of "artistic quality" (is quality required to be artistic?) is embedded in Western education and in the Western concept of art, a historically regional concept projected to universality through European colonial expansion. The schooling of taste around this regional concept of "art" is taken for granted among millions of art museum visitors, so presumably visitors of the Decolonial Memorial Field would see things

in these terms. The decolonial aspects of the works, on the other hand, may not and would not be as easy to discern because there is no Western education on the decolonial because there is not much education on coloniality. Western education concentrates on modernity, not on coloniality. I understand that changing the terms that guided the conversations in education and in the public sphere, is one of the functions of the Decolonial Memorial at Berlin Global Village.

I began to imagine myself next to a visitor. I began by suggesting to that imagined visitor when starting our tour on the Decolonial Memorial Field, that we should take artistic quality as a given since that aspect of the competition was vetted by the evaluating committee. I suggested that we focus instead on discerning the decolonial aspects of each work. At that moment, I imagined us looking at the seventeen sculptures, the mural, and the word inscriptions on the floor. Walking through the field, the visitor and I would exchange our thoughts, examine the works, and engage with the ideas and descriptions submitted with each design proposal.

While my imagined visitor's perception would be limited to what was available to see and read, I have contextual knowledge of the Berlin Global Village's project. During our time in the imaginary Decolonial Memorial Field, the visitor would use the available QR codes to access descriptions of three of the twenty works and take notes in a notebook or photos of the descriptions with their iPhone.

After two hours of walking, chatting, and exchanging views on each project, we went to a café nearby to exchange our impressions and expand on our reflections. In the garden, shady and cool, the visitor started the conversation commenting on Spirit of Sankofa. The visitor noted that the wearing of masks, be it in spiritual ritual praxis or at Halloween, has a transformative power. In the case of Spirit of Sankofa—to underscore his impression, the visitor read from the handwritten notes and from the photo on their iPhone "African

masks, beyond artistry, symbolize profound transformation. Wearing one involves surrendering the human body, becoming a vessel for the represented spirit or animal, fostering a deep connection with nature and the spirit world"—a crucial aspect of tribal cultures. While listening, I noticed the expression "beyond artistry." I pondered that the power of masks doesn't seem to require artistic quality. But I didn't mention it because that would take our conversation in a different direction, and I wanted to wait and see where the visitor was orienting the conversation.

The visitor stopped to take a sip of coffee and then wondered aloud whether it had been possible to perceive decolonial features beyond or despite artistic quality. That was the point! The visitor continued recalling that Spirit of Sankofa is a bronze memorial consisting of three parts: humanity, nature, and the world. How is this done? The visitor asked rhetorically before following up by reading: "By crafting a mythical Sankofa bird as an African dance mask." He added that Sankofa is an Adinkra word meaning "go back and fetch it." The point here, I told myself, is not going back to the past, ever, but rather bringing forward what was destituted, and is relevant in the present to reorient the future. The visitor reminded me that the work's description also states, "preserving past knowledge... emphasizing the importance of understanding history and heritage for personal and global improvement." Well, I intervened, I'm not sure "improvement" would be a decolonial goal. It sounds more like a modern expectation centered on individual progress, achievement, and competition.

Well, the visitor said, maybe that artist is not acquainted with the decolonial vocabulary. It may be so, I consented. I think so, replied the visitor, because the idea is there, despite the vocabulary. Listen to this, the visitor continued: the sculpture, the gigantic mask, "envisions humanity wearing the transformative mask" and breaking away "from foreign control" while reconnecting with cherished legacies for our chosen modes of existence. That makes more sense to me, I commented. It is clear now that the author is concerned with two decolonial tasks: delinking from mo-

dernity while, at the same time, relinking with what modernity destroyed and disavowed.

At that point, I recalled my training in semiology. I told the visitor that I became aware that verbal languages, in the restricted sense of oral/speech and writing, are the only sign system that can reflect on itself recursively as a sign system and reflect descriptively on non-verbal sign systems. In relation to what we saw in the Decolonial Memorial Field, this means that associating a sculpture or an installation with decolonization cannot be described with another sculpture or installation. To do this, one needs verbal language. This requirement, I concluded, makes the Decolonial Memorial Competition more puzzling.

Why? The visitor asked while ordering some pastry from the waitress that was just passing by, serving other clients. Because, I said, any of the twenty individual or collective artists selected were required to describe the intended decolonial idea of their work. While for a personal creation that is not responding to a call, it is not necessary to describe the idea. That would be left to the viewers. In fact, if you googled "art and decoloniality," you will find a wide range of texts and figures. In the absence of a description, the artist must help the viewer by means of a title. Even when there is no title, the viewer must figure out why the title is "no title." The visitor asked me to give an example. When Pablo Picasso painted his most famous piece, Guernica—I said—he did not add a written description saying that it was a protest to Hitler bombarding the town of Guernica in support of Franco. Artists, individual or collective, that are not in a competition do not have to do that. It is indeed contrary to the idea of non-verbal artwork. I see, said the visitor. The meaning of a work not only depends on how viewers interpret it but also on how the artist describes her or his own work when they are interviewed.

After thinking for a few minutes and looking at the notes in the notebook, the visitor told me that there were four additional works in the Decolonial Memorial Field that could be better understood following my semiotic explanation. However, the visitor commented,

these works have an added feature—the information can be accessed via QR code. These four additional works are Unbound, Heimlich/ Unheimlich, BELL DRUM/TROMMELGLO-CKE/TAMBOR CAMPANA, and EarthNest. We could also include Licht der Wahrheit/ Beacon of Truth, I added, which doesn't have a QR code with a narrative but does have a narrative text that is part of the artwork itself. True, I said, I did not take notes, but yes, I remembered that some of the projects include a QR code. I do remember well Beacon of Truth. Not the content of the text, but the text as a component of the artwork. Now, what becomes intriguing, added the visitor, is how these four artworks correlate with decolonization.

Good question, I said. And I would add The Ground Beneath Your Feet to the list. This one doesn't have a QR code or written words in its composition, however, in my view, it suggests a scope of global logic coloniality that is important to keep in mind in relation to specific historical instances of colonization. Its written idea mentions that the stones it contains come from six continents. I imagine that the artist refers to Asia, Africa, America, Europe, Antarctica, and Australia. Colonialism in each of these parts of the world was different both in time and in terms of the imperial state legislating it. Each colonized area and people have their own local histories, languages, memories, and praxis of living. However, the underlying logic of coloniality was exported to the colonies from the local histories of each European imperial state, adapting the specifics of each colonialism to the circumstances. The entire world was not colonized at once, at the same time and in the same place. This is why I find "coloniality" to be a crucial concept since it names the underlying logic of diverse historical and geographical colonialisms. These ideas that have been explored by Latin American decolonial thinkers are in fact a game changer.

Why? The inquisitive visitor asked. I explained that coloniality refers to the common logic of all Western colonial expansion since the sixteenth century. And this is relevant because when we talk about decolonization today, we are not referring to the Roman or Persian em-

pires, even less to Alexander the Great. We are talking about European colonial expansion since 1500. The European conquest and colonization of what came to be named America, then the colonization of Asia and Africa up to the leadership and expansion of the United States after the Second World War. In this process, the Russian Revolution of 1917 disputed for seventy-five years the hegemony of Western imperial/colonial domination. Well, that makes sense, the visitor pensively responded. After a silence, the visitor added that we shall be talking about decoloniality instead of decolonization.

Well, I said, we can speak of both, as each word has a distinct denotation. Take, for example, modernity and modernization, and coloniality and colonization. The former are an abstraction naming a general vision and orientation of European history since the Renaissance period of 1500 to 1650, which coincided with the conquest and colonization of America. Modernization, rather, addresses instances, the space and time in which the Western idea of modernity has been implemented by imposition or by will of the local population. I see, said the visitor, still pensive. So, modernity and coloniality are two sides of the same coin, as are modernization and colonization? Which means that decoloniality addresses modernity/coloniality while decolonization addresses instances of modernization/ colonization?

I think you are right, I replied, realizing that I had not considered those correlations. The visitor continued to press the issue: so, decolonization is always connected to and acts on a specific colonization (say, Spanish, British, Dutch, or German), while decoloniality is always connected to and acting on modernity/coloniality. Which means that decoloniality and decolonization are distinct and complementary operations, like the complementarity of coloniality and colonization, and modernity and modernization.

If you are right, I said, then we must reconsider what we were talking about a few minutes ago regarding the correlation of the verbal description (the idea) and the artwork. Yes, perhaps, the visitor considered and ad-

ded, I do not think we have to change too much of what we have said up to now. The only thing we must pay attention to now is when we refer to a specific colonization—say, the Germans in Namibia, the Dutch in Indonesia, the British in India, or the Spanish in South America and the Caribbean. The visitor continued to surprise me. Yes, I said, just as you suggest, decoloniality investigates how coloniality works, but it must do so by examining specific instances of colonization. In this way, decoloniality is an analytic perspective guiding the investigation of the logic of coloniality and the rhetoric of modernity. Pause, silence. We decided to take these thoughts and return to the four artworks.

Ok, I continued, let's take Heimlich/Unheimlich (Canny/Uncanny), a sculpture inspired by the Imperial German SMS cruiser to repress revolts in Zanzibar and Namibia. In this case, the artwork and its description invite us to investigate imperial methods of suppressing decolonial revolts, that is, revolts for local liberation from colonization. The revolts aimed at liberation, while their suppression sought to maintain the German civilizing mission. This artwork uses sounds and images, both moving image projections on the building walls and images accessible through the QR code. In any event, the title of the work and its description, Heimlich/Unheimlich, brings forth an added dimension to the sound, moving images, and sculpture. More than underscoring the decolonial revolts, Heimlich/Unheimlich highlights the hard power of colonial repression.

Well said, the visitor exclaimed, not without enthusiasm. Now let me bring forward UN-BOUND and BELL DRUM and try to match your reflection on Heimlich/Unheimlich. BELL DRUM brings sounds to the equation. It could be music or a tool to exchange coded messages between villages. There is nothing new in modernity except its rhetorical celebration of "newness": the morse code is a technical version of the bell drum. Obviously, the musical and messaging functions of the slit gong are not prominent features of European history. You could notice that without reading the description, the visitor said. That is true, I consented. Nevertheless, the author of the

project notes that BELL DRUM intends to invoke colonial histories of Asia, Africa, the Americas, and Oceania. So, here is another move to suggest that stories reconstituting the destituted are a fundamental technique of decolonial thinking and doing.

Much like The ground beneath your feet, I added. This work invites us to remember that coloniality is the common logic of all Western colonialisms in the four named continents. An added element I consider important is the use of slit song for rituals and healing, as the author notes in the description. Not to mention that slit gongs from Oceania feature human faces carved at the top, invoking ancestry. Well, the visitor interrupted, ancestry is a common reference across the twenty artworks. BELL DRUM, like several others, brings into the present what colonial narratives told in the name of modernity had expelled from the present to highlight that Europe is the present of time and the center of space. As in Spirit of Sankofa, the decolonial reconstitution of the work corrects the denials of contemporaneity, which is the European denial of contemporaneity to co-existing histories. But that is not all. In this project, there is an archive accessible through the QR code. The archive starts in 1441, when, allegedly, the first enslaved human beings in Africa were transported to Europe.

Well said! It was my turn to recognize my interlocutor. And much like UNBOUND, I added, an archive of colonial stories can be accessed through a QR code. I said colonial "narratives"—the visitor interrupted—but you said colonial "stories." What is the difference? Ah, good point, I consented. In my understanding, colonial narratives are told by the colonizer, always providing half of the story, insofar as colonizer narratives silence and destitute colonized stories. But when colonial stories are told by the colonized themselves, these colonial stories have two main functions: for one, preserve the memory, languages, and praxes of living of the colonized, and secondly, to confront and dispute the "truth" of colonial narratives. That makes sense, the visitor responded. What caught my attention in UN-BOUND, the visitor added, was the strong call to reflect on women and colonization,

but also on women and decolonization. Any thoughts on that?

Well, that is a complex topic. But before addressing your question, I want to point out that one of the relevant features of UN-BOUND is its invitation to use the entry space as a gathering place to share stories and to meditate. The recordings of Indigenous rituals and early Black resistance music are a reminder that what Western modernity could never eradicate is the language, the memory, and the praxis of living of the colonized. Westernization was and always remains on the surface. The memories and languages of the colonized could hardly be Westernized. Granted, there are always those among the colonized who prefer to become Western. But this is another problem. The reconstitution of destituted languages and memories can be seen all over, not only in Indigenous and Black resistance music but in the reconstitution of civilizations that were not taken over by settler colonialism (like it was the case in India, Algeria, Indonesia, and many others) but that couldn't avoid the disruption of coloniality, as, for example, China, Russia, and a large part of the Islamic world, Persian and Arabic. Here we see, once again, why the concept of coloniality is so groundbreaking.

Wait a minute! The visitor raised hands and voice—you will not say that these later cases are decolonial?! Not at all, I emphatically exclaimed. I call them de-Western. Country states (not the people) cannot be decolonial. The politics of China, Russia, Iran, even India and Turkey, I would call de-Western. Meaning what? The visitor asked in disbelief. Meaning that, like decolonization, de-Westernization rejects Western neoliberal expansion and engages in the reconstitution of a past that Western modernity told them to despise. But, to answer your question, unlike decolonization, de-Westernizations are state-led projects supported by a capitalist economy. Decolonization is not. We are no longer in the Cold War.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, decolonization became a project of the political society, that is, the sector of the society that is acting to counter the "contemporary pre-

sence of the colonial past." The Decolonial Memorial is a decolonial project led by the political society (that is, it is not a state-led project), its organizers, artists, and all of us who support it are members of the political society, adrift from the civil society. I see, the visitor changed from surprise to pensiveness and added, I must think about that one. The pause gave me the opportunity to continue. Much like decoloniality, de-Westernization works on reconstituting in the present memories that Western narratives had placed in the past of its regional of universal history. Which means the past in the perspective of a local Western narrative of universal history.

So, what about UNBOUND? Women, colonization, and decolonization, the visitor insisted, coming back to the previous question. Oh, yes, I responded. This is a tough question because colonial structures and the institutional history of domination cannot be separated. Or, in other words, coloniality, gender, and race cannot be separated. How come? The visitor interrupted me again. Well, as I said, it is a complex question but let me attempt a brief response. Patriarchy and the subaltern role of females are, of course, much further back in the past than five hundred years and wider than Western regional history. But when the colonial expansion began, say, in the Americas, Indigenous females and European women were not in equal standing. Woman, in Western vocabulary, is distinct to female. It was a Christian discursive that added meaning to female. In other words, while Indigenous and European females were equals in the cosmic order, European women had an added status that denied and suppressed the cultural status of females within the Inca or Aztec civilizations. Furthermore, Indigenous patriarchy was not based in Christian cosmology but in Indigenous cosmologies, which are based on complementary duality (male and female, two moieties of the same unit) rather than on binary opposition (man vs. woman, independent units).

That is one thing. The other is that once Indigenous females became colonial subjects, they became Women of Color, to simplify matters, and non-Christians, while European women had the privilege, in patriarchal impe-

rial narratives, of being Christian and white. That colonial structure spread all over the planet and is still alive today. Look at, for instance, the question of gender and immigration in Europe. Just look around and you will see such differences. So, the visitor whispered, perhaps in UNBOUND the racial component may not have been sufficiently highlighted. That may be, I said, but let's turn our conversation to projects which, beyond providing stories or information through a QR code, were conceived as gathering places for conversations and for sharing experiences of living in formerly colonized countries. The participants would be either immigrant settlers or colonized natives in the former colonies. Now they can gather as former settlers in Germany as well as in other Western European imperial countries, with former colonized natives that are now immigrants. I paused here and told the visitor it might help to think about the Indonesian project Unfinished Business. What about it? The visitor asked. Well, I have a general idea of the Dutch colonization of Indonesia, but I lack information about some of the keywords in the description. For example, "Warung." What kind of cafés are the Warung?

Looking at his notes, the visitor told me that they are small shops or mobile food stalls offering simple dishes. But that is not enough, I said. I would like to know more about their role in Indonesian life. Also, I do not know about the Indonesian weaving techniques, "Tuban Gedog," which are mentioned in the description. I had kept these words in my memory to do some research at home. The visitor and I realized that neither of us knew about Tuban Gedog, when we heard voices coming from a nearby table: we are from Indonesia and overheard you were talking about Warung and Tuban Gedog. Yes, indeed, I consented. So, can we join the conversation? Please do, I said, while asking the visitor for help with moving our tables closer together.

My name is Bethary. I am an anthropologist, and my friend, Sitti, is working on a PhD in architecture. We just finished a tour of the Decolonial Memorial Field. Great, the visitor and I said in unison. We greeted them and gave our names, affiliations, and provenance.

It turned out that the visitor is a philosopher from Moldavia. This was good to know, as it had not occurred to me to ask before. I added that I am a semiotician from Argentina living in the United States and doing decolonial research on modernity and coloniality. So, with our geopolitical and body-political configurations laid out, we turned back to our topic, inviting Bethary and Sitti to tell us more about Warung and Tuban Gedog.

Certainly, Bethary said. As you were saying, Warung are small family-owned food businesses. They are very popular, like McDonald's, except that McDonald's is a corporate fastfood business. So perhaps it is more like a bratwurst stand in Germany, except that bratwursts could also come from a family business. In any case, the difference is the distinction between a family business in a capitalist developed country and a family business in a former colonial country like Indonesia.

So, in Warungs you can see one aspect of colonization: the coloniality of food, not only in Indonesia but in every colonized area. But you can also see that the coloniality of food couldn't eliminate traditional Indonesian food. On the contrary, the Dutch colonizers ended up incorporating Indonesian cuisine into their diets. Not even McDonald's could erase the long-lasting memories of the Indonesian palate!

Well, that is helpful, I said. It makes me more aware of the way in which Unfinished Business responds to the Decolonial Memorial's call. And what about Tuban Gedong? Bethary turns to Sitti. Sitti, your grandmother was a great Tuban Gedong weaver, please tell us about it. Well yes, said Sitti, Tuban is a small town, today perhaps home to some hundred thousand people. The town is known precisely for batik weaving called Gedog. Tuban history goes back to the thirteenth century. When Indonesia obtained independence from the Dutch in 1945, batik weaving became a smallscale industry, and the Dutch were interested in sugar plantations rather than the textile industry. But during the Dutch colonial era, unfortunately my grandma died shortly after independence, batik Gedog weaving was, like the food in the Warung, less a family business than a family practice. Tuban became known

for this tradition. At that point I addressed the visitor to recall that we were just talking about the impossibility of Westernization to erase the memories inscribed in languages and in living praxes generation after generation.

I see, replied the visitor. Now, I also begin to better grasp Unfinished Business. It is interesting how the project correlates Tuban Gedog weaving with the Warung by having the sails attached to the masts and modeling Indonesian food banners weaved in Indonesian traditional techniques. This recalls that the Portuguese colonized part of Indonesia in the sixteenth century. I should add, I intervened, that all of this would be made more apparent if the performative activities of people selling coffee and beer were included in the project. That would surely help to generate conversations at the Warung at Berlin Global Village! Also, I continued, Bethary's and Sitti's comments make me think about the economic rupture of the traditional economies, which were displaced and replaced by colonial/capitalist economies increasing global trades which Unfinished Business invokes. Yes, the visitor continued, I am now starting to better understand why you said that one of the decolonial tasks is to investigate in what ways coloniality works. The colonization of Indonesia by the Dutch since the seventeenth century is a case in point.

Certainly, Bethary added, I think that is the meaning of Unfinished Business. The work is about reconstituting sovereignty in Indonesia by bringing the past praxis of living into the present to overcome the superficial colonial insertions of domineering Western modernity. Remember, we hosted the Bandung Conference in 1955, an intercontinental conference, decolonial par excellence! Bethary added with pride. The visitor returned to his notes. I scratched my head, mentally reviewing what we have seen and what we have said. Sitti broke the silence. I was quite taken by (luft)wurzeln/ (air)roots, beginning with the uses of unfinished parentheses. I interjected to connect this to EarthNest. Both projects are concerned with earth. So, what does concern with earth tell us about colonization and decolonization? I do not know, Sitti added, I am just wondering aloud. I scratched my head again, and I was sure the visitor had no answer for this question in his notes. We were silent.

Let me risk an answer, Bethary broke the silence. I have been asking myself about the colonial connotation of "earth" and decolonial responses to it. In Indonesia we have two words, "tanah," meaning land and soil, and "bumi," meaning Earth, the planet. So why do the two projects you mentioned, Sitti, highlight earth and not land? The visitor jumped in. To my knowledge, a distinction shall be made, in English, between earth and Earth. Earth with capital is the planet, encompassing land, soil, and water, whereas earth is the solid surface not covered by water. That is, I think earth is a synonym of land and soil, while Earth refers to the planet. Yes, followed Sitti, bumi is more like Earth. I am at lost, I said. Why are these distinctions relevant to our discussion?

It was their turn to scratch their heads. I do not know, asserted the visitor, but what I can see in relation to what Bethary and Sitti are saying connects with a sentence in the description of (luft)wurzeln/(air)roots, "a community garden used as a learning space and social sculpture." Garden, as a Latin word (hortus gardinus) and in vernacular European languages, entails enclosure. But that meaning predates Western colonial expansion. I once read an interesting book about gardens and gardening in precolonial India. What stands out to me here is that (air)roots underscores of a "community garden used as space and social sculpture." However, this is less a garden than a sculpture recalling a garden, an imagined garden, so to speak, that is a space of learning. "Space of learning," that is what universities are, the visitor continued with enthusiasm. Well. Western universities are one "place of learning," not the universal place of learning, which were installed in colonized areas alongside the Western economy, government, language, and culture. Here, I said to the visitor, you have another example of coloniality's planetary extent mediated by different Western European and United States masks.

Following up on your reasoning, continued Sitti, we can connect decoloniality with this. If one of the goals of the Decolonial Memorial artwork is not just to be an "object" for decoration but to provide communal energy convoking gatherings and conversations about colonial histories and decolonial responses yesterday and today, then the Decolonial Memorial would be just that, a space of learning. A space where investigation can occur through conversation and sharing decolonial stories of coloniality. This means that decoloniality would be enacted, or put to work, by understanding coloniality and finding ways out and ways forward. Not in the sense of development or progress, but in the sense of changing directions.

Yes, that is true, Bethary replied, but what about earth/Earth? Well, let's consider this, the visitor said, reading from the notebook, "artists from the diaspora, Berlin, and the Global South will lead workshops to discuss the geographical and historical origins of plants. People can learn about colonialism, decolonization, and about gardening, such as nutrition, water, climate change, soil." So? asked Sitti. Don't you see a decolonial move in the act of valuing everything that modernity devalued through colonialism to impose Western values in the name of civilization, as if non-European civilizations were barbarians?

Well, yes, the visitor said. I recall a highly noted diplomat of the European Union, Josep Borrell, saying recently that Europe is a garden, and the rest is the jungle!² Can you believe that? Plants, for capitalism and colonialism, are either timber or they are weeds. Gardens are privileged places of relaxation, walking, or running but not places of learning. For a corporation, gardens may be a waste of land that could otherwise be "developed" by real estate business. If not controlled by the state or by corporations, a garden as a place of learning could be considered subversive! The visitor got enthusiastic. Yes, that is true, I said, and here we see coloniality once again, all over, here and there.

I think this is the point, regarding earth/Earth in the EarthNest project, I continued. Yes, Sitti agreed, recalling Flag of Roots in this con-

text. See, she continued, these three works highlight earth and roots. What caught my attention in Flag of Roots, the visitor intervened, is what I would like to call "decolonization of the idea of the nation-state." I highlight idea because you cannot decolonize the nation-state without decolonizing the idea of it and showing the complicities of the nationstate with the coloniality of power. Indeed, agreed Bethary, we know that in Indonesia, from when Suharto replaced Sukarno. It was clear that a decolonially-oriented state was not convenient for global coloniality. Some of us have been addressing this issue in Indonesia, revisiting the goals of the Bandung Conference in 1955, which perhaps was the motive for Sukarno's demise a decade later. What is interesting to me in this regard, Sitti added, are certain expressions of the description of Flag of Roots. For example, "overcoming the nation-states," "a flag made of nature." See, that idea displaces and replaces the function of the flag made of fabric, colors, and symbols. The colors and symbols of a territory with borders, protecting "nationals" and disregarding human beings.

Interesting point, I agreed, encouraging her to continue. Perhaps the decisive sentence, Sitti continued without paying attention to me, is what I wrote in my notes: "it transforms the colonial idea of conquering and expanding nations to sow unlimited territories; it aims to propose emancipatory systems based on social, ecological, and educational approaches to the land." See, here "earth" is underscored as "land." I see what you mean, the visitor interrupted, looking at his own notes. If you allow me, the visitor said to Sitti, I would like to add to your support because now I understand this statement: "it calls for restoration and visibility, bringing to the surface what is usually underground." What is underground? The visitor asked rhetorically, announcing the answer: That the nation-state not only privileges the national over human beings but also disregards the living life—if you allow me the expression-of trees. Everything becomes reduced to a noun, nature, shattering the verb

 $^{^2}$ https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/10/26/josep-borrells-jungle-trope-was-no-slip-of-the-tongue

and relations. That is an important point, Sitti responded. Listen to this: "it addresses the capacity of trees to coexist, adapt, and relate to each other... a decolonial form against geopolitical devastation."

Well, well, slow down, I said. There is too much going on. We are discussing several crisscrossing issues. Like what? Bethary asked. One of them is an issue I raised at the beginning of the conversation with the visitor. You and Sitti were not here yet. I was talking about the semiological function of verbal and written language to complement non-verbal expressions, like visual, acoustic, and performance artworks. For example, Flag of Roots cannot be described by means of other flags or other roots or with any other material work in any non-verbal sign system you could imagine. But beyond that, the interpretations of all the projects in the Decolonial Memorial Field are already framed in relation to the colonial/ decolonial. If you believe that Pablo Picasso is a Cubist painter, this is not just because of his paintings but because there are descriptions of and conversations about Cubism. Besides, our own conversation here proves that the meanings of non-verbal artworks don't end in the silent observation of the works but rather continue in the texts the authors provide, similar to the texts guiding museum visitors to a set of works and to each work. It continues in informal conversations and in critical reviews published in art magazines and newspapers. Point taken, said Bethary and asked, what else? You said, "several issues."

Yes, correct, let me continue. "Nature" (air, earth/Earth, land, roots, plants, trees) is a noun, and an idea in lieu of the incommensurable fluidity of the living, which cannot be reduced to a noun, to an entity. But once the idea of the noun, nature, replaces the fluidity of living energies (air, light, water) and of living organisms (including us, humans), the idea becomes an entity, and it is separated from what human beings make, that is, culture. Once the incommensurable fluidity of living energies and organisms is reduced to an entity, it becomes separated and independent from us, human beings. We are not nature, we are culture! The doors have been opened to devastation: natural resources could and shall

be extracted to increment the production of commodities and promote consumerism. The colonial idea of nature reduced to natural resources is exposed in EarthNest. Lastly, what in Flag of Roots appears as an idea of communality between "humans" and "trees" beyond the nation-state border, in EarthNest the communality appears precisely in the idea of the "nest." The communality of people, culture and the fluidity of life that makes culture possible, that is, nature. To think and imagine beyond coloniality, in this case, the coloniality of the idea of nature, is always already a decolonial attitude or a decolonial will to liberation from the chains of Western vocabulary and visual images. It may not be an exaggeration to say that this is what we see in the twenty artworks of the Decolonial Memorial Field.

Interesting, said Sitti. But I would like to go back to your first comments on verbal language as a semiotic system that can describe itself, and also is necessary to describe nonverbal sign systems (visual, sonorous, tactile). It may not strictly relate to your idea, but I would like to share an observation of my thesis advisor: the first sentence of any writing is decisive to capture the reader's attention. I remembered this dictum when I read the first sentence of EarthNest's description: "EarthNest is a work of decolonial healing, a communal temple that brings communities together to reclaim their history." Certainly, this idea would be difficult, if not impossible, to grasp just by looking at the visual display of the work and by exploring the technique of its composition if the viewer is not informed that the authors have learned "from the weaver birds as messengers from the Global South." That is a good example, I consented. Furthermore, bird migrations, unlike human migration, are not restricted by the borders of nation-states. Also, it reminded me of the trees of Flag of Roots. Sitti excused herself to pick up a phone call. I noticed that she was inviting her telephone interlocutor to join us. Bethary took the opportunity to share her thoughts. What I find intriguing is the idea of decolonial healing. Certainly, like other projects in the Decolonial Memorial Field, the emphasis on community-building delinks from what is common sense in the West, but

not necessarily in the non-colonized minds of Indonesia, that the individual is the center and that society is a sum of the free will of individuals. That is, the idea that society is a sum of individuals competing to take advantage over the rest. The delinking horizon runs through various artworks in the Decolonial Memorial Field as the artwork becomes a place and an invitation of gathering, of conversation, and of community-building. In Flag of Roots and in EarthNest, the connections are made between nature (the birds) and culture (the nest built by the weaver birds) and the African Musqum conical dwelling made by humans for their own shelter. The womb-like form of the cone becomes a temple to exchange "soil stories" in an atmosphere of nature, bird culture (the nest), and human culture (the conical dwelling or hut). All of this makes me think again about (luft)wurzeln/(air)roots and Flag of Roots: "decolonial healing" are communal processes of sharing and delinking from the paws of modernity/coloniality, delinking from the free will of individuals acting on their own interests.

The healing purpose of decoloniality is unique to EarthNest, I interjected, we already noted that. It is also the only project among the twenty in the Decolonial Memorial Field that offers an orientation to the question: decoloniality for what? Well, for healing colonial wounds! And how do you do it? Not with a psychoanalyst or a social worker, but through communal conversations revealing that the promises of modernity are always masking the realities of coloniality, which at their turn releases the energies of decolonial liberation. Healing is of the essence, and decolonial healing aims for healthy decolonial subjects, reconnecting with and respecting earth that is nurturing us and all living organisms. Decolonial subjects working with each other, rebuilding the communal, avoiding unhealthy food, and circumventing mental unhealth that has become a social disease.

I know, said Bethary, that is quite a work and a project. I am working on it as best I can. What you said, she continues, makes me think of Afro-Mandala. The mandala is a spiritual symbol and cosmic as well. One of its purposes is healing. As a matter of fact, mandalas

are sacred pieces of artwork related to healing, spiritual fullness, and meditation. But what I do not see in this work is a connection with decoloniality, for spiritual healing is one thing and decolonial healing another. Or if you wish, we can pose it as a question. What makes healing a spiritual praxis and what makes healing a decolonial praxis? If decolonial healing presupposes spirituality, healing doesn't necessarily imply decoloniality. What I recall, I said, is that the description, which considers African weaving and connects with Unfinished Business, emphasizes empowerment.

Do you have notes on Afro-Mandala? I asked the visitor. Yes, he replied, "the vision of the project is to transform the daily lives of local communities." Sitti just mentioned that, didn't she? I may have missed it, I responded. Its emphasis is on unity, mental freedom, and multicultural society, but there is no clear connection with decoloniality. I mean, this description could be attributed to any wellintentioned citizens of modern societies. We should keep in mind that in caring and working on healing, unity, and freedom, decoloniality is not necessary. The same goals could be pursued by other means. However, decolonial healing is certainly a feature of decolonial work, although decoloniality doesn't have the final truth and designs for promoting respect and conviviality in communities' daily lives. Such goals could be held by religious, honest, liberal citizens, and the like. There are other frames that have the right and the responsibility to work for similarly good purposes. I suspect that in Afro-Mandala, the decolonial stance is implied, even if it is not clearly stated in the description.

In that regard, Bethary responded, LINEAGE could be an example of an explicitly decolonial description and of a clear correlation between title, sculpture, and decoloniality. What is interesting, I observed, is the continued crisscrossing among different projects, which in this case is the number four. The number four? The visitor asked distractively while calling the waiter to order another round of coffee, tea, and pastry. Wait, let's not mix issues, let's take one at a time. One is the correlation between the title, the sculpture, and decoloniality, and the other is this mysterious num-

ber four, which I also wonder about. You are right, said Bethary. LINEAGE, for example, has four sections, and THE WORD OF THE GREATER SPIRIT OF FIRE has four stations. It may be that the number four is basic to all non-Western cosmologies underscoring sunrise, sunset, the right of sunrise (or "north" after the invention of the magnetic compass), and the left of the sunrise ("south" after the magnetic compass, and Global South after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the mutation of the former Third World). Well, you see, I added, even in Greece numbers had a cosmic correlation.

You were right on the crisscrossing, said Sitti. It is true that the ancient cosmologies I know of highlight the four cosmic directions. Here, in Afro-Mandala, we have another project invoking spirituality. Does the invocation of spirituality also invoke the decolonial? This is what we were asking a few minutes ago. I jumped back in. I do not know about your region, but in the West where we are now, and in the confines of the West that is Argentina, decolonial thinkers have a dictum: "It is necessary to decolonize religion to liberate spirituality." Spirituality has been captured by the three religions of the books. The visitor, who had been quiet, intervened. It is true that both THE WORD OF THE GREATER SPIRIT OF FIRE and LINEAGE have the number four in common. LINEAGE takes on chronology, while THE WORD OF THE GREATER SPIRIT OF FIRE takes on spatiality. I am not sure if this is relevant, the visitor questioned.

Not sure about that, I responded, and I am confused by one of the sentences in the description of THE WORD OF THE GREATER SPIRIT OF FIRE. Listen to this, Sitti intervened looking at her notes: "with the concept of the four stations, the artist suggests healing the colonial roots of modernity." To heal the roots? I wonder what this means. How do you heal roots unless you assume that they are sick, which would mean assuming that modernity is at risk because it is sick? I think it would be better to say, "healing the colonial wounds," as EarthNest puts it. But perhaps I am missing the point, and healing roots has another meaning here. The sentence-Sitti continued—later refers to the Ego Conquiro,

to the origin of marginalization and the denial of otherness, so it could be that the artists want to heal the root of modernity. That is, to have a healed modernity. I do not know, but this doesn't seem to fit the decolonial, Sitti concluded.

Good point, the visitor said. The description of LINEAGE opens with an unmistakable sentence, as Bethary pointed out with respect to EarthNest. Well, I said, I do not take notes, but that sentence stayed in my memory: "to speak on decolonization is first to reckon with the colonial." "The colonial" is coloniality at large. Ergo, decoloniality without reckoning with coloniality is an empty call. This relates to what I was saying before that specific decolonization projects (for example, of knowledge, of the idea of gender, of race, of nation-state, of capitalism, of nature, of religion, of design, etc.) require a clear understanding of how coloniality works and controls the meaning of what we take to be real (gender, the nationstate, capitalism, etc.). Briefly, to work on decoloniality demands reckoning with the logic of coloniality.

What a thought! The visitor exclaimed. Too bad I am not recording this so that I could think over your statement again. But let me go back to LINEAGE—the visitor continued and to the correlation between the meaning of line + age, that is, a line of descent, the line of ancestry. The question of ancestry is important in decolonial arguments. Not because we want to go back, of course. That is impossible, and besides, who would want to go back? The decolonial relevance of ancestry is that Western modernity destituted and disavowed all ancestry, except their own: that of Ancient Greece and Rome! Now the visitor raised his hands as a sign of victory and laughed. Okay, now to be serious, he lowered his hands, erased the triumphant smile, opened the notebook, and continued: "to reckon with the colonial means to acknowledge its continuity and its impact on the present and future." See, there is no going back, but on the contrary, it is about the return of the many futures that were cut off by the expansion of the universal future of modernity/coloniality and its unilineal ancestry.

Talking about ancestry, Bethany intervened, looking at me, I kept on thinking of what you said before about China. On what point exactly? I asked. You described China's state project as de-Western rather than decolonial. However, the question of ancestry is relevant for state politics. However, Chinese scholars and intellectuals are not officers of the state as they work on their scholarly projects. So, my question, said Bethany, is this: if the state cannot be decolonial, can Chinese intellectuals embrace decoloniality? They are "civilizationists," Sitti corrected. What? Bethary asked, frowning. The concern of the state and of scholars and intellectuals is to restructure themselves as a civilizational state and no longer a nation-state. Okay, Bethary responded, but what does that mean? It means, continued Sitti, the return of their own future, the meanings of their own ancestry, which is neither Ancient Greece nor Rome. A civilizational future that was disrupted by the Opium War. To rebuild Chinese civilization means to eradicate the idea of a Chinese nation-state, which was a Western imposition. Hence, rebuilding the state as a civilization is a large part of de-Westernization. So, the scholars and intellectuals engaged in rebuilding their own civilization are contributing to de-Westernize Chinese culture. That is right, I said, endorsing Sitti's comments. Remember that decoloniality today cannot be a state project, whether national or civilizational. And remember also that China did not endure settler colonialism. So that in the public sphere, the work of scholars and intellectuals rebuilding China's culture as a civilization rather than as a nation could be said to be de-Western. Decolonial work today seems to be related to the public sphere of states that had undergone settler colonialism, with all the educational and linguistic interferences, disrupting their own future. Of course, it cannot be expected that this work goes without opposition, since this work itself is already oppositional. Oppositional to what? The visitor asked. To the Westernizers' positions in mainland China and the oppositions in Taiwan who prefer to opt for re-Westernization. I see, said the visitor. It is the same in the West (meaning US, NATO, and the EU). What do you mean? I asked. Well, the visitor said, it is not the same but parallel and in reverse: people and institutions pushing for neoliberalism and re-Westernization (meaning: preserving the privileges obtained during five years of colonial expansion) find internal oppositions in the so-called radical right and radical left.

I have been taken by Sitti's relational reasoning, the visitor intervened. But now we have a problem. Which one? Sitti asked. If deco-Ioniality and de-Westernization have a common feature: the reconstitution of what has been destituted, the reconfiguration of disrupted ancestralism, what are the differences between decoloniality and de-Westernization? What do we do with that? Now it was my turn to intervene. Sitti said that decoloniality cannot be a state-led project, whether national or civilizational. So, in that regard, it is important to remember that the politics of the German state cannot be the same as the politics of the public sphere in Germany. What?!, the visitor frowned. Yeah, I continued explaining. The German state is embedded in re-Westernization, that is, in confronting de-Westernization, which is preventing Germany (and the EU, as well as the US) from enjoying the privileges gained from over five hundred years of Westernization. Whereas the Berlin Global Village, by launching a Decolonial Memorial project, is acting in the public sphere. Ah, I am beginning to see the difference, the visitor acquiesced.

However, since Germany did not endure settler colonialism, like Indonesia or Algeria, for example, what would be the meaning of deco-Ionization in Western Europe in tandem with decolonization in the then-called Third World and now Global South? It seems to me that to have productive decolonial cooperation between Western European imperial countries and the former colonies in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean, the power differential in both local histories has to be spelled out. That is a good point, Sitti acquiesced. I would say, she added, that the Decolonial Memorial invites—on the one hand—the German native population to acknowledge the imperial history of the country and—on the other it promotes conviviality between the German native population and the immigrants coming from former colonies of Germany and of other Western European countries. Remember,

Sitti added, that during the Berlin Conference of 1984–1985 all imperial European countries convened in the partition and possession of the entire African continent, with the exception of Ethiopia.

Thanks, Sitti, said Bethary, what you said is very helpful for making sense of what you said before about China, that not enduring settler colonialism did not prevent them from enduring coloniality without settlers. Although the Opium War was a moment of rupture, Western colonial education was not implanted in China, as it was in India, for example. Well, Sitti said, following up on Bethary's comments, have you noticed that all the projects here in the Decolonial Memorial Field are grounded on memories of settler colonialisms? Of course, such places are where the struggle for decolonization originated, said the visitor. I do not remember if it was Sitti or Bethary, I intervened, who mentioned the Bandung Conference a short while ago. In any case, I think that one issue is contextualizing the global span of coloniality behind the promises of modernity, that is, behind Westernization. Another issue is looking at what type of conflictive responses they provoke. Decoloniality is one such response in the public sphere; de-Westernization is another in international relations. The question to be explored would be to ponder the relevance of displacing the idea of the "nation" by the idea of "civilization," which is common to states that did not endure settler colonialism, like China, and states that did, like India. In both cases, however, the displacement of the idea of nation by civilization is relevant.

Well, let's not get lost in international relations and return to the works of the Decolonial Memorial, the visitor suggested. I have been fixed on LINEAGE, the visitor added. For one, we have the number four again. There are some good lines in this project, for example, its organization into four sections: History/ Memory, Resistance/Resilience, Awareness/ Education and Reconciliation/Healing. Here we encounter healing again. The four sections are consistent with the first sentence, claiming that the decolonial must reckon with the colonial. How does this project do it? The titles of the four sections deal with the decolonial reconstitutions of what has been desti-

tuted by coloniality, and this implies Awareness/Education. I would say also, the visitor continued, that healing presupposes decolonial awareness and decolonial education. And I mean education, not schooling. The QR code text reinforces the power and necessity of discourse to complement the sculptures' materiality.

The waiter came with the coffees, teas, water, and pastry. And a stranger approached the table at the same time, greeting and kissing Bethary and Sitti. I am glad you were able to come, said Sitti. The visitor looked at the scene without saying a word. I understood that he was wondering what was going on. Apparently, the visitor did not pay attention when Sitti interrupted the conversation earlier to make a phone call. Hi, I am Tayeb. I am from Morocco and just visiting Berlin. Sitti told me that you were having an interesting conversation about the Decolonial Memorial Field. I visited it last week and told Bethary and Sitti not to miss it. Please bring a chair and join us, we told Tayeb. What makes you so enthusiastic about the field, Tayeb, I asked? Oh, many things, he replied. For example? I pushed.

I was pleased and captivated, Tayeb responded, that all the artworks use materials, memories, words, images, sounds, languages, and labor—such as weaving or cooking—from Africa, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean in a competition organized, sponsored, and housed in Germany. That gave me the impression that a significant, if not radical, mutation of subjective and intersubjective relations is taking place globally, and that Germany is one of those places. What all of this means, I said, responding to Tayeb, is that in the public sphere, those regions of the planet that have been disavowed, first of Western Europe, Germany among them, and then of the U.S., have begun to take their destinies in their own hands. While the public sphere responds with the decolonial, the states respond by engaging in de-Westernization. I agree, said Sitti, I sense that what is going on is a sort of global reconstitution and restitution of what was destituted by five hundred years of Western colonial expansion. Yes, consented the visitor, we were talking precisely in those terms. Well, perhaps not as directly as you

put it, but that was the frame of our conversation. I took the visitor's interjection as an opportunity to push Tayeb further: could you be a little bit more specific about your enthusiastic reaction to the Decolonial Memorial Field?

Well, it's difficult to know where to start, Tayeb quickly replied. Perhaps with CORE-CO-LUMN. To tell you the truth, I was not very taken by the column itself. I do not know much about art history and art criticism. I work in the field of information technology, which is what brought me to Berlin. But it was great to see a sculpture like the CORE-COLUMN here in Germany. It invokes the Berlin Conference of 1884 and the Scramble for Africa, one of the most distinctive moments of European colonial expansion after the conquest and colonization of the Americas. Yes, said the visitor, we were just talking about the Berlin Conference before you arrived. At that point Bethary commented that Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft (Past, Present, and Future) connects the present, 2024, with the past, 1884, and the future, 2064. The recent military uprisings in the French Sahel and New Caledonia are good examples of the presence of the past (1884, for Africa, 1853 for New Caledonia) in the present, the continuity of coloniality after decolonization, and the orientation of the future in a second decolonization pushing the French and the U.S. Americans out of the countries. That makes sense, Tayeb interjected, but where are you going, Bethary, with those comments?

Oh! Apologies! Bethary realized that she had lost track of the conversation. What I meant is that decolonial memorials today should not merely memorialize the colonial past that is still present but should, above all, contribute to orienting towards decolonial futures by promoting decolonial awareness of coloniality in the present. Coloniality is not over, it is all over, a student of mine said once. She was from Singapore insofar as the decisions we make in the present orient the "return of futures" for all cultures and civilizations that have been demoted in global history by the presumed universality of Western historical narratives. I see, responded Tayeb, your comments are quite ambitious. Well, Betha-

ry said, I am from Indonesia, and if Germany hosted the Berlin Conference in 1884, setting off the Scramble for Africa, we had the Bandung Conference in 1955, giving force to the struggle for decolonization in Asia and Africa during the Cold War! I see, Tayeb acquiesced. That is true, Sitti jumped into the conversation with fervor. I remember a high school class in Jakarta. The teacher showed us maps of European colonialism in India, Indonesia, and the partition of Africa after the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. I was shocked to see the map of Africa from 1900. The entire continent, except Ethiopia, in the hands of European imperial states. We already mentioned that, the visitor corrected Sitti. Oh, perhaps I was distracted, Sitti excused herself. That is right, said Tayeb. If you were shocked in Indonesia, imagine how we feel in Africa looking at that map! I hope for you, Tayeb, that artists from Africa as well as from Europe will be walking away from the provincial history of European culture and reevaluate their own local memories and praxis of living, Sitti said. Der Kristallwächter/The Crystal Sentinel does that too, she added. It makes a decolonial statement inspired by Namibian crystal and African weaving. It is about the reconstitution of the destituted, as we have been discussing. It is like Unfinished Business, hinting at the relevance of Tuban Gedog weaving in Indonesian culture.

That is interesting, chimes in the visitor. It makes me think that we are right when we insist that the project of decolonization is not to dwell romantically on the past but to bring the past politically and ethically into the present, to turn colonial interrupted futures into the decolonial presents. Yeah, Tayeb consented, adding that that is why the description of Der Kristallwächter/The Christal Sentinel suggests that the illuminated sculpture, the sentinel, stands between the past and the present, tradition and progress. Adding to that, the visitor intervened, it stands horizontally between the past and the future, but vertically it convokes the cosmos. Yes, said Bethary, remember that the inverted pyramid at the bottom "kisses the sky and touches the earth," in the author's own words. These are issues that the sacralization of technic (mechanics) and the technological (discourses on the mechanic and on the technic), as well as of financial, cultural, and military wars, prevents us from thinking about. So, the artwork strives to preserve the fullness of thinking. I hope that decoloniality has something to say about all of this, about the devaluation of thinking and the overvaluation of social media and consumerism, especially today as we are invaded by digital technic and the technological discourses about digital technic. There is such a need to work on decolonizing our own areas of existence.

Der Kristallwächter/The Crystal Sentinel contains five sections, Bethary commented, instead of four like LINEAGE. However, these five sections and the four of LINEAGE are connected through decolonization. I did not understand what Sitti meant, but Bethary, who was looking at her notes, said, yes, I agree, and listen to this: "its five sections represent the framework for decolonization: rediscovery, mourning, dreaming, commitment, and action." And here is the cherry on the cake: "all countries colonized by Germany will be engraved into the plinth area of the sculpture."

Silence. Too much to think about. I recalled my original comments on the correlation of the verbal to the non-verbal. Imagine, I attempted to say, breaking the silence, that on our tour of the Decolonial Memorial Field we had only access to the titles and the sculptures but not to the descriptors. People like to say "descriptions," but descriptions are what they are because of the descriptors. In any event, what we have been talking about for the last hour or so would have been significantly different. I do not know about you all, but speaking for myself, I would not have been able to perceive what you were pointing out in Der Kristallwächter/The Crystal Sentinel, for example. The same holds for other artworks in the Decolonial Memorial Field. Yap, I see what you mean, the visitor agreed. I now realize that without thinking of decoupling the verbal from the non-verbal, we tend to believe that the verbal (in this case, descriptors that explain the idea of each work) and the nonverbal (in this case, the artworks) are one and the same. Now I also realize, the visitor continues, that this is one of the traps of Western modernity's way of thinking: the concept of representation makes us believe that the representation is the represented and that the explanation is the explained. This is why it has been possible, lately, to talk about the nonsense of the notion of post-truth. Can you elaborate on that? Bethary asked.

Sure, the visitor continued. You see, the prefix "post" became fashionable after the idea of "post-modernity" was introduced in the Western vocabulary at the end of the 1970s. Since then, it has been applied all over, starting with the "post-colonial" and followed by "post-development," "post-nominal letters," "post-season," "post-game," "post-truth"— "post tudo" Brazilians say jokingly. You name it, not to mention "post-office," which refers to a place rather than time! "Post," as we know it, means "after," as in "postpone." So, what happens if you replace all the "posts" just listed with "after"? Bethary responded that it means that all the events or activities named by the noun are no longer in effect, it means that what is named has ended. Or it may imply something new. Ah, interrupted the visitor, you see, there is a time component in these prefixes that celebrate "newness," the main weapon of the rhetoric of modernity. The rhetoric traps you, the new iPod, the new Toyota, the new Nike! So post-modernity and post-truth and post-colonialism may be understood as something new, the new modernity, the new colonialism, the new truth!

Right, said Bethary. She was thinking about prefixes in Bahasa Indonesian but preferred not to bring them into the conversation. She had to think about it further. Kabenaran, she was thinking, could be translated, in abstract, as truth, but it so happened that each concept acquired its meaning in their respective languages and cosmologies. Bethary was also thinking about the Western concept of time. In Indonesia, time is lived as non-linear. Jam karet is flexible time, like rubber, while modern Western time is rigid, linear, and universal. Furthermore, she was still thinking in silence, all the concepts that we have in Indonesia for "modernity" (kemodernan, modernisasi, pemodenan, pembaharuan) are not derived from the history of Bahasa, but were invented to make sense of the European colonization of our language. Two different cosmologies were intertwined by coloniality and the power differential it implies. However, speakers of Western modern imperial languages do not have this problem.

Apologies, said Bethary, I got distracted thinking about something interconnected. Coming back to the Western concepts of "newness" and "modernity." As an Indonesian, it is existentially clear to me that the concept of modernity serves to deny contemporaneity to the non-Europeans and to relegate them/us to the past, telling us that we must modernize! This is coloniality at its best, as we were talking before. Like many others, Indonesians and Indonesia were placed in the underdeveloped Third World. So, what could modernity mean to us if we have not yet been modern? "Post-modernity" may be new or after modernity within Western history, but Indonesia—in the Western eyes—remains in the past. We Indonesians do not belong to the "posttruth," which is a concept only meaningful in Western hegemonic languages and Western cosmology. Good point, interjected the visitor, whatever post-truth or other post means in Western languages is meaningless in Indonesian and other non-Western languages. Precisely, responded Bethary, that is what I was saying! You see how coloniality operates in all areas of existence through language and how important modern imperial languages are to preserve Western conceptual hegemony.

Silence again. The conversation was getting heavy. The coffee was getting cold, and the pastry was waiting to be eaten. After a long silence, the visitor read his notes, dropping pastry crumbs over them, which he quickly swiped away with his hand. There are a couple of works that also emphasize spirituality, which the visitor commented as coming out of the blue. I remember someone just said that one decolonial task is to decolonize religions to liberate spirituality. But I am also curious about the correlations between weaving and spirituality. Sure, said Tayeb. I imagined Tayeb may have been thinking that the magic of information technology has something to do with spirituality. A crazy idea of mine! But recently an impressive thunderstorm caused a breakdown of the internet connection in my

neighborhood, and it took the company until the next morning to fix it. Digital technic, including AI, cannot supersede cosmic energies. I was not sure if I should reject or think more about these issues. In any event, I did not speak, and the visitor ignored Tayeb's interjection. But Tayeb followed up on his own interjection.

Take Afro-Mandala, for example, said Tayeb. We know that mandalas and spirituality go hand in hand, but this project overlaps Mandala and African weaving. What for? The visitor asked. It was a rhetorical question. I suspected that the visitor had the answer, but Tayeb jumped ahead, saying, I am a Muslim, and I learned from my friends in Senegal that Afro-Mandalas are landmarks that impact daily life by creating communal identifications. Sure, the visitor conceded, adding the descriptor of the work tells us that: "it is a symbol of our collective strength as a global community, we are stronger when we are together." This reminds me of EarthNest, Sitti introjected, and of the reconstitution of spirituality beyond religious institutions. Building of the communal that was destroyed by the modern celebration of the individual in competitive and consumerist societies seems to be a common thread through most, if not all, the projects.

In that case, said the visitor, ISI ESEMO (AN-CESTRAL CONSTALLATION) goes in the same direction. In what sense? Sitti inquired. Think about ancestral and constellation working together. You see, one is an adjective and the other a noun. Constellation is associated with the cosmos, but ancestral is associated to the cultural foundation of a people, to the ethnos. All foundational narratives we know around the planet, including Greek mythology and the Bible, correlate heaven and earth, be it Tianxia (All under Heaven) in Chinese ancestrally, Tawantinsuyu in Andean cosmology, or the Popol Vuh among the Maya-Quiché in today's Southern Mexico and Guatemala, the energy of Chaos that created Cosmos and Gaia, the Earth, in Greek mythology, or God in Biblical mythology. Let me read a sentence from the description: "individuals become stars enacting, maintaining the connections with the ancestors who became stars in the

past." It is about the ancestral and the constellation, but also the uninterrupted correlations of all living organisms.

Good point, said Sitti, let me now read from the description of ISI ESEMO: it "depicts the transition from colonial legacies to decolonial institutions and a setting that encourages open discourse, inclusion, and introspection." And to clarify, she continued, the emphasis is on diverse ancestral traditions-not one universal ancestrality, the Western one, but many pluriversal ancestralities. Colonial histories, from the colonized perspective, are many. European colonialism expanded and disrupted existing local histories, imposing their own local history. The colonizers' history, whether it be Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British, or US-American, is grounded in the same Greco-Roman-Christian cosmology, while the colonized's cosmologies are numerous and irreducible to Western cosmology. This is how I understand the play of words with "roots" (ancestrality) and "routes" (pluriversal lines departing from the universal): the project "emphasizes ex-colonies maintaining heritage connections (roots) while actively engaging in a global context (routes)."

That is all well and good, it was my turn to enter the conversation, but I insist that to achieve these goals, a written or verbal description is needed not only to assist our understanding of the sculpture but also to orient the conversations around the Decolonial Memorial. Briefly, decolonial storytelling is essential to overcoming the powerful storytelling of Western modernity. You are right, the visitor agreed, and I think it is what the organizers of the Decolonial Memorial intended. But don't you think that the verbal descriptions restrict the freedom of the viewer to build her or his own meaning? Are the descriptions not a way of controlling rather than orienting?

Indeed, intervened Tayeb. The power of the word is a common denominator in various cosmogonies: at the beginning was the word. I say this because when I deal with digital information in my job, I sense that the word, in the sense of storytelling and communal conversations, is being shattered. Perhaps this is why I was attracted to SHELTER (Zuflucht),

he continued. The composition of the mosaic was inspired by the making of Berber rugs and by communal conversations and storytelling. The artwork, that is, the floor mosaic containing pictures, words, and symbols—I am not sure whether to call it sculpture. The material composition of SHELTER doesn't fit current art classifications. If current art classifications are tainted by coloniality, is disobeying those classifications a decolonial move? It may, but not necessarily, I responded. Disobedience could remain within the frame of Western modernity, like the vanguards, for example. Yeah, maybe, said Tayeb. Anyway, covering the entire entrance to Berlin Global Village, the mosaic was collectively designed, according to the description, by "People of Color." Anyhow, the rug is composed of words, pictures, and symbols—three different sign systems. Very rich for those of us working with zeros and ones!

Yeah, I noticed the expression "People of Color," said the visitor, ignoring Tayeb's last observation. On the one hand, the idea goes back to the Kantian notion of color according to continent: Black in Africa, Yellow in Asia, Red in America, and White in Europe. The expression invokes race and racism, since "race" is always already a racist concept. But racism goes far beyond skin color. Yes, blood has also been the racializing marker at some points in history, Tayeb added. In Spain, my Muslim ancestors were expelled, and the Jews too, because Christians wanted to maintain their "purity of blood." Precisely, I jumped in. Racism is the outcome of the power of the words, of narratives and arguments disqualifying people from their/our full humanity by citing superficial markers such as blood, skin color, religion, language, ancestry, etc. Yes, Tayeb agreed and added, "People of Color" in this project is taken as markers of communal and collaborative labor, rejecting the hegemonic Western and racist concept of humanity. The installation of an outdoor studio was the space where the participants collaborated in the project, but it was also open to conversations revealing and rejecting the coloniality of racial classifications.

Bethary and Sitti had been quiet and were obviously waiting for their turn. I gestured to encourage them to speak. While you were talking about SHELTER, Sitti said, I was thinking about the correlation of the title, SHELTER, and I just wanted to mention that this caught my attention, although I'm not sure why. A question may be there. Anyway, I was also thinking about IN LAK'ECH (I am you and you are me) before Tayeb brought up SHELTER. Please share your thoughts, I encouraged her. Well, one thought may be trivial and just occurred to me while you were talking about SHELTER, Both SHELTER and IN LAK'ECH are flat artworks, one is flat on the floor and the other flat on the wall. Bethary jumped in, suggesting that if the latter is called a "mural," the former should perhaps be called a "floral," like Licht der Wahrheit/Beacon of Truth. Everybody laughed at Bethary's onomastic creativity. It is funny, said Sitti, still laughing, but Bethary brought up an interesting point that we have not talked about yet: the kind of monument that a memorial is supposed to be. What do you mean? Tayeb asked. Sitti went back to her notes and read: "EarthNest decolonizes Western logic of the imperial monument and its affirmation of male sovereignty. Instead of placing a patriarchal monument on a higher plane like those erected by the conquerors, we chose to weave a monument partially underground connected to earth while embracing the lightness of the air that flows through the open structure."

There you go again, said the visitor, it is about weaving again. Weaving seems to be a keyword in decolonial thinking. Sure, I ventured, decolonial thinking is relational, while modern/colonial thinking is ontological, fixing on the entity, the denotation, the essence, and hence, on the noun, but not on relations, the verb. Hmm..., the visitor murmured. Anyhow, the visitor added, the point is well taken and could be extended to all the projects. I mean, the focus on relations rather than on entities. Which makes me think now that not one of the projects proposes to build a monument to a great decolonial thinker like Gandhi, Cabral, Fanon, Lumumba, or Biko. Of course not, said Bethary. To do so would be to maintain Western imperial logic, swapping out the content, replacing a conqueror hero with a decolonial hero, maintaining the binary opposition and the focus on the individual, the Man. Binary

opposition is very distinctive of Western imperial logic: you are either with me or with my enemies. The third is excluded. And that is where the decolonial emerges. Certainly, Sitti agreed, adding that for Sukarno, the Bandung Conference was neither liberal capitalism nor state communism, but decolonization. That is, a third beyond the control of binary opposition liberal capitalism vs. state communism. Right, I said, following up on Sitti's comments. To have chosen one or the other would have meant to remain within the binary logic, excluding the third. Decolonial logic is relational in the sense that it doesn't get trapped on the binary either/or, which is always set up in terms of entities or events, not in terms of relations. The decolonial perspective looks for the complex field of forces that brings about a given situation in which there is no way out other than choosing between A or B.

Then my first thought was not as trivial as I imagined, exclaimed Bethary with a triumphant smile. My second thought was about I am you and you are me, which reverberates with the African idea of Ubuntu, I am because you are. This may be another good example of relational thinking, Bethary said, looking at me. Correct, I said adding that modern/imperial thinking focuses on the individual, the ego. Hence ontological thinking. But decolonial thinking underscores the complementarity of everything. This is important, Bethary continued, because decolonial relationality is not limited to the so-called human species but is with all the living, that which imperial thinking calls "nature." Binary and ontological thinking privileges the individual in society and the human among all living organisms. The description of IN LAK'ECH, on the other hand, talks of "decolonial love," which implies that you and me are not adversaries but need and complement each other, precisely implying "I am you because you are me," two moieties in mutual respect rather than two entities in oppositional relations, such as male versus female. Males don't exist without females, and vice versa. They are in complementary dualities, not in binary oppositions!

While Bethary spoke, Sitti looked at her notes on IN LAK'ECH. Listen to this, she said and began to read out loud: "the scene of the mural is a magical scene", so the spiritual is back. But more importantly, "nature imparts life's purpose," implying relationality, interconnections. The author sees decolonial love rooted in wild forest sacred medicine and as confronting" colonial practices by European pharmaceutic and food transnational industries." Decolonial love, commented Sitti, becomes a connector between decolonial healing, both physical and spiritual, through alchemical plants like Ayahuasca. Pharmaceutical drugs are needed today, but the problem is that spirituality and love have been displaced by "pharmakos." The enormous golden Ayahuasca tree that is the spine of the mural connects the roots with earth and with the sky. So, the author suggests that Ayahuasca traverses national borders but, above all, fosters the unity of Earth and Cosmos.

Very good, very good, said the visitor. Looking at my notes, I was reminded that this was a competition and that a competition requires a winner. Shall we discuss this? What do we think about EarthNest, the project selected to fill the entrance to Berlin Global Village? Silence. Sitti was looking at her notes, Bethary was reading them over her shoulder. Tayeb murmured in a pensive way. I had some ideas but preferred to listen to other opinions. Here is a beginning, said Sitti after four or five minutes of collective meditation. Maimouna Ouattara, chairwoman of moveGLOBAL e.V. and member of the shareholders' assembly of Berlin Global Village, noted that "the winning design, EarthNest, stood out not only for its poetic idea but also for its effective incorporation of suggested modifications by the jury."

That sentence motivated me to share my thoughts. I volunteer first, said Bethary. We should—she suggested—return to the work's description, and specifically to a sentence I mentioned before when we were talking about the power of the word: "EarthNest is a work of decolonial healing, a communal temple that binds communities together to reclaim their history." Here we have healing, communal and communities reclaiming their memory—or history, whichever you prefer. The first is within the community, the second is community storytelling confronting the ignorance

and distortion of colonized pasts. Remember that language and narratives were at work here. The colonizers imposed their languages and narratives over the already existing ones, told in their languages and based on their own cosmologies. Think of Indonesia, India, or South America, how many languages that existed and still exist have been displaced by Spanish, Portuguese, and English. And, Sitti interrupted, the relationship of earth and sky and the pluriversal flow of time. Yes, Sitti, Bethary agreed. That seems to be a crucial point of this project, especially given the final sentence of its description: "we envision a living monument that honors and preserves the memories of our ancestors and dreams of a world where many worlds can flourish." Yap, exclaimed the visitor, that is a Zapatista's maxim.

This project connects several strands, Tayeb observed. First, there are the keywords that Bethary was mentioning. Then there is a critique of standard memorial monuments and a strong departure from them. The communal is here too, as in other projects. In this case, communities from colonized countries are invited to the Nest to share stories and celebrate their encounter. To celebrate, not to protest. It is decolonial love in motion, as IN LAK'ECH 's descriptor puts it. Then, Sitti interrupted to add, there is the womb-like shape of the nest connecting the weaver bird's nest with African Musgum architecture. Yes, said Tayeb, it is an architecture very similar to the weaver's nest, indeed. Also, like IN LAK'ECH, and a couple of other projects, EarthNest connects the earth/Earth with the sky. We should not forget, said Bethary, that EarthNest brings "ancestral soils" into the picture, inviting visitors to collect soils from different locations, but perhaps more importantly, to exchange stories. Storytelling once again, said the visitor, is highlighted here as a decolonial tool. Certainly, Sitti intervened, storytelling is not the property of decolonial thought, and there are other perspectives that also prioritize storytelling. What distinguishes decolonial storytelling is that it is always correlated with the reconstitutions of what has been destituted by Western modernity.

And what about you? The visitor asked me, looking into my eyes. From the beginning of our conversation, I responded, I have been thinking about this project, but I told myself that I would like first to hear what all of you have to say. You see, I know the members of The Lockward Collective, the artists, Jeannette and Patricia, and the advisor, Rolando. And I agree with everything you all just said. There is a nice interview with them on the Berlin Global Village's homepage that I recommend to read.

So, what I would like to add to the conversation is not information about the artists' individual trajectories, as you can find plenty about each of them online. What I would like to share with you are some comments on the collective's name: The Lockward Collective. What does it mean? Are you familiar with the name of Alanna Lockward? The name of the collective is a component, I would say, of the descriptor and the artwork itself. It is of note to know a little about it. Sitti and the visitor quickly grabbed their iPhone to look for it. I saw Sitti sharing her phone with Bethary. Good, I thought. The name of the descriptor, I would say, is a component of the artwork itself. What do you mean? The visitor asked.

Alanna Lockward (1961–2019) was a remarkable Afro-Dominican writer, curator, critic, and producer who split her life between Puerto Plata, in the Dominican Republic, and Berlin. Among her projects, she created, curated, and single-handedly produced BE.BOP (Black Europe Body Politics). BE.BOP events happened in 2012 and 2013 and then biannually until 2018. Each event was a communal feast. I attended all of them because we were very good friends. But also the authors and the advisor of EarthNest. At that point, the waiter who was serving the table next to us stopped by and asked if he could listen. Sure, but why? I asked. You were talking about Alanna Lockward? Yes, I said. Did you know her? Yes, he replied. We lived in the same building. We used to chat when we met going out or coming in. When the landlord told me that she passed, I was very sad. She was a very nice lady with a positive attitude, very energetic. We invited the waiter to join our conversation.

To continue, I went on, The Lockward Collective members Jeannette, Patricia and Rolando were part of the BE.BOP core group and very close friends of Alanna. The BE.BOP events consisted of workshops during the day and artistic performances in the evening. Jeannette and Patricia had the first performance of some of their work at BE.BOP. Beyond the core group attending every workshop, Alanna invited artists, curators, activists, and journalists to join. BE.BOP was a decolonial event through and through. The project began in 2012, a year after Alanna attended a workshop on "Decolonial Aesthetics" at Duke University, where I teach. Alanna and a few others, including Rolando, stayed on one day after the end of the event and continued talking over dinner. At this dinner, Alanna proposed writing a "Decolonial Aesthetics Manifesto." The idea was embraced, and following further exchange, Alanna, who was also a blogger, published the "Decolonial Aesthetics Manifesto." She created a blog to host the Transnational Decolonial Institute and posted the manifesto. It had a significant impact.

In the interview I mentioned before, posted on the website of the Berlin Global Village, Rolando mentions that he was one of the founders of the Decolonial Summer School, launched in 2010 in Middelburg, Netherlands, and supported by University College Roosevelt. Since 2020, the school has been called the Maria Lugones Decolonial Summer School and hosted at the Van Abbemuseum for Contemporary Art in Eindhoven, Netherlands. For some time, Alanna was one of the core members of the summer school, as were Jeannette and Patricia. So, between 2012 and 2018, BE.BOP and the Decolonial Summer School were two independent but interrelated decolonial events. The school was a pedagogical project, while BE.BOP was an event in which workshop and performance provided context for conversations promoting pluriversal decolonial understandings of coloniality. They were also communal events of-not for, but of-decolonial healings. This distinguished them from professional or academic gatherings, which are about professional improvement.

I looked around and our little group has been attentively following my narrative, including the waiter who was still standing behind Bethary and Sitti. Anyhow, I went on, this is all to say that EarthNest and the name of the collective are a continuation and outcome of more than ten years of collective work at BE.BOP and at the Decolonial Summer School. While the Decolonial Memorial is embedded in the Berlin Global Village, EarthNest could be read, for those of us who know the story, as an Alanna Lockward's memorial. This is what I mean, I said, responding to the previous question of the visitor. And this is quite fitting to the occasion, because Berlin was the headquarters of the decolonial communal work that Alanna promoted through BE.BOP.

Well, well, well, said the visitor. That is a nice story. Thanks, very nice to know all of that, chimed in the waiter before taking his leave. Now, the visitor carried on, it is getting late, and we will need to say farewell. So, I hope that for all of us, this conversation has expanded our ideas about decoloniality and decolonization in the third decade of the twenty-first century. Bethary, Sitti, and Tayeb exchanged words with us, and we closed with friendly and warm kisses goodbye.

CENTERFOLD

Mithu Sanyal asking Louiza Renning:

What does de:colonial mean to you? The background to this question is that during my jury work, I often thought: wow, a lot of the submissions are for a colonial memorial, but the decolonial aspect gets very short shrift. And then I thought: perhaps we simply know too little about what decoloniality actually means. So my question to you is: what does decoloniality—or perhaps better as an adjective: de:colonial—mean to you?

A CONVERSATION AMONG WOMEN

Answer:

To be honest, although I was familiar with colonialism before the project, I was less familiar with the concept of decoloniality.

As a result, being involved in the contest has been a learning process for me that has presented the many facets of this topic to me.

I learned that decoloniality is, among other things, an attempt to promote discourse about the colonial past and to develop perspectives for a decolonial future. Decoloniality includes spiritual methods of reconciliation alongside empirical confrontation. I learned that decolonial perspectives extend beyond the horizon of the West and, most importantly, that the term is ambivalent.

Like every other participant in this project, I am involved in this process and can only say that for me, "de:colonial" is a mutable term that will hopefully, if it hasn't already been doing this for a long time, now accompany and guide us.

Louiza Renning asking Michaela Zischek:

As the person responsible for the Corporate Design of such a complex project as the Decolonial Memorial, I imagine the task of inventing a unified design language that does justice to such an artistic magnitude is challenging.

What was your discovery process like and what helped you choose a design concept in the end?

Answer:

It's true, it wasn't easy to decide on a suitable Corporate Design for the Decolonial Memorial—but it was a lot of fun! From my point of view, it is essential to have a good project team and a professional agency at your side in such a process. With HEN-KELHIEDL and their staff—Dr. Eva Brunner and Ina Goia (Concept and Project Management), Christian Rogge (Design and Strategy), and Victoria Grunicke (Design)—we had exactly that.

Our goal was to create a design that emphasized the decolonial perspective, felt modern, chic, and artistic, yet was warm and inviting. It should convey mindfulness without being heavy-handed and definitely avoid ethno-kitsch. The vision was a look that emphasized community thinking, was future-oriented, and had echoes of Afrofuturism.

The existing logo of the Decolonial Memorial was a step in the right direction because the logo and design concept had to go hand in hand. The agency presented us with three strong and very different designs, which made the decision difficult. The final concept was unanimously decided on by the project team. It is characterized by strong purple spikes that embody something combative, activist. These "spikes" honor the accomplishments of Black activists and poke white viewers to engage more deeply with decolonial issues. The warm purple contrasts harmoniously with the blue/green of the Berlin Global Village Corporate Design. With its many corners and edges, the look and feel of the Decolonial Memorial stands apart from the round shapes of the Berlin Global Village.

For the web design, we focused on lots of black space and a gray background instead of white. A sans serif font provides clarity, while distorted serif keywords (often associated with tradition and the old) artistically symbolize a break with the past. In the end, the decision was unanimous, and as the person who works with the design elements the most, I am still very happy with our decision.

Michaela Zischek asking Katinka Theis:

You followed the contest closely and had early access to the 20 finalists' submissions. You wrote the summaries of the artistic designs, which were an important basis for the jury's decision. If you had been on the jury, which three or four designs would you personally have considered the best, and why were they your favorites?

Answer:

That's a great question! During the preliminary review process, I really dug into the designs to objectively present the ideas to the jury and make sure they were all equally valued. I completely withheld my own judgment at this point. However, through the intense engagement with the different ideas, I engaged in an interior dialog with the authors of the designs, who were still unknown to me at this time due to the anonymous procedure. Had I been on the jury, I would have decided between the qualities of Rebecca Korang & Jeremiah Ikongio's "The Ghost of a Memorial," Ade Adekola's "The Crystal Sentinel," and The Lockward Collective's "EarthNest." "The Ghost of a Memorial" de-

sign, which consists of objects in the form of an Augmented Reality-enhanced wall installation and was created in workshops with cooperation partners from regions of the world formerly colonized by Germany, convinced me primarily because of its significant participatory aspect. The luminous sculpture "The Crystal Sentinel," whose glass core is surrounded by an iron-metal structure inspired by Namibian crystals and African weaves, appealed to me for its unusual aesthetic and architectural presence. And the winning design, "EarthNest," impressed me from the start with its spatial concept, which includes a depression in the ground for the open bronze architecture, where soil from the former colonies can also find a place. The conical architecture is based on an organic form that corresponds to a collective thought and opposes the patriarchal forms of conventional memorial culture. Through the spatial experience, a process of renewal can occur on a sensory level.

Katinka Theis asking Maimouna Ouattara:

Dear Maimouna Ouattara, you were one of the initiators of the contest for a Decolonial Memorial and have supported and accompanied the process throughout. What role can art play in the process of decolonization? Do you think that the engagement with the issue through the art contest has made a difference? And what makes the winning design special to you? At what level can it have an impact?

Answer:

Dear Katinka Theis,

Thank you for your interesting questions. I see the contest as a complement to the existing approaches to decolonization in our city.

For the first time, I was able to experience and follow an art contest. I was impressed by how the idea of the memorial was carried out with such creativity. What a wealth of possibilities and approaches to engage with the theme of decolonization. It is undeniable that art cannot be left out of decolonization efforts. In the field of development policy education, we talk a lot about changing perspectives. This is an added value that art brings to the engagement with decolonization. Art offers many means of expression. The artworks submitted to the contest clearly demonstrated this.

At the moment there is a lot of movement in the field of decolonization, especially in museums, and not only in Berlin. It is important to maintain decolonization approaches or strategies that focus on the knowledge and expertise of actors from different communities, as well as approaches that center their work around cooperation and assembly.

I especially like this quote from Prof. Dr. Walther Mignolo: "Decolonial thinking is neither a discipline nor a method. It is a way of being, thinking, doing, and becoming in the world." I think Walter

Mignolo explains here that decolonization is about attitude. For us, in our work, in our society, in our meetings, I want to make decoloniality an attitude. This is also reflected in the EarthNest.

The winning design is interesting on several levels and incorporates some of these approaches in its implementation. The Lockward Collective is a group that has been working on decolonial issues for years. I appreciate the idea that the memorial will bring together different perspectives and be a place of meeting, healing, and sharing. I see many opportunities for organizations, not only at Berlin Global Village, to embody these aspects in their work.

Maimouna Ouattara asking Mariana Moreno:

What do you associate with the Decolonial Memorial? Since you are interested in intersectional (de)coloniality, migration, and feminism, I would like to ask: to what extent do you think intersectional and feminist approaches were implemented in the contest or in the winning design?

Answer:

The project exudes an impressive feminine power. The guidance of Angelina Jellesen, the project manager, and Michaela Zischek, the public relations officer, was an enriching and educational experience for me. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of and learn from this team.

The anonymity of the contest created something unique that I haven't experienced in other art contests. It allows the "ego" of art to be minimized, so that neither name, nor art academy, nor nationality occupy the foreground. Rather, it is the connection between the design and the desire to create a memorial that commemorates colonialism or addresses decolonialism in the present. There are numerous designs that attempt to present an intersectional or feminist perspective. However, the direct connection of these themes does not present, continuously. This I noticed particularly because the Decolonial Memorial team always aspired to work intersectionally and decolonially. We were committed to working with people in the diaspora locally.

Through inspiring women like Mithu Sanyal, María Linares, and Sylbee Kim, I have experienced intersectionality on a new level. They take clear and firm stands and are not swayed by outside influences.

Mariana Moreno asking Mithu Sanyal:

As an author, you write about various issues, such as racism or feminism, from an intersectional perspective in your books and publications.

Where do you see this intersectional perspective in the Decolonial Memorial project?

Answer:

Fuck, what does intersectional mean?

I mean in this context.

I mean, fuck.

So much intersectionality, so little time.

I have never worked on a project where such a large group managed their time so efficiently. With hundreds of suggestions. Our different backgrounds.

So friendly and productive and... Hats off!

But what got lost along the way is the discussion.

All the questions that have been burning in my soul are still there and burning.

So now I send them to you, dear Mariana, unordered and unanswered:

Why do 99.66% of all submissions refer to German-African colonial history?

What role do bodies play?

If the representation of bodies is part of the designs, why are only Black bodies represented? What about Brown bodies?

What gender stereotypes are reproduced/challenged by these bodies?

Why is the positive future almost exclusively represented by the young female body?

What is the role of the naked male body?

What is the role of the suffering body in these designs?

What about the living/dead body?

And when, when are we going to have these conversations with each other?

UNANIMOUS

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF THE JURY FOR THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL ART COMPETITION



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing, Prof Dr Chika Okeke-Agulu, Elfriede Müller and Anne Lampen at the second jury meeting

On January 27, 2024, the jury met for the last time in the Miriam Makeba Hall of the Berlin Global Village to determine the winners of the art contest for the Decolonial Memorial. As before, the project team was pleased to welcome the jury members Dr. Mithu Melanie Sanyal, Gary Stewart, Sylbee Kim, Kristina Leko, and Michael Küppers-Adebisi, chaired by Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu and vice-chaired by María Linares. Since Sylbee Kim had already been promoted to a full member of the jury in the first judging session, Sonja Hohenbild was welcomed as a permanent replacement this time. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the shareholders of the Berlin Global Village, Maimouna Ouattara (moveGLOBAL e.V.), Sylvia Werther (BER e.V.), and Akinola Famson (Afrika-Rat Berlin Brandenburg e.V. [Africa Council Berlin Brandenburg Association]) as well as the Decolonial Memorial project team. The session was led by the external coordination team of Óscar Maurico Ardila Luna and Stefan Krüskemper, who oversaw the entire contest from the beginning to ensure the anonymity of the artists.

The jury members were given access to the complete designs submitted by the artists. Both the concept posters and the accompanying texts, as well as the artists' comprehensive submissions, were available for the jury members to review in their entirety and scope. The abbreviated pre-assessment reports

were then provided to the jurors in both procedural languages to assist in their decision-making process. All documents had been sent digitally to the jury members in advance for their review. The session was opened by the moderator at 9:00 am sharp.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Akinola Famson and Joshua Kantara discuss the designs at the second jury meeting

After a welcome, the day's agenda, goals, and schedule were reviewed before the moderator handed over to the jury chairs. The designs were presented by the External Coordination team, all the designs were accepted by the jury and approved for the procedure. Following due consideration of the designs, clear favorites emerged in the first round of voting. Prof. Chika Okeke-Agulu excused his jury colleagues from the first work session two hours later than anticipated.



Gary Stewart and Kristina Leko at the second jury meeting

Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Prof Dr Chika Okeke-Agulu at the second jury meeting

In the final effort, the focus was on discussing the designs with the most votes and comparing their strengths and weaknesses with and against each other. The issues of feasibility and external impact played an important role in this process. After lengthy and enthusiastic discussion, another vote was called. Once again, there were clear winners. At this point, the jury chairs asked for a statement from the shareholder representatives of Berlin Global Village to possibly take into account the needs and feelings of the clients.

Representing the shareholders present, Akinola Famson expressed confidence in the process. His only request was to formulate the recommendations and requirements for the artists clearly to allow for smooth imple-



Photo: Sedat Mehde

María Linares, Gary Stewart, Kristina Leko, Mithu M. Sanyal and Michael Küppers-Adebisi at the second jury meeting



The Miriam Makeba Hall during the second jury meeting

Photo: Sedat Mehder

mentation on site. The third and final round of voting on the artistic designs resulted in an intensely debated shortlist, which ultimately was approved unanimously by the jury. After a long day, the jury chair turned the process over to the External Coordination team, which closed the proceedings. Armin Massing, Managing Director of Berlin Global Village, thanked them and dismissed everyone for the evening. The decision was unanimous. Now it was clear: We had a first-place design for the Decolonial Memorial!

The first-place design

The artists who took first place in the Decolonial Memorial art contest are The Lockward Collective. Artists Jeannette Ehlers and patricia kaersenhout, in collaboration with consultant Rolando Vázquez, implemented their EarthNest design. The technical advisor is the architect, Max Bentler.



Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Sylbee Kim at the second jury meeting

Maimouna Ouattara at the second jury meeting

A DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL FOR THE WHOLE WORLD IN NEUKÖLLN



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Kartin Korte at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

Karin Korte

District Councilor for Education, Culture and Sports in Berlin Neukölln

I first heard about the idea of the Decolonial Memorial from Fritz Felgentreu, Neukölln's Bundestag representative (SPD) at that time, who had worked hard to secure €750,000 in federal funding for this special memorial. Since additional state funds of the same amount were lacking, he asked for my support, as I was still a member of the Berlin House of Representatives then. The idea of erecting a "Decolonial Memorial" in public space fascinated me from the very beginning: from an artistic point of view, because it could be anything, it did not have to become an ordinary monument but was free in its artistic design, and also from the perspective of responsibility to acknowledge Germany's colonial past. I was very happy when Berlin Global Village asked me if I would like to accompany the selection process and be part of the jury as an expert.

What a question—of course I would. It was an honor to represent the district of Neukölln in this important process as District Councilor for Culture. Initially, of the over 600 submis-

sions, 244 made it to the second round, with 20 of those selected for the final round. From the Neukölln Art Commission and our district projects in the areas of art in architecture and art in public space, I was quite familiar with the processes in art competitions and the associated jury meetings, but the final meeting on January 27, 2024, was something very special.

On my way to Berlin Global Village, I already felt that this was an extraordinary day. Today, after a worldwide competition, we would decide on an artwork that would be prominently visible to the public on the forecourt of



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Karin Korte and Anne Lampen at the second jury meeting

Berlin Global Village as a Decolonial Memorial and would have an impact far beyond Neukölln and Berlin. The selection process took a full day. The discussions about the artworks were all conducted with great appreciation for the artists who made it to this final round. It was a great pleasure for me, and I would like to thank the jury and everyone else who contributed to the success of this process.

In the end, the winning design was EarthNest by The Lockward Collective. It was a great pleasure for me to meet the artists of this collective, Jeannette Ehlers and patricia kaersenhout, with Rolando Vázquez and Max Benter, during the exhibition of the final 20 competition designs in the Kulturstall at Gutshof Britz. During the selection process, everything was completely anonymous, but now you could actually talk to the artists behind the artwork. It was fantastic, especially because they were overjoyed, and they showed it. I hope that EarthNest, as a work of art, will radiate out into the world and become a living place of exchange, inspiration, and remembrance as a Decolonial Memorial.

FULL HOUSE

THE VERNISSAGE OF THE 20 FINAL ARTISTIC DESIGNS



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Curator Óscar Ardila and Armin Massing at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

All 20 artistic designs submitted for the creation of a Decolonial Memorial were presented to the public in an exhibition curated by Óscar Mauricio Ardila Luna and Stefan Krüskemper in cooperation with the Kulturstall at Gutshof Britz/Museum Neukölln. The exhibition took place to underline the transparency of the contest, demonstrating the creativity and diversity of the submitted designs. The artists' concepts were in focus and accompanied by a stage program aligned with the contest, including panel discussions and a talk with the artists who took first place.

On the evening of April 26, 2024, the foyer of the Kulturstall at Gutshof Britz was transformed into a place of artistic exchange on the theme of decolonization. More than 250 guests, some coming directly from the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) conference "Remembering Colonialism," gathered for the festive opening of the exhibition called "The 20 Final Designs for a Decolonial Memorial." In addition to the opportunity to speak with the artists who took first place and present finalists, there was exciting input on the international contest:

Dr. Matthias Henkel, Director of the Museum Neukölln, welcomed the numerous visitors and emphasized the special significance of the cooperation between the museum and the project team of the Decolonial Memorial. He elaborated that to him this collaboration was a logical result of the thematic interaction with the "Buried Memories" exhibition, which received great acclaim last fall.

In his speech, Armin Massing, Managing Director of Berlin Global Village, appreciated the symbolism of EarthNest, the first-place



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Entrance to the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs at the Kulturstall Gutshof Britz



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen and Armin Massing at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

design, and emphasized that global justice is not possible without decolonial thinking. Angelina Jellesen, Project Manager of the Decolonial Memorial, thanked all the artists who participated in the contest and paid special tribute to the finalists, some of whom were present in person at the opening.

Karin Korte, District Councilor for Education, Schools, Culture and Sport in Berlin-Neukölln, who had participated in the jury sessions as an expert, emphasized the relevance of the project, especially for the district and beyond. This was followed by an engaging panel di-

scussion moderated by Jeannine Kantara, in which jury members María Linares, Maimouna Ouattara, and Michael Küppers-Adebisi shared insights into their jury work and decision-making process.

Michael Küppers-Adebisi, initiator and advisor for the Decolonial Memorial, explained the visions, expectations, wishes, and needs within the framework of the Decolonial Memorial. In particular, he addressed the desire to manifest decolonial thinking at the core of the work of the Berlin Global Village. Visual artist and vice chair of the jury, María Lina-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michael Küppers-Adebisi and Maimouna Outtara at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

EXHIBITION



Photo: Sedat Mehder



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Jeannette Ehlers, patricia kaersenhout and Rolando Vázquez at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

Guests at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

res, spoke about the criteria and challenges in selecting the final designs. She emphasized that the participatory process, that is, the involvement of associations at the Berlin Global Village in the creation of the artwork, was particularly important to the jury. Maimouna Ouattara, board member of moveG-LOBAL e.V. and member of the shareholders' meeting of Berlin Global Village, reported on the process of translating the initial idea into the project design and implementation: Many of the designs seemed very utopian at first, but the first-place design, EarthNest, impressed not only with its poetic idea but also with how well it implemented the jury's comments from the first phase of the contest.

A special highlight of the evening was a conversation with the artists who took first place in the competition, Jeannette Ehlers and patricia kaersenhout. Their artistic design for a thought-provoking Decolonial Memorial has been realized in collaboration with consultant Rolando Vázquez and architect Max Bentler in front of Berlin Global Village in the fall of 2024. The artists provided insights into their creative process and the meaning of their work, EarthNest.



Photo: Michaela Zischek

Elisabeth Masé and the Collective, in the centre María Linares at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

FINALISTS



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Full house at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs. Front row: Jeannette Ehlers, Rolando Vázquez, patricia kaersenhout, Akinola Famson and Tahir Della

The evening concluded with a sparkling wine reception where visitors had the opportunity to view the final artistic designs and engage in discussion. The exhibition in the foyer of the Kulturstall at Gutshof Britz ran until May 10, 2024.

If you missed the exhibition in Neukölln, you can learn more about the artists and their designs in a permanent digital exhibition on the Decolonial Memorial website at https://www.berlin-global-village.de/en/dekoloniales-denkzeichen/digital-exhibition/.



Photo: Sedat Mehde

The Lockward Collective with consultant Rolando Vázquez



A globally open, anonymous and two-phase art competition. Realization of a decolonial memorial in front of the Berlin Global Village.

Foyer des Kulturstalls Gutshof Britz, 26.04. — 10.05.2024

Exhibition of the competition submissions

Finalist

Winner project

Earth Nest [KennNr.: 010084]

The Lockward Collective - Jeannette Ehlers, patricia kaersenhout [Amsterdam, Niederlande] Specialists: Max Bentler & Rolando Vázquez

2. Rana

SHELTER (Zuflucht) [KennNr.: 010128]

Elisabeth Masé & the Collective [Berlin, Deutschland] Collaborator: Tchekpo Dan Agbetou, DansArt Tanznetworks | Specialists: Svenja Teichert, Cosmomusivo Mosaik Consultant: Juvencio Demide, Prof. Dr. Shulamit Bruckstein

3. Rang

UNBOUND [KennNr.: 010155]

Tuli Mekondjo, Nicola Brandt, Muningandu Hoveka [Berlin, Deutschland]

Staff: Kamal Ranchod & Lorenzo Nassimbeni | Specialists: Kamal Ranchod & Lorenzo Nassimbeni | Advisor: Napandulwe Shiweda, Larissa Förster, Reinhart Kössler, Dieter Brandt

4. Rang

The Ghost of a Memorial [KennNr.: 010191]

Rebecca Korang & Jeremiah Ikongio [Berlin, Deutschland] Staff member: Vanessa Opoku | Specialist: Farokh Falsafi Consultant: Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung

(luft)wurzeln / (air)roots [KennNr.: 10001]

Nina Berfelde [Berlin, Deutschland]

Staff: Dr. Alexandra Appel, Nicole Pearson, Ghasal Falaki, Dr. Anna Stoffregen Advisor: Luise Leon Elbern

BELL DRUM / TROMMELGLOCKE / TAMBOR CAMPANA [KennNr.: 10008]

Pedro Lasch [Carrboro, Vereinigte Staaten]

Collaborators: Duke University Colab & DesignHub, Duke University Artistic Research Initiative & FHI Social Practice Lab | Specialists: Isaac Rattey, Sara Canale, Emma Maddock, Jake Mann, Swetha Sekhar, Devi Yuliarti | Consultant: Michael Faber

The ground beneath your feet [KennNr.: 10014]

Diana Sprenger & Euan Williams [Berlin, Deutschland] Employees: Fittkau Metallgestaltung GmbH Specialists: Laufs Engineering Design

Afro-Mandala [KennNr.: 010032]

Steven Anwar (Sapien) [Sheffield, Großbritannien]

Collaborators: Steel Line Ltd, Yorkshire Artspace, Darren Richardson & John Thatcher, Cutting Edge Laser Ltd & C&S Fabrications | Specialists: Mtec Fine Art Ltd, Gibson Design Consultancy Ltd, Structural Workshop Ltd.

CORE-COLUMN [KennNr.: 010050]

Bettina Hutschek & Alioum Moussa [Berlin, Deutschland]

Licht der Wahrheit / Beacon of Truth [KennNr.: 10052]

Jean-Ulrick Désert & Roberto Uribe-Castro [Berlin, Deutschland]

Specialists: BRAUN Lighting Solutions Consultant: Mokia Laisin

LINEAGE [KennNr.: 010056]

Emeka Udemba [Freiburg, Deutschland] Specialists: Art Engeneering GmbH | Consultant: Matthias Dämpfle

Flag of Roots [KennNr.: 010061]

Miguel Braceli [Brooklyn, Vereinigte Staaten] Sonderfachleute: Mary Nanckel Studio | Berater*in: Art and Sculpture Unlimited & Eastern Engineering Group

Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft 1884, 2024, 2164 / Past, present, and future 1884, 2024, 2164 [KennNr.: 010077]

Ulrich Vogl [Berlin, Deutschland]

Staff: Christoph Wagner, Eric Tscherow | Specialists: Anna Trabulo & Team Consultant: Christoph Wagner

ISI ESEMO (ANCESTRAL CONSTELLATION) [KennNr.: 010115]

Orevaoghene Jenkins Okpokpor [Lagos, Nigeria] Specialists: Momoh, Osomhe, Mowete Victor Chiejin Advisor: Onyekachukwu Anthony Iloanya, Professor S.O Adeusi, Ekiti State University

Heimlich/Unheimlich [KennNr.: 010138]

Romy Achituv [Somerville, Vereinigte Staaten] Specialists: Maayan Strauss, Kerem Halbrecht, Jan Mommert Consultant: Sandra Stemmer & Holger Hönck, Stop Making Art

IN LAK'ECH (I am you and you are me) [KennNr.: 010149]

Ingrid Cuestas [Bogotá, Kolumbien]

Spirit of Sankofa [KennNr.: 010151]

Chaz Maviyane-Davies [Cambridge, Vereinigte Staaten] Collaborator: Marianne Schoucair | Specialists: Sino Sculpture Consultant: Björn Alfers

Unfinished Business[KennNr.: 010213]

Dwi Januartanto [Lamongan, Indonesien]

THE WORD OF THE GREATER SPIRIT OF FIRE [KennNr.: 010236]

Ancestral Council Willka Yaku (Sactred Water)

[Cauca, Kolumbien] Staff member: Miller Alexander Ordoñez Muñoz Special experts: Jenniffer Avila Jordán (Phuyu Uma) Consultant: Eyder Fabio Calambás Tróchez (Isua Pørøpik)

Der Kristallwächter / The Crystal Sentinel [KennNr.: 010250]

Ade Adekola [Lagos, Nigeria]

Collaborator: Jurgen Willen

Specialists: Niel Thomas, Dr Olumide Okubadejo, Ouchhh Studio, KVL Berlin









Gefördert von





Funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for the Arts and Media (BKM) and the Senate Department for Culture and Social Cohesion (SenKultEU).

<u>Introduction</u>

German colonialism and its consequences were ignored in Germany for a long time. But ongoing interventions from civil society have set a process in motion. Issues such as the appropriate handling of the genocide in Namibia, the unclear provenance of human remains in medical and academic archives, and cultural assets in ethnological museums have now also reached parliaments.

Committed development policy and migrant-diasporic organizations come together in the Berlin Global Village. Therefore, the Berlin Global Village announced an international, two-phase open art competition for a decolonial memorial to address the connection between German colonialism and development cooperation.

750.000 euros from the State of Berlin (SenKultGZ) are available for the realization of the work of art. The competition, education program and public relations work are financed with a further 750.000 euros from the federal government (BKM). Both Claudia Roth, Minister of State for Culture and Media and Joe Ciallo Senator for Culture and Social Cohesion are patrons of the Decolonial Memorial. The project is supported by the Berlin Global Village gGmbH in cooperation with the Office for Art in Public Spaces of the Kulturwerk GmbH of the bbk berlin e.V. and a civil society support group made up of eight associations.

Competition procedure

At the beginning of 2023, an open, anonymous, two-phase and worldwide competition was announced for the realization of a decolonial memorial, which will be permanently displayed between or in front of the two buildings of the Berlin Global Village in Berlin Neukölln by autumn 2024. The work of art in public space is intended to be a catalist for decolonial awareness process and the development of a decolonial aesthetic in Berlin as well as Germany. Only freelance professional visual artists or groups of artists from all over the world were accepted to participate. Artists from formerly colonized countries were also invited to take part in the competition – a first in Germany.

20 designs were selected by a high profile, sevenperson international jury chaired by Prof. Dr. Chika Okeke-Agulu (Princeton University) was selected for the second phase and worked out in detail by the artists. The names of the participants and winners were only revealed at the end of the entire competition after the jury's decision. The jury emphasized the high quality of all submissions.

Statistical evaluation

Fortunately, artists from all continents submitted a total of 244 designs. In addition to Europe, submissions came from Africa (Egypt, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Gambia, Ghana, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Zambia, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe) and from Asia (China, India)., Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Thailand) and from North and South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Jamaica, Canada, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, USA). A total of 23.40% of the first phase submissions came from the African continent. In this group, designs from Nigeria were most represented at almost 40%.

In the second phase of the competition, according to the authors' statements, the distribution was as follows: 45% EU, 15% Africa, 15% North America, 10% South America, 10% England, 5% Asia. The extent to which the artists had diasporic backgrounds, for example from Europe, was not examined.

Implementation recommendation

"Earth Nest" is the project recommended for realization by the jury for the decolonial memorial. The design proposes a conical bronze sculpture in the form of a woven spatial structure, which will be placed between the two main buildings of the Berlin Global Village. The artists describe it as "a work of decolonial healing, a communal temple that brings communities together to reclaim their history. Its underground section will host ancestral soils of the former colonies, and its weaved aerial cone will be illuminated in violet tones." The authors see the fact that a significant part of the monument does not strive upwards, but is located underground, as a conscious break with European traditions.

The project was designed by The Lockward Collective, consisting of Jeannette Ehlers and patricia kaersenhout, in cooperation with consultant Rolando Vázquez and architect Max Bentler as technical advisor.

Exhibition

The 20 finalist projects submitted for the second phase of the competition in form of posters will be exhibitet at Museum Neukölln. These provide a detailed representation of both the concept and the technical details for implementation. The competition entries that were created during the first phase of the competition will also be presented digitally in the exhibition, as will supplementary documents for the competition, including the announcement, protocols and reports.

The decolonial memorial will be unveiled and presented to the public on September 13, 2024 in front of the Berlin Global Village.

More information about the Decolonial Memorial and a digital exhibition of the 20 final designs can be found at www.dekloniales-denkzeichen.de

DENK[MAL]ZEICHEN

ON RECALLING THE PAST,
IMAGINING POSSIBLE FUTURES,
AND THE TRANSFORMATIVE HEALING POWER OF ART



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Matthias Henkel at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

Dr. Matthias Henkel

Director of the Museum Neukölln; Chairman of the Museums, Municipal History, and Memory Culture Group

A classical monument (Denkmal) often radiates concern: concern about events of the past. By contrast, a memorial (Denkzeichen) exudes optimism and seems instead to open up a transformative, diverse, future-oriented space in the imagination. While monuments fundamentally justify their existence through their ability to move us to reflect on what has been, we can suggest that memorials want to move us to look ahead and take our thinking further.

All the more exciting and revealing was the entirely deliberate spatial and temporal proximity of the exhibition BURIED MEMORIES: How Remembrance Is Handled: The Genocide of the Ovaherero and Nama at Museum Neukölln and the presentation of the Decolonial Memorial short list in the foyer of the Kulturstall of Schloss and Gutshof Britz from April 26 to May 10, 2024¹. The previously unsuccessful effort to bring the remembrance of the

Herero and Nama genocide into the present thus confronted Germany's colonial heritage with the vision of "healing the colonial wound, through remembrance, mourning, and also the celebration of the plurality of worlds that have been, and continue to be, under oppression" (Rolando Vázquez)².

As part of its cultural policy, the Neukölln District Council has tasked its Museums, Municipal History, and Memory Culture Group with developing appropriate ways of dealing with the Hererostein. The BURIED MEMORIES exhibition is one response to this mandate. Using the tools available to a museum-exhibiting what was hidden previously—it became clear just how complex the history of the commemorative ensemble at the Columbiadamm Cemetery in Berlin's Neukölln district, and the layers of meaning attached to it, really are. Sometimes traditional memory culture remains stuck in an attempt to deal with the past solely through a facts-based approach. This often ignores the emotional and corporeal level of inter-generational trauma. Yet cultural memory, which is directed towards the past, and imagination that is directed towards the future are both important processes for understanding oneself and the world better, and for further mutual growth.³

The transformative power of EarthNest, the Decolonial Memorial design that placed first, and which exudes safety, becoming, protection, and commonality at the same time—and thus "empowerment and healing through art" (Jeannette Ehlers)—was already apparent at the design stage. It provides us with reason to expect that, in the future, the Decolonial Memorial will be a place that not only permits previously unimagined encounters and social interactions, but also initiates them.⁴



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Matthias Henkel during the panel discussion at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

Wir können
die Grausamkeiten
der Geschichte
nicht löschen;
Wir sind verdammt dazu,
daraus zu lernen;
Let's have a dream:
get active together.

We cannot erase the cruelties of history; We are condemned to learn from them; Let's have a dream: get active together.

Website of the Buried Memories exhibition: https://schloss-gutshof-britz.de/museum-neukoelln/ausstellungen/buried-memories.

Website for the exhibition of the 20 finalist's designs for the Decolonial Memorial: https://www.berlin-global-village.de/en/dekoloniales-denkzeichen/digital-exhibition/.

¹ As part of the concept of the accompanying program for the Buried Memories exhibition, the call for moderators was developed together with the Initiative of Black People in Germany (ISD), together with AFROTAK TV cyberNomads.

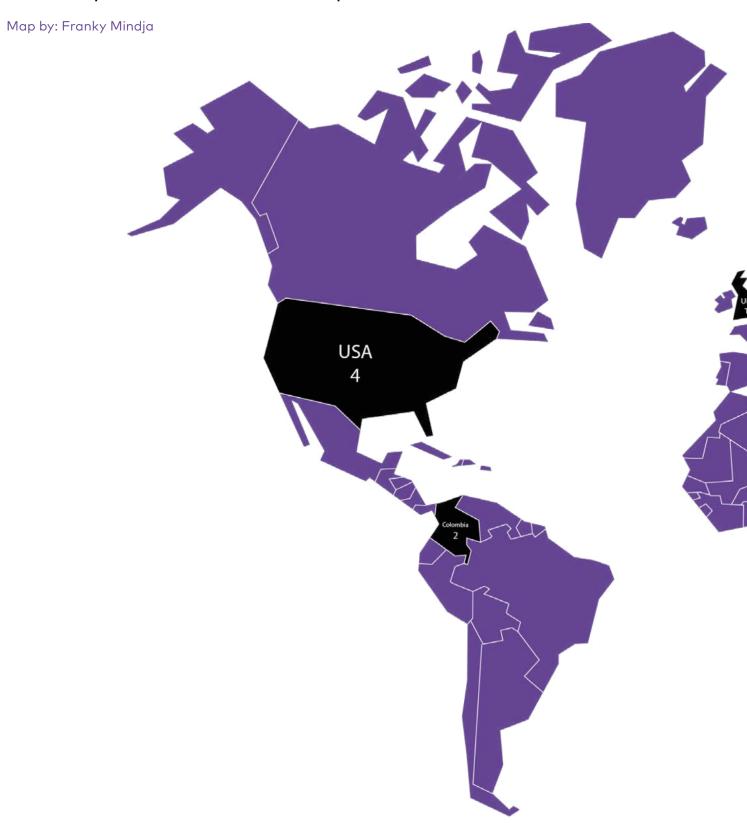
² Vázquez, Rolando. Interview: The Lockward Collective, https://www.berlin-global-village.de/en/blog/²⁰²⁴/⁰⁴/²⁵/interview-the-lockward-collective/.

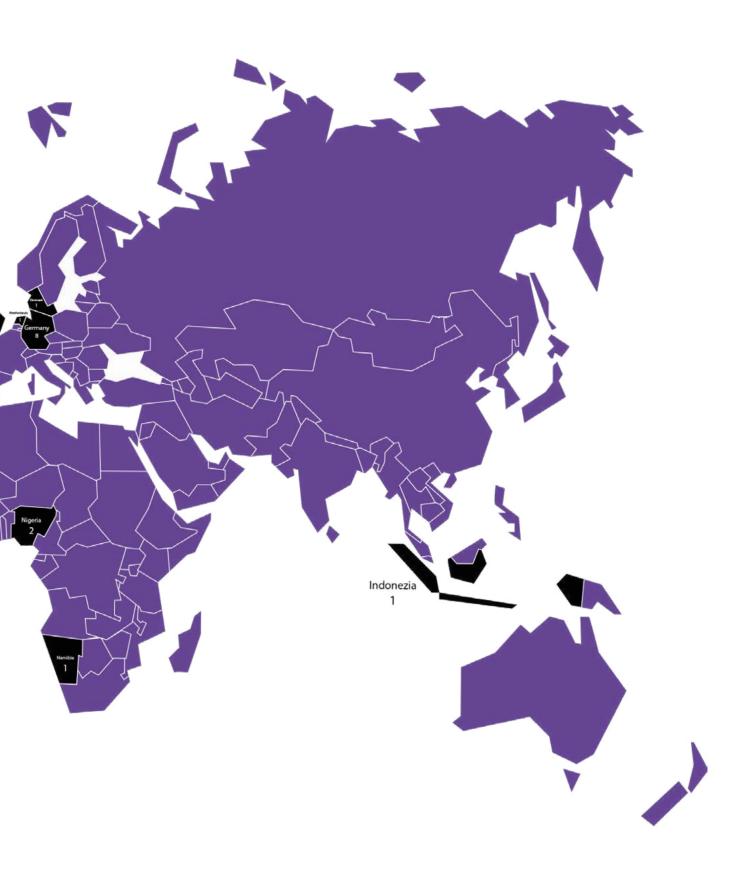
³ With respect to the genocide of the Herero and Nama and efforts to draw attention to trans-generational trauma or render it visible, the German premiere of Coming Home Dead by a Nama theater troupe on May 30, 2024, which was made possible in cooperation with the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung and the Kulturnetzwerk Neukölln, was a signal event: https://calendar.boell.de/de/event/coming-home-dead.

⁴ Ehlers, Jeannette. Interview: The Lockward Collective, https://www.berlin-global-village.de/en/blog/²⁰²⁴/o⁴/²⁵/interview-the-lockward-collective/.

FINAL DESIGNS

20 final designs were selected for the second phase of the art competition









MEET THE ARTISTS: THE LOCKWARD COLLECTIVE

The Lockward Collective was awarded first place in the application competition for the Decolo-nial Memorial. Artists Jeannette Ehlers and patricia kaersenhout, in collaboration with advisor Rolando Vázquez, created the EarthNest. Their technical advisor was architect, Max Bentler.

The work of The Lockward Collective engages decolonial practices contesting the legacies of European colonialism. The group, formed in 2023, takes its name from the Dominican thinker and writer Alanna Lockward and wishes to honor her work and spirit by joining forces and ma-terializing a decolonial project in a public space.

PRODUCTION



patricia kaersenhout Multi-media artist

Photo: Sedat Mehder

patricia kaersenhout is a multimedia artist of Surinamese descent based in Amsterdam and France.

kaersenhout stud-ied fine arts at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam and completed postgraduate studies at the BAK in Utrecht. kaersenhout has exhibited nationally and internationally and was the first Black woman in the Netherlands to create a monument: "The Monument for Flight and Re-sis-

tance" for the city of Utrecht, unveiled in 2023 as part of the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the Netherlands. In the same year, kaersenhout curated a comprehensive instal-lation on the colonial past of the city of Rotterdam. kaersenhout's critical reflection on the Braunschweig Colonial Monument won an international contest and was inaugurated in 2024.



Jeanette Ehlers Artist

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Jeannette Ehlers is a Copenhagen-based artist of Danish and Trinidadian descent whose practice takes shape ex-perimentally across photography, video, installation, sculpture, and performance.

Ehlers graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in 2006. From 2020 to 2023, Ehlers chaired the Danish Arts Foundation's Grant Committee for the Visual Arts.

Her work has been exhibit-ed internationally, and she was a finalist for the National Windrush Monument at Waterloo Sta-tion in London and for the Braunschweig Colonial Monument in 2022/23. She is also the co-creator of the sculpture "I Am Queen Mary," a public project produced in 2018.

Prof. Dr. Rolando Vázques Consultant

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Prof. Dr. Rolando Vázques is a decolonial thinker at the University of Amsterdam.

Together with Prof. Walter Mignolo, he cofounded the María Lugones Decolonial Summer School, which has a particular focus on memory culture with respect to the abolition of slavery in the Netherlands. His book Vistas of Modernity: Decolonial Aesthesis and the



End of the Contemporary, published by the Mondriaan Fund, is a landmark on the subject of decolonial aesthetics. He was an advisor to The Lockward Collective, which placed first in the competition, and, together with architect Max Bentler, contributed greatly to the conception and realization of the artwork EarthNest.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

ART, COORDINATION, AND VISION

Along with the artists of The Lockward Collective, several experts were also involved in the artistic execution of the EarthNest:



Elena Quintarelli Production Manager

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elena Quintarelli is a cultural worker and educator interested in exploring the intersection of artistic practices, education, colonial pasts, and decolonial options.

Based in Berlin, she holds an MA in Media and Visual Anthropology from Freie Universität Berlin. Since 2012, she has been involved in the curation and production of several projects, including SAVVY.doc in SAVVY Contemporary (2015 to 2021), BE.BOP-Black Europe

Body Politics (2014 to 2018) under the curation of Alanna Lockward, and The Decolonial Salon (2023). She joined EarthNest's Decolonial Memorial project enthusiastically as a Production Manager at the invitation of The Lockward Collective. She is grateful for her long-standing relationship with the artists, initiated by Alanna Lockward's labor of love.



Billy Fowo Curator Sonic Memorial

Photo: Marvin Systermans

Billy Fowo is a curator and writer based in Berlin who works at SAVVY Contemporary – The Laboratory of Form-Ideas, Germany.

With points of interest in various fields and disciplines such as the sonic, linguistics, and literature, Fowo questions what is considered knowledge and endeavors to rethink the spaces in which it is disseminated. He recent-

ly graduated from de Appel's Curatorial Program 2023 and acted as a Tutor at the Dutch Art Institute (DAI) in the framework of their COOP Academy between 2021 and 2023. For the Decolonial Memorial, he will and has been working alongside The Lockward Collective and the project team to develop and curate the sonic aspect of the memorial.

THE ARTISTIC PROCURING FOR EARTHNEST

A MEMORIAL THAT LIVES AND CONNECTS



Photo: Mariana Moreno Hevia

The traditional earthenware jars contain soil from formerly colonized areas

The Earths: Community and Healing

Alongside the conical bronze construction, the 12 earthenware vessels, made by hand in Mexico, make up another central element of the EarthNest. These vessels contain earth from formerly colonized lands. People from the diaspora can add more soil, which is then symbolically conjoined with the earth in the vessels. The initial idea was that each vessel would be filled with earth from a particular country, but during the implementation process, the artists stepped back from the colonial idea of national borders and the deliberate separation and individualization of collective experiences under imperialism. Instead, the earths are meant to foster ideas of community and affinity. Mixing soil is emblematic of that solidarity. The artists have emphasized that the EarthNest is not only meant to be a place of remembrance but also a space that brings people together and symbolizes a common future of healing and hope.

Stories That Let the Artwork Speak

Another essential component of the EarthNest is the acoustic element: an audio series in which people from the diaspora tell their memories and stories. By scanning a QR code, visitors can access the website of the Decolonial Memorial and hear the stories of people talking about the effects of colonialism on their family histories.

Billy Fowo, curator and author, works closely with The Lockward Collective to gather these stories and continually expand the acoustic component of the EarthNest. New stories will be continuously added until the end of 2026, offering a global perspective on the consequences of colonialism.

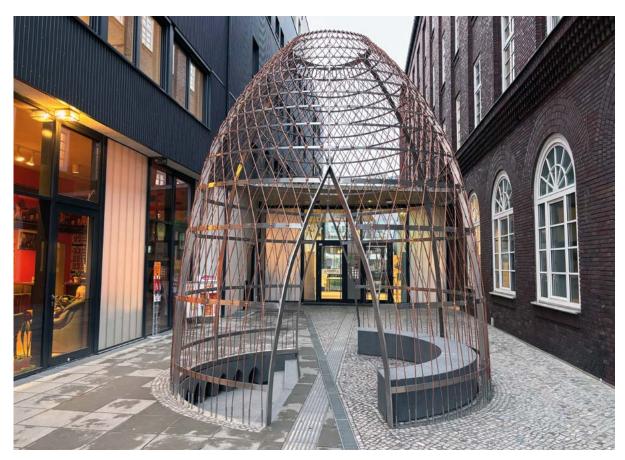


Photo: Michaela Zischek

The finished artpiece EarthNest in front of the Berlin Global Village

Current stories include:

Akinola Famson, Berlin/Germany, chair of the Afrika-Rat [Africa Council] Berlin-Brandenburg, talks about the importance of a Decolonial Memorial and the role of Berlin Global Village.

Lisa Hilli, Naarm Melbourne/Australia, artist, researcher, and curator, illuminates colonial vestiges in the Pacific and their impacts on the Melanesian population.

Masimba Hwati, Vienna/Austria, artist and researcher, explores the relationship between people and materials from a Shona perspective

Ye Charlotte Ming, Berlin/Germany, journalist, writer, and artist, takes listeners on an anti-racist walk, exploring traces of Germany's colonial history in the city of Berlin.

These stories give the EarthNest another dimension that goes beyond what is visible onsite. They invite people to listen, reflect, and get acquainted with the perspectives of the affected communities.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Elena Quintarelli in the audience at the opening ceremony of the EarthNest $\,$



Photo: Sedat Mehde

patricia kaersenhout, Rolando Vázquez, Jeanette Ehlers and Elena Quintarelli at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

FROM DESIGN TO REALITY

BUILDING THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL EARTHNEST

The Leipzig-based firm Les Choses – Büro für gegenständliche Architektur [Office for objective architecture] was responsible for the architectural realization of the Decolonial Memorial EarthNest. Architects Max Bentler and Jürgen Eckardt were involved as advisors from the early conceptual stages of the Decolonial Memorial. In the competition phase, Max Bentler created the technical drawings for the second round, which would later serve as a basis for more detailed planning.

An Intensive Process: Planning and Implementation

The work of bringing the EarthNest into being began immediately following the decision to award first place to The Lockward Collective's design. The team began by detailing the design and converting the plans into a construction application. This involved meeting numerous legal and technical requirements, including issues of monument preservation and fire safety.

At the same time, the team also had to work out the project's technical feasibility and requirements in terms of materials and implementation of this unique structure. Coordinating the technical crews, whose work ranged from digging holes to determine the locations of utility lines to building the concrete structure to installing the prefabricated components, turned out to be particularly complex. With the help of a precise construction schedule, and with Konrad Retzer of the Decolonial Memorial project team by their side, the architectural firm coordinated every step, from preparing the building excavation to the final installation of the prefabricated components. One significant aspect of this was the public contracting of the construction work, which not only necessitated long tender-submission periods but was also required to detect the offer with the best value. Despite these challenges, it was possible to find partners for every aspect of construction.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Concrete pouring of the EarthNest foundation in front of the Berlin Global Village

Challenges and Highlights in the Construction Phase

Max Bentler personally took over management of the construction site. He was responsible for quality assurance and coordinating construction work. The intensive preparations paid off when the artwork was built on-site in just four weeks. A gigantic crane hoisted the precast concrete components precisely into the excavation pit that had been prepared and poured over with concrete.

As so often happens with construction projects, the timing was tight: the last paving stones were still being laid as the first guests began arriving for the opening celebration. But in the end, the artwork was completed on time! The project team would like to thank everyone involved for their collaboration and dedication.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The Berlin Global Village team monitors the construction progress



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing on the construction site in front of the Berlin Global Village

 $\label{lem:concrete} \mbox{Architect Max Bentler and workers install the concrete stairs}$

CONSTRUCTION SITE



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Jürgen Eckhardt, Max Bentle, Manuel Schultze, Hendrik Rössler (forman) and Alexander Nowak on the construction site

Les Choses – Büro für gegenständliche Architektur [Office for Objective Architecture]

The architectural firm Les Choses – Büro für gegenständliche Architektur [Office for objective architecture] is based in Leipzig and headed by its partners Max Bentler and Jürgen Eckhardt.

Max Bentler studied architecture at Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences in Alfter and at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. Following stints at architecture firms in Cologne and Rotterdam, he decided to relocate to Leipzig in 2020. There, he met experienced architect Jürgen Eckhardt.

Jürgen Eckhardt earned his degree at Technische Universität Berlin and now has more than three decades of professional experience to look back on. In the mid-2000s, he worked on memorial projects in France and was

an editor with the publishing company Verlag der Beeken. His expertise in restoration and sensitivity to historical context were tremendous assets for the EarthNest project.

Their dedication and experience helped turn an artistic vision into a memorial of lasting significance.

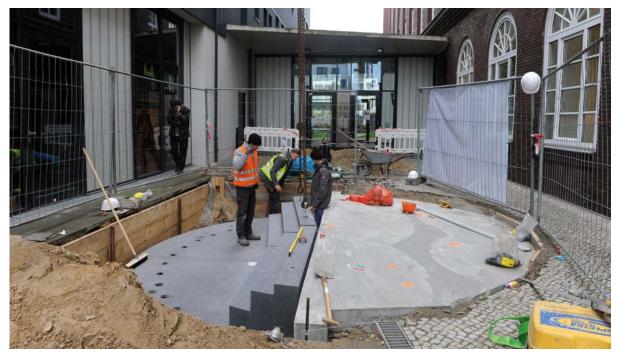


Photo: Sedat Mehder

Firma Georg Schulz Garten-, Landschafts- u. Sportplatzbau GmbH u. Co. KG: Manuel Schultze, Alexander Nowak and Paul Schwisow



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Paul Tetzner, Manuel Schultze and Olaf Lecki on site

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE DESIGN THAT MADE FIRST PLACE?

AN INTERVIEW: JEANNETTE EHLERS, PATRICIA KAERSENHOUT AND ROLANDO VÁZQUEZ IN CONVERSATION WITH MICHAELA ZISCHEK



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Rolando Vázquez, patricia kaersenhout and Jeannette Ehlers visit the Berlin Global Village

Michaela: Welcome to Berlin Global Village! And congratulations—in the international art contest with 244 submissions you emerged as the winners with EarthNest. We want to know more about you. Please tell us about the discourses and issues that you deal with in your work.

Jeannette: My work focuses on decolonial pursuits and ruptures, emphasizing empowerment and healing through art. In particular, I want to honor the legacy of resistance in the African diaspora. As author Lesley-Ann Brown notes, my work reminds viewers that "history is not in the past."

patricia: My art raises questions about the movements of the African diaspora and their relationship to feminism, sexuality, racism, and the history of enslavement. I see my artistic practice as a social practice. Through many of my projects, I support people who belong to marginalized groups.

Michaela: How does the issue of colonialism affect you personally?

Jeannette: My art aims to dismantle the colonial power system because I believe that this system is destroying our planet.

patricia: My work creates spaces to confront and share the ever-present pain of racism and historical grief, often making my own body a bridge between past sorrows and present audiences, fostering a dialogue that leads to healing and celebration between groups of people who have lived in constructed opposition for more than 500 years. Most of my work is therefore transformative. I hope that the discomfort, confusion, and other emotions that my work evokes are converted into a positive energy that activates imagination.

Michaela: Thank you very much. Rolando, you are an advisor on this project. How does colonialism concern you?

Rolando: My life is dedicated to decoloniality, an ethical and political project for justice



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The Lockward Collective visiting the Berlin Global Village: Armin Massing, Rolando Vázquez, patricia kaersenhout, Jeannette Ehlers. Michaela Zischek and Elena Quintarelli



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Host Jeanine Kantara in conversation with Jeanette Ehlers, patricia kaersenhout and Rolando Vázques at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

and the healing of colonial wounds. Over the years, this work has allowed me to collaborate with various communities and experts. Always with the goal of deconstructing coloniality and finding decolonial levels of justice, hope, and joy.

Michaela: Could you tell us a little bit about the design you submitted?

Jeannette: EarthNest is a work of decolonial healing and hope, symbolizing a communal temple that brings together diverse communities to remember what has been destroyed by colonial erasure. The underground part of the memorial contains ancestral soil from former colonies. The cone above ground glows in shades of violet to invoke the power to heal colonial wounds. EarthNest is a collaborative effort that invites communities from former German colonies to participate in honoring their history.

Michaela: How have other artists or movements influenced your work?

Jeannette: BE.BOP (Black Europe Body Politics) ten years ago in Berlin and the Maria Lugones Decolonial Summer School in Amsterdam were crucial and provided a platform for our common journey against oppression and for more joy in life. They helped us to articula-

te our decolonial artistic practices beyond the aesthetics of the dominant West. BE.BOP was also when we met for the first time.

Michaela: It's awesome that you have now created a memorial together, in the very city where you first met. How did you come up with the name "The Lockward Collective"?

patricia: Our group takes its name from the Dominican thinker and writer Alanna Lockward, who initiated BE.BOP in Berlin. By combining forces and realizing a decolonial project in public space, we want to honor her work and her spirit.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The Lockward Collective and consultant Rolando Vázquez in front of their poster at the exhibition opening of the 20 final designs

Michaela: What message or impact do you hope to achieve with EarthNest?

Rolando: EarthNest is dedicated to the healing of colonial wounds—through remembrance, mourning, and also the celebration of plurality—especially the wounds of those who have been and continue to be oppressed.

Michaela: What are your goals for the future?

patricia: We hope that the memorial honors those who have been oppressed by the modern/colonial order and that we contribute to a broader process of recognition and healing.

Michaela: Thank you for your time.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

patricia kaersenhout in conversation at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial

INTERVIEW

IS THERE AN ARTISTS' SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTION FOR ART IN ARCHITECTURE PROJECTS?

A LEGAL INQUIRY

The firm Laaser did advice and counsel the project Decolonial Memorial in matters of media law. In this capacity they encountered a topic still not settled: The obligation of payments of KSA in the framework of architectural art contests is still in litigation. Following we prepared a presentation of the current state of judication.

Sonja Laaser

Attorney at law and specialist attorney for copyright law, Laaser Law Firm, freelance dramaturg

Whether or not fees from art in architecture projects are subject to the artists' social security contribution (hereafter "KSV") is a rarely discussed topic.

The Artists' Social Insurance Act (Künstlersozialversicherungsgesetz, hereinafter "KSVG") distinguishes in Section 24 KSVG between typical users, self-promoters, and atypical users. The conditions under which the artists' social security contribution must be paid on the honorarium differ for these three categories.

a. Typical user

Entrepreneurs must pay the KSV if they operate a business that is listed in the catalog of Section 24 (1) KSVG (e.g., theaters, orchestras, galleries). The companies listed in the catalogue are colloquially referred to as "typical users."

If they are typical users, the artists' social security contribution must be paid on the artists' honorarium.

The client of an art in architecture project would be considered a typical user if, for example, they run a gallery or an art dealership. This is generally not the case. However, it is necessary to consider whether the company engages in advertising and public relations for third parties. This could be the case if part of the client's task is to promote the artists by allowing them to hold an exhibition as part of the art in architecture project and also to promote the artists in this context (see ruling of the Federal Social

Court of June 21, 2012 – B 3 K KS 2/11 R). If the typical user role is affirmed, the question would then arise as to whether the entire fee or only a portion of it should be the basis of the assessment.

b. Self-promoters

Entrepreneurs are required to pay the KSV if they engage in advertising or public relations for their own business purposes and offer contracts to freelance artists on more than an occasional basis (more than €450.00 per year). These companies are colloquially referred to as "self-promoters."

In the case of art in architecture projects, it could be considered whether the granting of rights of use by the artists—for example, allowing the client to present the art in architecture work on their own website—could fall under this category. In our opinion, only the portion of the honorarium related to the granting of rights of use should be considered, if at all. Where this is the case, as with typical users, the amount used as the basis of the assessment should be reviewed.

c. Atypical users

Companies must also pay the KSV if they are so-called "atypical users" (see Section 24 (2) KSVG). This is the case if they are not already typical users or self-promoters, and if they offer contracts to freelance artists and publicists on more than an occasional basis to use their works for their own business, and if the company generates revenue in connection with that use.

An art in architecture project usually does not generate revenue, so payment by atypical users often does not result in a KSV.

A PLACE TO HEAL TOGETHER

OPENING THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The EarthNest by dusk

On November 14, 2024, the sun set at 4:14 PM, yet the fading daylight was not followed by darkness. Instead it was illuminated by the glow of a new light: a place of hope and community. Construction of the EarthNest had just been completed the night before and now it was time to celebrate. On the eve of the 140th anniversary of the Berlin Conference, the Decolonial Memorial was being opened. But first, it had to be unveiled and handed over to the community.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Dwight Fransman at the ritual opening of the Decolonial Memorial

Many of the guests arrived early along with the other organizations in the building and members of the support circle, not wanting to miss the activation of the living memorial. In the twilight, Dwight Fransman began by blessing the EarthNest. Amid rhythmic clapping, he offered sacrifices to the ancestors: a drink and a decorative ladle to spiritually represent past generations. In commemoration of courage, strength, spirit, and hope, patricia kaersenhout then began placing the ceramics partly filled with soil into the openings provided for them. Now the EarthNest was finally set. Dwight Fransman and his colleagues withdrew to draw strength for the dedication that was to follow.

The light from the Berlin Global Village, as well as the light of the memorial itself, shone as the daylight faded. With the growing audience, the joyful conversation, and the warm expression of congratulations, the Decolonial Memorial was creating space for gathering and community even before its official presentation and opening. More and more people were arriving, which meant that Dwight Fransman's voice had to be amplified. Through the microphone, the emcee asked the audience to join hands and to sway their bodies to



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The public awaits the opening of the Decolonial Memorial

the rhythm. Chanting, Fransman now began the dedication and presentation ceremony. He handed possession of the EarthNest over to Sylvia Werther and Akinola Famson, representatives of the shareholder organizations who were standing in for the community in and around the Berlin Global Village. This was followed by shared contemplation in remembrance of the ancestors, who were invoked in the form of a prayer. Those present committed themselves to their memory. With the audience watching, the Decolonial Memorial,—the EarthNest,—was given over to the Berlin Global Village community in a ceremony in which Fransman clothed Werther in a shawl and presented Akinola Famson with a scepter. By taking possession of these gifts, and thus of the EarthNest, they demonstrated their commitment to the Berlin Global Village community and to preserving the me-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Members of the shareholders' assembly Sylvia Werther and Akinola Famson at the official handover of the Decolonial Memorial by Dwight Fransman

morial. This concluded the ceremony and the EarthNest was now available to the public to visit and use. The celebration was to continue in the Maschinenhaus at KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art next door.

The guests were greeted there by music from Dejlifily Sakos, who used his kora to fill the space with memories of his family. Johara Sarhan emceed the evening.

Hosts Armin Massing and Angelina Jellesen welcomed the audience. Massing opened by stating that relations between the Global



Photo: Sedat Mehde

Angelina Jellesen, Armin Massing, Sylvia Werther, Akinola Famson, patricia kaersenhout, Sarah Wedl-Wilson, Martin Hikel and Konrad Schmidt-Werthern in front of the EarthNest

North and the Global South demanded an engagement with colonial history and, therefore, also with decolonial interventions. The Decolonial Memorial was created to drive home this joint approach, anchored in the work of the in-house organizations. It was only now, with the completion of the EarthNest, that the construction of the Berlin Global Village was finished. The need for a place of remembrance like this could not be overstated: "In a time when the right is gaining momentum in Germany and around the world, we are paying the price for not having worked through the colonial era and its ideological legacy of racism." Decolonial work, Massing argued, could only happen through alliances, and in that spirit thanked his collaborators and the co-initiator of the Decolonial Memorial, Michael Küppers-Adebisi. He then also offered his thanks to the patrons and affiliated agencies for their cooperation: the Berlin district of Neukölln, the now former District Councillor for Culture, and Fritz Felgentreu, as well as to



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Chairman of the Board of the Africa Council Berlin-Brandenburg and shareholder representative Akinola Famson at the opening ceremony of the EarthNest

everyone who works at the Berlin Global Village, the Decolonial Memorial project team in particular. Finally, he thanked project leader Angelina Jellesen, who then took the podium. Jellesen spoke of the difficulties encountered in the course of the project and honored some of the contributors, such as Elfriede Müller, Óscar Ardila Luna, and Stefan Krüskemper. She thanked all 671 artists for the blood, sweat, and tears evident in their submitted proposals, and took the time to individually thank each member of the project team and ack-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial

nowledge them for their outstanding work. Jellesen also thanked the cooperation partners, noting that a project like the Decolonial Memorial had only become possible because of their decade-long work.

These words of gratitude were followed by an address by Konrad Schmidt-Werthern, Permanent Representative of the Executive Officer of the BKM.. He conveyed greetings from the Minister for Culture, Claudia Roth, who was unfortunately unable to attend due to the political situation. But, as Schmidt-Werthern pointed out, she had been more than a patron; the Decolonial Memorial was very close to her heart. He then recounted how, ten years ago, a group of curators and exhibition organizers—including Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung from the "Wir sind alle Berliner 1884-2014" (We Are All Berliners 1884-2014) project—decided to address the Berlin Conference and the participants' hubris in believing they had the right to divide up the African continent among themselves.

Potential partners they approached with this idea all had the same thing to say: "Yeah, that sounds really interesting, but unfortunately it doesn't fit into our support structures or project categories, so we can't fund it." He was therefore all the happier, Schmidt-Werthern said, to be able to inaugurate the The Lockward Collective's work on the eve of the 140th anniversary of the conference. With the Decolonial Memorial, Germany was setting the right example for an active engagement with



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Representative of the BKM Konrad Schmidt-Werthern at the opening ceremony for the Decolonial Memorial

its own awful colonial history. Its existence, however, did not relieve us of any responsibility. On the contrary, it was a challenge to us all, a gift that came with a mandate. The exemplary collaboration between the national, state, and district levels that made it possible now made it imperative for us to move forward together. Schmidt-Werthern concluded by saying: "The Minister of State and the Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the administration, are very clear about this: colonialism and its crimes are a fixture in our culture of remembrance and will remain so precisely because of the changes that are occurring here and around the world."



Photo: Sedat Mehder

State Secretary Sarah Wedl-Wilson at the ritual opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial

Permanent Secretary for Culture, Sarah Wedl-Wilson, spoke next. In her words of thanks to all the participants, she specifically addressed patricia kaersenhout, the representative for the artists' collective, expressing her gratitude for an artwork that would provide a place for people to come together. She expressed her thanks for the moving, spiritual opening ceremony and for a memorial that created space,—space to come together, space to reflect, space to be human. This artwork, she said, created a place that had been lacking, a place that would certainly be sought out again and again. A place that people would come back to in order to breathe and to rest. A place that would do the soul good.

Sarah Wedl-Wilson, too, was happy about the collaboration between the national and local administrations: "Berlin is our city and we are proud of all its facets." She ascribed the project's success to Berlin's vibrant civil society. The Decolonial Memorial was realized in the Berlin Global Village because what was needed was more than an idea: what was needed were people and personalities who were engaged, who went the extra mile, who stuck around, who put up with endless meetings, and who were committed to creating a memorial like this in the middle of our society. Wedl-Wilson asked the Berlin Global Village and Berlin's civil society to stay on the ball. -Who knows what else might be achieved together.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

District Mayor Martin Hikel (Neukölln) at the opening ceremony for the Decolonial Memorial

Martin Hikel, District Mayor of Neukölln, began by saying that so many of his colleagues were keenly interested in this project and that so many of them were present this evening that, in theory, they constituted a quorum! The district of Neukölln, he went on, saw itself as responsible for promoting an engagement with colonial history. As a city, Berlin was just getting started in that respect. Hikel said that it was a privilege to live in a city that has become attractive precisely because of its diversity and freedom, —but that this was not a given. We need, he urged, to process our history together so that we can move forward together. The District Mayor also acknowledged the efforts of Berlin's civil society, saying, "The fact that we are grappling with the legacy of colonialism is above all a result of civil society engagement, of people who live in this city and carry this legacy with them in their own histories." It would take time to develop a shared understanding for the future, time to create a diverse future in accordance with democracy and pluralism. He called the Deco-Ionial Memorial an important step toward a sustainable democracy.

In his keynote address, Africa Council Berlin Brandenburg representative Akinola Famson outlined the main areas of work of the organizations in the Berlin Global Village. He explained the importance of the political cooperation partners and joint owners of the Decolonial Memorial, which now belonged not only to the fifty organizations in the building, nor only to the more than 200 organi-

zations that are represented by the shareholder representatives, but also to the allies and members of these cooperation partners, Berlin's Black civil society. "We think that's terrific. We think it's important. Because power structures can only be dismantled when many people are able to participate, particularly those with little or no privileges, people who are discriminated against." It is precisely these organizations in Berlin's Black civil society that have been working on crucial aspects of decolonization for many years. Their expertise and perspective are key to this work, Famson said, particularly their clear call for concrete change.

The Berlin Global Village has also brought this spirit to the Decolonial Memorial project, Famson continued. There was a concerted effort to conduct the competition in a manner that was as decolonial as possible. That is why they opted for an anonymous, worldwide competition, why they published the call for submissions in five languages, why there was financial compensation for all the artists who participated in the second stage, and why there are two project languages, English and German. This goal had not always been easy to live up to, but they had stuck with it: "We find ourselves in a de facto postcolonial society that is nevertheless still far too burdened with the legacy of colonialism."

Famson also thanked The Lockward Collective and the jury, saying, "We are very happy with the work that won the competition and today we are celebrating its opening together." The EarthNest addresses decoloniza-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Joshua Kantara and Louiza Renning talk about the documentary of the Decolonial Memorial

tion on many levels, focusing on community and healing. It creates space for coming together and participation, and it is open to the future, —to many futures.

The Decolonial Memorial, Famson said, was a first step, —a first step towards what African diasporic and decolonial civil society has been demanding for a long time: a national memorial in the heart of Berlin to the victims of colonialism, racism, and the enslavement trade. He warned the audience that "only by clearly working out the historical development of racism as a foundational ideology for the atrocities of colonialism and the slave trade will we be able to stop the spread of right-wing extremism."

After a short break, there were more testimonials about the project.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Adetoun Küppers-Adebisi, Michael Küppers-Adebisi, Karin Korte and Janine Wolter at the opening ceremony

The second part of the program began with the project's documentation. The audience was shown a teaser for the documentary film and a preview of images from the upcoming photo exhibit on the Decolonial Memorial project. Following applause for photographer Sedat Mehder, Louiza Renning and Joshua Kantara of Kantara Productions were called to the stage. Producer Louiza Renning began by expressing her heartfelt thanks to the cinematographer and all the participants, saying that the uniqueness of the project had struck her immediately. Kantara Productions co-founder Joshua Kantara added that their goal had been to document and impart knowledge in an entertaining way. Renning and Kantara spoke of the difficulty of narrating the story without protagonists. The anonymity required by the Decolonial Memorial competition had had a big impact on the first half-year of production. It had been fascinating, they said, to watch the project's process be reinvented over and over again. This meant that they had to keep finding a new balance between flexibility and planning, with the result that they had geared their film toward the artists, and only revealed which design had won at the end. They said that they had both learned a lot and were happy to have been able to participate in such an impressive project.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Armin Massing, María Linares, Johara Sarhan and Akinola Famson in conversation at the opening ceremony of the EarthNest



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The audience in the machine room of the Kindl - Centre for Contemporary Art at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial

The following panel also focused on the process behind the Decolonial Memorial project. Armin Massing, Akinola Famson, and acting jury chair María Linares were called to the stage. Massing spoke about the context from which the idea for the Decolonial Memorial emerged, explaining that it had come about early in the construction phase of the Berlin Global Village, together with Michael Küppers-Adebisi. Fritz Felgentreu's help had been crucial in securing funding for the project. But even after money from the federal government had been secured, it took hard lobbying to get state funding. Asked about the significance of the Decolonial Memorial, Akinola Famson spoke of it as a symbolic milestone that recalls the history of the African diaspora in Germany and the contributions that Africans and people of African descent have made to our society. It also, he said, symbolizes their engagement in civil society and shows that with vigor and tenacity, so much can happen. Furthermore, the memorial recalls that the struggle against colonialism and racism is ongoing. And it is evidence that opposition can be overcome: "For me, it is a call to be involved, to make possible the change that we want."

Asked about the jury's work, María Linares noted the severe effects colonialism still has today. Unfortunately, re-victimization had occurred in her own actions, in those of her colleagues, and even in some of the proposals. It had thus been crucial to proceed with great care. The main challenge had been discussing the proposals without knowing the artists' perspectives. The anonymity that was meant to level the playing field had also caused dif-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Merel Fuchs and Dr Akiiki Babyesiza at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial

ficulties in that respect. In conclusion, Berlin Global Village Managing Director Armin Massing looked toward the future: with the creation of the memorial, their work was just beginning. Now, he said, the goal was to work with the Decolonial Memorial. Along with working with the products of the Decolonial Memorial project, they were considering many different approaches to continuing the discussion. Most urgent, he said, is the need to lobby for a central memorial to the victims of colonialism, racism, and the enslavement trade.

patricia kaersenhout then took the opportunity, together with Johara Sarhan, to thank Elena Quintarelli, The Lockward Collective's producer. kaersenhout then discussed the development of the concept and the planning kaersenhout and Max Bentler had done during the second phase of the competition. It had been clear from the outset that the Decolonial Memorial was to be a living memorial, connecting people and inviting them to get involved. The decolonial idea is to bring together things that have been separated, to heal together, and to share stories. Finally, kaer-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

patricia kaersenhout at the opening ceremony of the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{Decolonial}}$ Memorial



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Konrad Retzer (project team) and Ulrich Vogl (finalist) at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial

senhout said it was her wish for the Decolonial Memorial to set an example for Germany and for Europe and to make it possible to come together in love, in hope, and in safety to build a loving, caring community. But now it was time to celebrate! This concluded the official part of the program.

For the party that followed, the guests were invited into the Kesselhaus in the KINDL – Centre for Contemporary Art for a DJ set by Sanni Est, sparkling wine, and finger food, continuing into the night in the light of hope and community.

OPENING NIGHT





THE VISUAL COMPANION

THE DOCUMENTATION OF THE DECOLONIAL MEMORIAL



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Joshua Kantara and Kalifa shooting the second jury meeting

In order to comprehensively document the process of creating the Decolonial Memorial, the project was photographed and filmed from the very beginning. With this memorial, Berlin Global Village is creating a significant "first" in the decolonial history of Berlin. The project team wanted to document the process in a transparent and understandable way for posterity.

Kantara Productions first produced a trailer about the project and the contest that was distributed worldwide to motivate especially artists from the Global South to register and submit designs. In addition, a comprehensive documentary was created to capture all the milestones of the project. The film shows the creation story, explains the background of the contest, and includes interviews with judges and top finalists who share their personal stories and sources of inspiration. The highlight of the film is the creation and unveiling of the final artwork, EarthNest, in front of Berlin Global Village. The documentary was presented to an interested audience in a public screening. It is also available at www.dekoloniales-denkzeichen.de/en and on the Berlin Global Village YouTube channel.

From the raw footage of the video documentation, Kantara Productions also created short videos over the course of the project for promotion on social media. These videos include

impressions from the jury sessions, the symposium, the exhibition opening, and the production and construction of the artwork. The videos can be found on the Berlin Global Villages Instagram channel, among other places: www.instagram.com/berlinglobalvillage/.

The photographic documentation of the project was handled by photographer Sedat Mehder, who captured all the major events and the people behind the project and the contest. All images in this publication are by Sedat Mehder, unless otherwise noted. His work not only provided the photos for this publication but also for postcards and other materials promoting the project. His photos enriched the blog articles and presentations of the jury, the project team, and the external coordination team on the website www.dekoloniales-denkzeichen. de/en. A preview of the photography exhibition of selected images from the project was part of the event to unveil the artwork at KINDL -Centre for Contemporary Art.

Kantara Productions

Kantara Productions is a young, multifaceted film production company based in Berlin. In addition to commercials and a series of short-form feature films, the company is increasingly focusing on documentary projects from the African continent and its diaspora. They work nationally and internationally for a variety of companies and are always on the lookout for compelling stories.

Joshua Kantara,

Executive Director and CEO of Kantara Productions

Louiza Renning,

Executive Director and Producer of Kantara Productions

Khalifa,

Cameraman/Director of Photography



Photo: Sedat Mehder

The Kantara Productions Team: Louiza Renning, Joshua Kantara and Khalifa

Sedat Mehder

Sedat Mehder is an independent photographer. He studied photography and film design at the University of Applied Sciences in Dortmund and won first prize in the student competition of the Federal Ministry of the Interior in 2001 for his photo essay "Germany - A Mosque" and in 2002 for his work "The Usual Suspects...". Mehder's photographs have been featured in numerous books and prominent newspapers. He is known for his portraits of celebrities, including politician Monica Frassoni and Nobel Prize-winning author Orhan Pamuk. For Cem Özdemir's non-fiction book for teenagers and young adults, "Turkey" (2008), Mehder worked for the first time on book-specific photography. He has been photographically documenting the Decolonial Memorial since its inception.



Photo: Selin Düyen

Sedat Mehder

A PLACE TO START

THE PROJECT WEBSITE

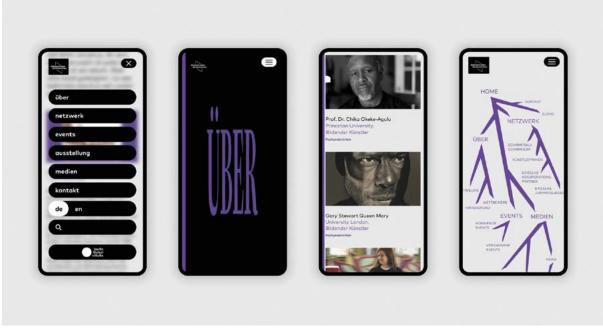


Photo: HENKELHIEDL

Screendesign mobile webpage

The Decolonial Memorial project came to a close at the end of 2024 following the opening and formal completion of the project. The artwork, now anchored in the urban landscape of Berlin, will remain as a longterm symbol of engagement with the theme of decolonization. But it is more than a static artwork; the memorial is only the visible part of a larger project. The Decolonial Memorial project aims to connect the present with the past and the future. This is achieved through a variety of measures and products designed for long-term impact. Like many decolonial initiatives before it, Berlin Global Village has ventured into new territory in Berlin's decolonial history with this project. The project's lasting achievements include extensive photo and film documentation, as well as this project-related publication. Our goal was not only to document the process of creating a artwork but also to make discussions about decolonization available to the public. After the unveiling, these documents will remain available, and the website will serve as a digital archive. In the future, interested parties will be able to access a wealth of information and learn about various aspects of the project.

The Decolonial Memorial in Digital Space

The website for the Decolonial Memorial project serves as a central hub for all project content, with digital access across national borders and physical distances. The website is designed to be accessible, to make all components of the project available, and to provide the global public with comprehensive information about the international art contest in both English and German. It provides an overview of the project, including a timeline of its stages and the video call for submissions to enter the contest. All the people involved in the project are introduced in detail: jury members, collaborators, patrons, the artists of the 20 final designs, the project team, and the external coordination. A digital exhibition showcases the artistic designs of the 20 finalists. A blog with lots of photos and videos of the events provides more information about the milestones of the project. Here you will also find additional insights, such as Prof. Walter D. Mignolo's visit to Berlin Global Village. Education materials, the project brochure, and press releases are available to download. Here you can find articles about the memorial in the press as well as an introduction to EarthNest, the

artwork produced by The Lockward Collective. A companion podcast tells the stories of the collected soil samples. After the project ends, the website will remain as a digital archive of all activities and will continue to provide a way to contact the Berlin Global Village team.

Inspiration for Other Projects

In addition to the website, the Decolonial Memorial project has issued this comprehensive book publication. Thereby, the project team has recorded the many experiences and lessons learned during the implementation of this extraordinary undertaking. The publication serves not only as documentation of the process but also as a valuable guide for organizations wishing to initiate similar projects.

With the decentralized Decolonial Memorial, Berlin Global Village has created a pilot project for the decolonization of public space through art, both in terms of method and content. This publication illustrates the exemplary nature of the project and offers suggestions that can serve as blueprints for other projects. It gives space to the participants to speak for themselves and, as throughout the



Photo: HENKELHIEDL

Brochure of the project

project, incorporates migrant-diasporic perspectives into the collaboration. Ultimately, it shows how art can contribute to the processing and visualization of colonial history and decolonial resistances, while providing a platform for dialogue and cooperation across cultural and national boundaries.



Photo: HENKELHIEDL

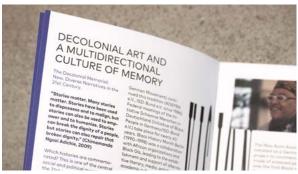
A Discourse on Decolonization

A key component of the Decolonial Memorial project is to inspire and continue discourses of decolonization. An extensive education program was developed to accompany the art contest, including the education program itself, as well as the organization of an exhibition and a symposium. These initiatives aim to foster a deeper dialogue about decolonization and also serve as a model for future public art projects.

The process leading up to the unveiling of the artwork was marked by intense engagement and discussions, with the active participation of Communities of Color and People of African Descent. The decentralized memorial in Berlin-Neukölln also opens up possibilities for the realization of another centrally located monument or memorial in Berlin-Mitte.

Target groups with little previous exposure to the topic were encouraged to engage with decolonization, while existing discourses were continued and deepened for others. In this way, people from the neighborhood and the local community were informed about Sustainable Decolonial Education the memorial at various events, such as the BGVestival—the annual street and summer festival organized by Berlin Global Village. The local steering committee of [Aktion! Karl-Marx-Straße] also showed great interest in the project and its goals.

EarthNest brings a new dimension to the discourse that goes beyond mere decolonization. The artwork seeks decolonial healing and hope for a better future by bringing together diverse communities and reviving awareness of what has been destroyed by colonization. The artists have a vivid vision for the memorial: They envision Berliners, especially people from the neighborhood, integrating the artwork into their daily lives—walking through it, sitting in it, reflecting together. The memorial will become an important place of remembrance and gathering, offering a respite from



the capitalist workday. The vibrancy of EarthNest is meant to honor the memory of the ancestors and preserve the dreams of a world where a multitude of realities can thrive.

This project is not just a symbolic artwork but an active contribution to the promotion and development of discourses on decolonization, healing, and visions for the future. It provides a space for reflection, exchange, and collective learning that will be meaningful far beyond the end of the project. In this way, the Decolonial Memorial remains a living legacy that reflects Berlin's diversity and history while contributing to a better, more inclusive future.

In addition to the website, book publication, and discourses, an extensive education program is part of the lasting legacy of the Decolonial Memorial project. The education program includes digital segments specifically designed for decolonial education work. These education segments target four different age groups: daycare and preschool children, elementary school students in grades 3 to 6, middle school students (grades 7 to 10), and adults. The materials are provided digitally free of charge and can also be used on site at the "WeltRaum" of EPIZ Association (e.V.) at Berlin Global Village.

The Decolonial Memorial serves as both a substantive and aesthetic starting point for the education work. The goal is to make history and its impact visible, not only in terms of global inequality and the challenges of sustainable development, but also in terms of African and Afro-diasporic agency. This educational and outreach program will have a long-term impact and reach a wide variety of audiences. It makes an important contribution to filling the gaps in Berlin's museum and remembrance landscape regarding colonialism and contemporary coloniality.

Through the education program, the memories, forms of resistance, and strategies of diasporic Berliners and people from countries formerly colonized by Germany are made accessible to a broad audience. It eliminates simplistic historical narratives that often tacitly present Germany's migration history as purely contemporary, without questioning the false assumption that the German "we" has always been monocultural and white.

The perspectives of Berliners and Germans with diasporic ties combine with the negotiated histories and open up new questions that the education program addresses. The anchoring of diasporic ties in Germany and around the world in history and the present simultaneously is a fundamental aspect of the project.

Through the education program, the Decolonial Memorial will grow beyond a static work of art and actively contribute to education, reflection, and the development of knowledge and understanding. It will create a space for ongoing engagement with the past and its impact on the present and future, enabling those who participate in the education program to gain new perspectives and to recognize and appreciate diverse histories.

DIGITAL PRESENCE

BETWEEN TERROR AND HOPE

BLACK WOMEN IN THE ARTS

Angelina Jellesen Project Manager Decolonial Memorial

Perhaps it may appear on inquiry, that blackness and darkness are in some degree painful by their natural operation, independent of any associations whatsoever. [...] Mr. Cheselden has given us a very curious story of a boy, who had been born blind, and continued so until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his sight. Among many remarkable particulars that attended his first perceptions and judgments on visual objects, ... the first time the boy saw a black object, it gave him great uneasiness; and that some time [sic.] after, upon accidentally seeing a negro woman, he was struck with great horror at the sight. The horror, in this case, can scarcely be supposed to arise from any association. [... T]herefore it is probable, if the great uneasiness he felt at the first sight of black had arisen from its connexion with any other disagreeable ideas, [...] there was no time for such a habit; and there is no reason to think that the ill effects of black on his imagination were more owing to its connexion with any disagreeable ideas, than that the good effects of more cheerful colours were derived from their connexion with pleasuring ones. They had both probably their effects from their natural operation.1

In Section XV of Part IV of On the Sublime and Beautiful, "Darkness Terrible in its Own Nature," Edmund Burke asserts that seeing a Black woman² without any prior ideological framing reveals the terror inherent in her nature. It is particularly important for Burke to demonstrate not only that darkness and blackness are inherently frightening but also that individuals classified as Negroes by an imperialist, racist logic are terrifying in their very nature, their essence.³ Besides stating that blackness has this inherent quality, Burke places absolute interpretative authority into the hands of white people, white men⁴ in particular.

Furthermore, this terror is itself violent, can only produce violence, and is therefore incapable of beauty (Section V, Part IV). The monstrosity of the Black body, especially Black women, is a recurring theme throughout Enlightenment philosophy.⁵

Edmund Burke's influence on Enlightenment aesthetics, and thus on the aesthetics of the European imperial powers, is undeniable. Accordingly, the framing of the Black body as the personification of a wild, untamed nature is ubiquitous. It is key to controlling the Black female body, the untamed and wild freedom



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Minister of State Claudia Roth and Angelina Jellesen, with Armin Massing in the background, at the Symposium on Decolonial Art

is to be conquered, tamed, and subjugated, ultimately to be placed at one's disposal: a prime example of colonial-imperialist aesthetics. Rarely questioned in this context is Burke's positioning of Black people—in this case, Black women in particular—within the realm of the sublime, and thus outside the realm of the beautiful. Accordingly, Black bodies simply cannot be perceived as beautiful, the affect they elicit cannot be discussed in terms of beauty.

Burke's terror is rooted in the nature of the thing itself, not in the viewer's related associations, thus making it an absolute attribute.

¹ Burke, Edmund, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, Lincolniana, Los Angeles. ¹⁹²². Last accessed November ²⁰²⁴ at https://archive.org, digital.

² The decision to feature a Black woman is not accidental; rather, it is a deliberate contrast to a female figure whose beauty suggests that strength cannot be perceived as aesthetically beautiful. The description makes it clear that this woman, presented in all her dependence, fragility, and immaturity, is intended to be a white woman. Part I, Section X.

³ Burke's proposition of such inherence was refuted by Gustav Theodor Fechner in his Vorschule der Ästhetik (Introduction to Aesthetics), part¹ ("IX Aesthetic Association Principle"): "If only form and color are directly available to our senses, then memory adds the rest: not separately, but in an overall impression, which is integrated into the sensory impression, thereby enriching it and, so to speak, coloring it in. We may call this the mental color that is added to the sensory, or the associated impression that connects with one's own or direct impression."

⁴ The class bias inherent in the text must also be addressed. In Part I, Section II, Burke states that opinions differing from his own are put forward only by the uneducated and even the mentally ill.

⁵ The experiences of Saartjie Baartman and Aminata Sagona can be briefly mentioned as examples in this regard.

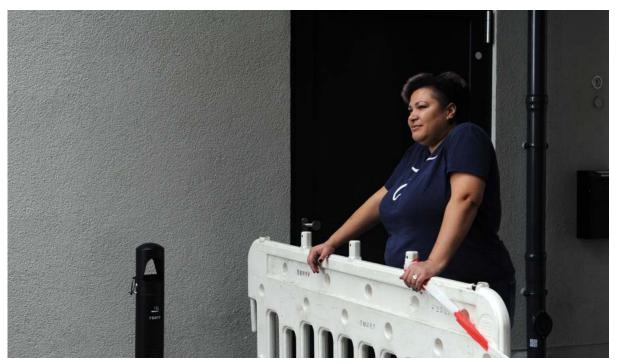


Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen at the construction site in front of the Berlin Global Village

The construction of the Black woman as the antithesis of beauty—truly the antithesis of all desirable traits—as fundamentally worthless, has also been observed by bell hooks.

She describes the contempt and exclusion that Black women face by white patriarchy as a strategic advantage:

It is essential for continued feminist struggle that Black women recognize the special vantage point our marginality gives us and make use of this perspective to criticize the dominant racist, classist, sexist hegemony as well as to envision and create a counter-hegemony.6

She goes on to say:

As long as these two groups [Black patriarchy and White feminism] or any other group, defines liberation as gaining social equality with ruling-class white men, they have a vested interest in the continued exploitation and oppression of others.

The strategic proximity of both white feminism and Black patriarchy to white patriarchy makes recognition by this system appear attainable, and it posits the oppression of other groups as a means of achieving self-realization and equality. In contrast, hooks argues, the position assigned to Black women by the oppressive system leaves them no hope for recognition. The Black woman must invent a new form of self-realization and creation from within herself. From this perspective, the position of the monstrous, of the ugly, to which Burke consigns the Black woman, actually becomes a source of hope, strength, and care: a position that rejects exploitation, commodification, and degradation, and thus rejects the position of the perpetrator. Black feminism cannot and ought not employ the tools that manifest the power of white patriarchy. The implications for decolonial work then become almost immediately apparent. The representation of the Black female body emerges as a symbol of a new conception of power beyond exploita-



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen at the second jury meeting

⁶ hooks, bell, Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center, 2nd ed, South End Press, 2000, print.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen and Walter Mignolo at Berlin Global Village

tion, a new way of coming together grounded in mutual respect, a transformative aesthetic that embraces diverse forms of beauty.

As a Black woman in a leadership role, this raises the question of applicability. When I first became Acting Supervisor in 2003 and was put in charge of a team of 13 armed security guards, my supervisor and departmental manager, Anthony Jackson, called me into his office at the beginning of first shift. Mr. Jackson, an African American who had decided not to return to his homeland after his military service in Germany, inspected my uniform, looked at me, and said: "Mrs Jellesen, you are dead weight. You don't make me no money [as supervisor]. Your guards do the work that pays your salary. Make sure they have all they need to do their duty." As a critic of ideology, I understand that this statement is deeply rooted in the capitalist logic of exploitation. However, I still value his words to this day. Responsibility means caring, it means trustworthiness.

The Decolonial Memorial was a new experience for everyone involved. No one could have predicted the journey we were about to take when we started this project. Thanks to the professionalism of our authors, our project publication reads like a tale of glory. At the same time, this sense of success conceals the toll that creating this historic structure demanded—a toll paid by all involved with worry, resilience, effort, and sweat. When I assumed leadership of the Decolonial Memorial project, I became responsible for creating a work environment that enabled everyone to reach their peak performance without burning out. It was my responsibility to demonstrate confidence and trust in our collective endeavor, to prioritize the well-being of the team over deadlines, and to be caring.

I couldn't have been entrusted with these tasks in a more supportive surrounding. As Managing Director, Armin Massing has created a working environment in which everyone has equal chances to exert influence, to participate in decision-making, and to have a say. No one is too important to lend a hand—least of all himself. He values open discussion, welcomes differing opinions, and leads with complete trust in his employees' success. Today, my memory of Mr. Jackson is accompanied by the memory of Armin Massing loading the dishwasher in the community kitchen. I consider myself lucky to have had the opportunity to work and learn here.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Angelina Jellesen and Armin Massing at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial

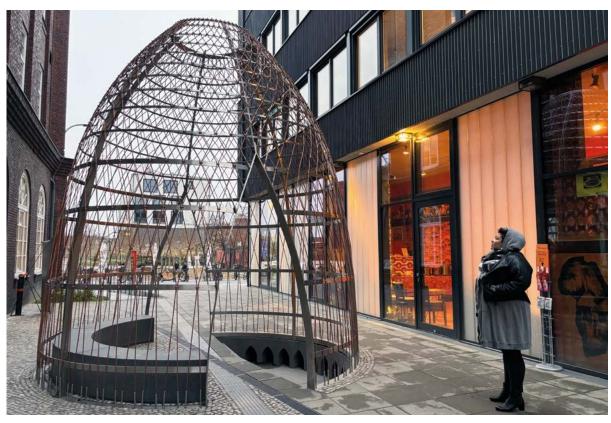


Photo: Michaela Zischek

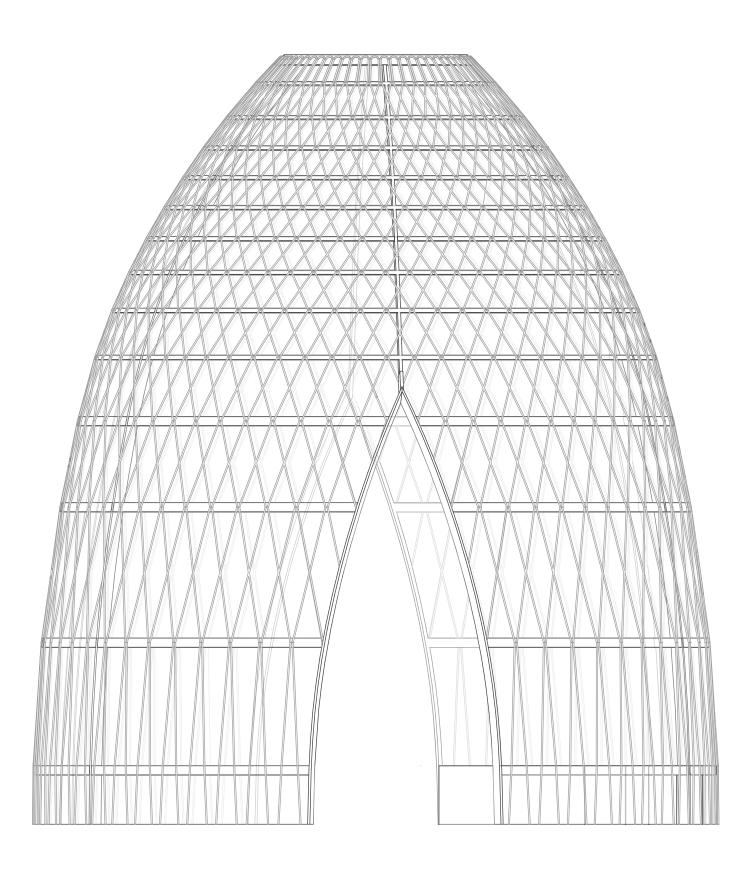
Angelina Jellesen in front of the completed Decolonial Memorial

It was also incredibly refreshing to have the chance to work within and contribute to Berlin's African, PAD, and Black civil society, and I am proud that—although my focus has always been on Black expertise—the project has provided the opportunity and space for people from so many different walks of life to collaborate. Even though the extent of the commitment and sacrifice required by the Decolonial Memorial from the EarthNest project team and the production team isn't immediately apparent, I will always remember these efforts in the hope that I have fulfilled my responsibility.



Photo: Sedat Mehder

Michaela Zischeck, Angelina Jellesen and Mariana Moreno Hevia (project team) at the opening ceremony of the Decolonial Memorial



Technische Zeichnung/ technical drawing EarthNest Fertiges Kunstwerk/ finished artwork EarthNest

Zeichnung: Max Bentler, Les Choses

