Spending

Clocking Out
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Clocking Out: Time Beyond Management
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Whitney Museum of American Art
Independent Study Program, 2022–23

KJ Abudu
Zachary B. Feldman
Emily Small
Johanna Thorell

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PREFACE

Clocking Out: Time Beyond Management explores ways in which notions of time are represented, lived, and contested. In a moment when neoliberal capitalism permeates almost every sphere of life, time seems inescapably priced and paced by capital. Far from neutral, this temporal logic—exemplified by the measurable, divisible, and rationalized time of the globally networked twenty-four hour clock—has become so pervasive that it masks the historical and cultural contingency of its own installment. Walter Benjamin famously described this hegemonic temporal formation as "homogenous, empty time,"[1] wherein time transcends its relation to variously situated human histories and becomes a universal, abstract substrate. Critiquing the teleological rationale that undergirds the notion of the progression of "mankind," Benjamin's description speaks to the naturalization of a disenchanted and mechanized temporal logic within modernity. Departing from the thesis that this linear and progressive conception of time structurally enables and ongoingly facilitates regimes of social, political, and economic domination, this exhibition turns to artistic practices that describe, defy, or propose alternatives to such hegemonic temporal orders.

The title for our exhibition, *Clocking Out: Time Beyond Management*, alludes not only to the end of one's daily labor cycle, but points to fugitive modalities of exiting a certain paradigm under which one's time is administered through imposed regimentations, insidious imperatives to productivity, and self-inflicted time-management. To be "clocked out" is also to refuse and to disengage with these social and psychological impositions of time. This exhibition foregrounds the orchestration of time as a site of struggle and locus of critique. By presenting speculative, historical, and always already existing alternatives situated outside the allegedly totalizing framework of the current hegemonic temporal order, this exhibition gestures towards a time beyond management.

The question of how to hold together such a multiplicity of counter-temporalities in a productive way without collapsing them into a singular, reactionary category is of equal concern to many of the artists represented in this exhibition. This is a difficult yet fertile problematic that the scholar Carolyn Dinshaw attests to in her critical discussion of linear time, "[t]hinking nonlinearity over and against linearity is hard enough, but figuring out the criteria by which different nonlinear temporalities might meaningfully be brought together—figuring out how to make heterogeneity analytically powerful—is exponentially harder."[2]

This exhibition creates an experiential and discursive space, wherein a heterogeneity of rhythms and temporal logics coexist and are put into dialogic relation with one another. Rather than propose a unified counter-concept of time, which would risk amounting to a new temporal hegemony, *Clocking Out* embraces a networked plurality of coeval but incommensurable temporalities. The exhibition weaves together multiple thematic threads which are further explored in the four essays in this catalogue, spanning decolonial and I/indigenous[3] temporalities, alternative time-based economies, the performativity of timekeeping devices, as well as material expressions of time in textile practices. Without reverting to an ahistorical universalism, we insist that these varied temporal critiques are inextricably interlocked and arise out of a shared discontent with their historical and ongoing enmeshment in the colonial, racialized, cis-heteropatriarchal, ableist, and ecocidal matrices that constitute capitalist modernity. Stretching the duration and format of a ten-day exhibition, *Clocking Out* unfolds through an exhibition with a reading room, a performance program, and two evenings of film screenings. The exhibition installed at Artists Space (New York, NY) gathers works by Kobby Adi, Julieta Aranda, Yto Barrada, Kevin Jerome Everson, ektor garcia, Simon Gush, Sky Hopinka, Clare Hu, Samson Kambalu, Duwawisioma, aka Victor Masayesva, Jr., Katie Paterson, Dario Robleto, and Finnegan Shannon as well as performances by Maria Chávez, Brendan Fernandes, and Gerard & Kelly. Inviting the viewer to linger in the gallery space, we have assembled a group of texts that were formative in our conception of the exhibition as well as a section of posters, books, and zines curated by Black Quantum Futurism. Running parallel is a film program at e-flux Screening Room in Brooklyn with works by Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, Helen Cammock, Kajsa Dahlberg, Hicham Gardaf, Karrabing Film Collective, Rosalind Nashashibi, and Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor. Deploying a diverse yet complementary set of critical methodologies and aesthetic sensibilities, the artists assembled in *Clocking Out* pierce through the disciplining veil of empty, homogenous time and illumine otherwise temporal horizons.

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[1] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken, 1969), 261.

[2] Dinshaw, Carolyn, et al., "Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion," in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 13, Issue 2 (2007): 186.

[3] In his essay in this volume, KJ Abudu makes a distinction between the use of "indigenous" "to refer to the plural, dynamic, and resilient onto-epistemologies (in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific) that have been and continue to be subjugated by world-systemic processes of coloniality/modernity"; and the use of "Indigenous" in "refer[ence] to populations, world over, that have been subjected to settler colonial violence and displaced by modern statecraft."

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WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

● = Film program

Kobby Adi
Whiskey, 2022
Food wrapper, PVC, matchbox, dog hair, tape, 35mm film negative processed in homemade Palm Wine developer
2 x 1.4 x 0.6 in.
Courtesy the artist

Palm Wine Developer for B/W Motion Picture Film, 2023
Printed document
Available in English, Mandarin, and Spanish
Recipe formulated by Kobby Adi
Mandarin translation by Si Li, Spanish translation by Emilio Martínez Poppe
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist

hold, 2021
Twelve seconds (looped), 16mm film transferred to medical grade DVD, rom-com DVD cases, black permanent marker (6 copies)
Courtesy the artist

Julieta Aranda
slowly
mulled over
matter, 2009
Twenty-four hours of electrocardiography data, print on paper (A4)
Courtesy the artist

sketch for an unclock, 2023
Twenty-four hours sound, stereo (physical and mechanical interpretation of 24 hours of electrocardiography data)
Courtesy the artist

Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle
● *Notes for a Time/Bank*, 2012
HD video with sound
00:21:47
Courtesy the artists

Yto Barrada
Untitled (After Stella, New Marrakesh), 2023
Cotton, madder, onion, iron, cochineal, pomegranate, and found fabric
24.5 x 24.5 in.
Courtesy the artist and Pace Gallery

Black Quantum Futurism
Time Zone Protocols (Poster I), 2022
32 x 49.5 in.
Chromogenic print
Courtesy the artists

Time Zone Protocols (Poster II), 2022
32 x 49.5 in.
Chromogenic print
Courtesy the artists

Time Zone Protocols (Poster III), 2022
32 x 49.5 in.
Chromogenic print
Courtesy the artists

Just in Timekit, 2022
Zine handout
Courtesy the artists

Black Quantum Futurism Selected Reading Materials: *Black Quantum Futurism Theory & Practice Vol. I*, 2015; *Black Quantum Futurism Theory & Practice Vol. II*, 2021; *Space-Time Collapse Vol I: From The Congo To The Carolinas*, 2015; *Space-Time Collapse Vol. II: Community Futurisms*, 2020; Rasheedah Phillips, *Recurrence Plot (and Other Time Travel Tales)*, 2014
All published by The Afrofuturist Affair/House of Future Sciences Books
Courtesy the artists

Helen Cammock
● *They Call it Idlewild*, 2020
HD digital video
00:18:35
Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry, London

Maria Chávez
HMI: Whitney ISP (HyperMemory Installation), 2023
Sound performance
Courtesy the artist

Kajsa Dahlberg
● *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force*, 2015
HD video, color, sound
00:42:13
Courtesy the artist

Kevin Jerome Everson
Workers Leaving the Job Site, 2013
16mm film transferred to HD video; color, silent
00:06:30
Courtesy the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery

Second Shift, 1999
16mm film transferred to HD video; b&w, sound
00:04:00
Courtesy the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery

Brendan Fernandes
A Solo Until We Can Dance Again, 2021–23
Performance, marley floor, vinyl
Duration variable
Courtesy the artist and NEON

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ektor garcia
Portal DF/SF, 2021
Crocheted copper wire, copper wire, copper pipe, shell
84 x 30 in.
Courtesy the artist and Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco

textile bronceado, 2023
Lost wax cast bronze
7.5 x 9.25 in.
Courtesy the artist and Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco

textil bronceado con espinas/semillas, 2023
Lost wax cast bronze
9 x 15 x 3 in.
Courtesy the artist and Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco

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Hicham Gardaf
● *In Praise of Slowness*, 2023
16mm film transferred to video, color, sound
00:17:00
Courtesy the artist

Gerard & Kelly
Timelining, 2014–ongoing
Performance
Duration variable
Courtesy the artists

Simon Gush
Sunday Light, 2013
HD video, stereo sound
00:13:14
Courtesy the artist and Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town and Johannesburg

Without Light, 2016
HD video, stereo sound
00:11:17
Courtesy the artist and Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town and Johannesburg

Clocking In, 2013
Clock card machine and time card rack
21 x 19 x 13 in.
Courtesy Emile Stipp Collection, Pretoria

Sky Hopinka
In Dreams and Autumn, 2021
HD video, stereo, 3-channel, synchronous loop
00:11:04
Courtesy the artist and BROADWAY Gallery

Clare Hu
Perimeter, 2022
Overshot weave ("Lee's Surrender") in white and blue, various patches, cotton duck, hardware, woven sandbags
Height variable x 72 in.
Courtesy the artist

2300 Pleasant Hill, 2022
Gridded double weave, digital image of 99 Ranch Market, views from Buford Highway and scaffolding attached to Stone Mountain printed fabric, plastic tarp, cotton duck, found plastic fencing, cotton yarn, thread
73 x 99 in.
Courtesy the artist

Samson Kambalu
Nyau Cinema, 2014–ongoing
Video installation, color and b&w, silent
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry, London

I Hold up a Tree in 1936, 2015
Digital video, color
00:00:22

Runner, 2014
Digital video, color
00:00:50

Snowball, 2015
Digital video, color
00:00:21

Strange Fruit, 2015
Digital video, color
00:00:21

Strip Lander, 2019
Digital video, color
00:00:31

Karrabing Film Collective
● *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams*, 2016
HD video, sound
00:28:53
Courtesy the artists

Duwawisioma, aka Victor Masayesva, Jr.
Itam Hakim, Hopiit, 1984
Film
00:58:00
Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art, New York

Rosalind Nashashibi
● *Denim Sky*, 2022
16mm film transferred to HD video
01:07:00
Courtesy the artist and GRIMM Amsterdam | New York | London

Katie Paterson
Future Library (certificate), 2014
Two-sided foil block print on paper
16.5 x 11.6875 in.
Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York

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Dario Robleto
I Haven't Been Heard From In Days, 1997
"Silence (Sometimes I can't speak to anyone or go out for weeks), 1982, 1986–91, 1993–94, 1997"
Print, part of the series "Actions" (1996–97)
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist

Finnegan Shannon
Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?, 2021
DayClocks mechanism, DiBond, clock hand, paint
13.4 in.
Courtesy the artist

Do you want us here or not, 2018
MDO, paint
72 x 26 x 36 in.
Courtesy the artist

Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor
● *Omnia Communia Deserta*, 2020
Film
00:29:00
Courtesy the artists

ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

Labor Notes from Josiah Warren's New Harmony Community, 1857
Denominations: One Hour, Two Hours, Five Hours
Facsimiles
Courtesy the American Antiquarian Society

Labor Note from Robert Owen's National Equitable Labour Exchange in London, 1832
Denomination: Ten Hours
Facsimiles
Courtesy the British Museum

Ithaca HOURS, 1991–2012
Project initiated by Paul Glover
Denominations: One Hour, Half Hour, Quarter Hour, One-Eighth Hour, One-Tenth Hour
Purchased with exhibition funds

Lawrence Weiner
Time/Bank Currency, 2009
Denominations: Half Hour, One Hour, Six Hours, Twelve Hours, Twenty-Four Hours
Project initiated by e-flux (Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle)
Courtesy e-flux

Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle
Time/Bank Newspaper, 2009
Printed newspaper
Courtesy the artists

Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK)
State in Time Passport, 1991–ongoing
Courtesy Zachary B. Feldman

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We would also like to thank Margaret Liu Clinton for her commitment to the exhibition and generous guidance. We appreciate all that you have done.

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We are grateful to all the artists in the show, as well as their studios, galleries, and collectors, for facilitating and supporting this project. For generously loaning works to the exhibition, we would like to thank: Andrew Kreps Gallery, BROADWAY Gallery, e-flux, GRIMM Amsterdam | New York | London, James Cohan Gallery, Kate MacGarry Gallery, Monique Meloche Gallery, Pace Gallery, Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco, and Stevenson Gallery.

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Editor
Joshua Lubin-Levy

Project Managers
Margaret Liu Clinton, Joshua Lubin-Levy, and Erika Wentworth

Designers
Hilary Greenbaum and Jonathan Gorman

Printer
Spencer Printing

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Spending Time

Zachary B. Feldman

Sociality from Time-Based Currencies
to Time-Based Nations

> “Time in our culture is a valuable commodity. It is a limited resource that we use to accomplish our goals. Because of the way that the concept of work has developed in modern Western culture, where work is typically associated with the time it takes and time is precisely quantified, it has become customary to pay people by the hour, week, or year. In our culture TIME IS MONEY in many ways: telephone message units, hourly wages, hotel room rates, yearly budgets, interest on loans, and paying your debt to society by ‘serving time.’”[1]
>
> —George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*

1 George Lakoff and Mark Leonard Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, First Edition (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 8.

"Time is money." Regarded as a maxim of common sense, there are few lessons more pervasive throughout history. Its oldest recorded use is credited to the great Greek orator, Antiphone, who lectured that, "[t]he most costly outlay is time."[2] In its contemporary use, it is attributed to Benjamin Franklin who, in the opening to his essay, "Advice to a Young Tradesman," compels the young working class to "[r]emember that time is money," so that they may equate a half day spent idle as having "spent or rather thrown away Five Shillings besides."[3] In many ways, the whole of Western civilization rests on the bedrock that time is but another natural resource to exploit, extract, and leverage in service of capital accumulation.[4] By weighing productivity against ones' limited resource of biological life and valuing it monetarily, strategies to maximize the use of one's time abound. While some have understood "Time is money" in a more Franklinian sense, others have sought to augment their time through the outsourcing of labor unto others, buying their time on the labor market. The advent and spread of capitalism and industrial production concretized the idea that time is money (and, therefore, a resource) into a system in which time is bought and sold in service by and for those with purchasing power.

The metaphor "time is money" is a cultural hegemony that disincentivizes particular uses of time, while rewarding others—always in service to a capitalist understanding of labor. When expressed as a truism, this metaphor further alienates money from its material value and determines how time—and thus, sociality—should be managed. The linguists and philosophers George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, in their book *Metaphors we Live By*, maintain that because abstract concepts are not experiential, they must be described through linguistic metaphors that, in turn, reveal something to us about our everyday functions and culturally based understandings of society. As they write, "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature."[5] When one considers "Time is money," one regards time as a kind of raw material or fuel that powers industry and can be leveraged to increase one's productivity. That is to say, time on its own is not profitable, nor even useful. Time itself must be employed in a particular way to generate value.

What happens when the metaphor is spent? What happens when time really is money? *Clocking Out: Time Beyond Management* explores artistic practices that venture to describe, defy, and debauch uncritical and hegemonic notions of temporality—to which "time is money" certainly belongs. In this essay, I introduce a number of theoretical and real-life time-based economic systems and the appropriation of this history in recent art projects. From the 19th century utopian settlements of Josiah Warren in the USA and Robert Owen in the UK, to art projects and videos by Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, Simon Gush, Kevin Jerome Everson, and Neue Slowenische Kunst, I think through the quantification and valuation of time as money connected to themes of labor, pleasure, incarceration, and nationhood.

2 Damien Villers and Wolfgang Mieder, "Time Is Money: Benjamin Franklin and the Vexing Problem of Proverb Origins," *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* 34, no. 1 (2017): 395.

3 Villers and Mieder, "Time Is Money," 391–392.

4 German sociologist Max Weber cites Franklin's use of "time is money." See Max Weber, "The Spirit of Capitalism," *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Routledge Classics (New York, NY: Routledge, 2001), 13–38.

5 Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 3.

TIME STORE: THE FUNGIBILITY OF LABOR

The year is 1827, the place Cincinnati, Ohio. Imagine, for a moment, entering a general store. The shelves are stocked with all the historically accurate accoutrements: grain, tea, sugar, produce, rifles, ammunition, snake oil, hats, beaver pelts, kitchenware, farm machinery, you name it. Grizzled frontiersmen and farmers alike shop for all their essentials. But this store is different from other general stores like it—not in its stock, but in its structure. In this store, a clock hangs conspicuously upon the wall for all to see. As shoppers select their goods and bring them to the register, the shopkeeper keeps tabs on the clock to measure the time spent waiting on each customer. The goods themselves are exchanged roughly at cost, thus there is no profit in the traditional sense.[6] At the end of the transaction, the shopkeeper asks for payment in an amount equal to the time spent on a specific trade, which is issued on a voucher to be "paid" on demand to the beholder.[7] Here, time really is money. This is Josiah Warren's Time Store—an experimental retail store used as a proof of concept for the practice of a labor-valued economy, and the first systematic application of mutualistic labor-based economics situated within the ideology of individualistic anarchism.[8]

The Time Store was a resounding success. Neighboring enterprises, unable to compete with Warren's "prices," sought his help to adapt his time-based labor model to suit their needs.[9] After two years in operation, Warren declared his experiment a success and closed the store to pursue the advancement of his new economic ideas in numerous labor-for-labor settlements, opening iterations of the Time Store everywhere he moved. One of the communities Warren founded was known as Modern Times (1851) in what is today, Brentwood, New York, on Long Island. Examples of labor vouchers from Warren's first Time Store in Cincinnati are exceedingly rare—and the ones on display in this exhibition, stamped with the year 1857, are from the Modern Times community. Warren's labor notes varied across the years in size and information listed, however the design of the bills themselves remained mostly the same, typically featuring an illustration of Lady Justice, a notice of non-transferability,[10] the hours owed, and in what form of labor [fig. 1]. Featuring print only on one side, both earlier and later versions included spots for endorsements that were intended to be filled out on demand, functioning similarly to a modern-day bank check. The labor notes signified a direct labor-for-labor exchange (through their non-transferability) and included safeguards, such as a cap of 100 hours per issuing loanee, as to avoid a capitalistic accumulation of expropriated time.

6 The cost is inclusive of a small markup to cover shipping, loss, and rent, which averaged about four percent.

7 William Bailie, *Josiah Warren: First American Anarchist, A Sociological Study* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1906), 10.

8 Steve Kemple, "The Cincinnati Time Store As An Historical Precedent For Societal Change," A lecture given at CS13, Cincinnati, OH, March 19, 2010, as part of the "Creative Economy" exhibition. https://www.scribd.com/document/32919811/The-Cincinnati-Time-Store-As-An-Historical-Precedent-For-Societal-Change.

9 Bailie, *Josiah Warren: First American Anarchist*, 14.

10 This was intended only to keep the trade of labor notes a closed system until someone was acculturated into the time-based economy.

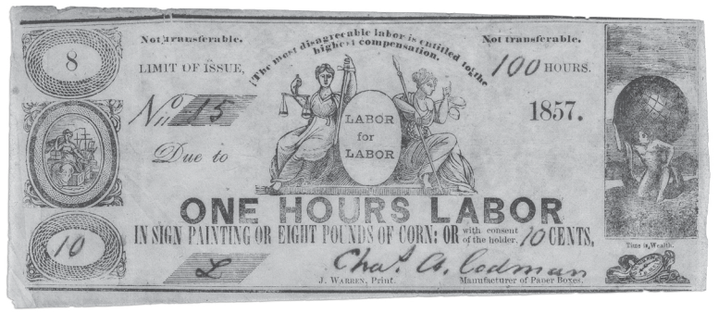


Fig. 1
"One Hour Labor Note," from Josiah Warren's Modern Times Community, 1857.
Courtesy the American Antiquarian Society.

Of course, Warren's economic ideas did not arise in a vacuum. Prior to his move to Cincinnati, Warren was a follower of Robert Owen, a wealthy textile industrialist from Wales. Owen became well known for the founding of New Harmony, Indiana—a planned utopian village where all money and private property was banned, and the citizens functioned on a loose credit-based economy and self-sufficient communalism. When the community imploded terrifically less than two years after its foundation, Warren left New Harmony for Cincinnati with his mind full of Owen's 1820 idea for a labor-note intended to alleviate the economic austerity then in Ireland.[11] Shortly after the voluntary close of Warren's first Time Store, Owen was emboldened to push the labor notes one step further by founding an exchange market in London—expanding the capacity for labor notes by facilitating *indirect* labor-for-labor exchange. The National Equitable Labour Exchange opened in 1830 and issued "Labour Notes" in denominations of one, two, five, ten, twenty, forty, and eighty hours [figs. 2 and 3]. As historian Ophélie Siméon puts it, co-operative producers in the Exchange could "bypass middlemen and trade their goods directly for labour notes based upon the estimated labour-time used to perform skilled work, thus enjoying the full produce of their craftsmanship."[12] In other words, the Exchange provided a physical space for craftspeople to sell their products at cost and charge labor-hour profits through a centralized entity. The National Equitable Labour Exchange notes, also featured in facsimile in this exhibition, signal a rise in officiality. They appear more standardized than Warren's notes—for example, they feature a printed endorsement and a recto and verso design recognizable to any viewer as official. Nonetheless, the Exchange shuttered only two years after it began and by the next year Owen's political work shifted toward trade unionism.[13]

Owen's and Warren's attempts would go on to garnish the attention of figures such as Karl Marx and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon as inspiration for the uptake of a labor theory of value within their political thought, although not without some criticism. Labor exchange, as envisioned by Owen and his followers, was always a stopgap to inject a bit

11 Bailie, *Josiah Warren: First American Anarchist*, 11.

12 Robert Owen, "'Rules And Regulations Of The Equitable Labour Exchange, Gray's Inn Road, London, For The Purpose Of Relieving The Productive Classes From Poverty, By Their Own Industry, And For The Mutual Exchange Of Labour For Equal Value Of Labour', Crisis , N°27, 8 September 1832, 105– 106.," in *Contemporary Thought on Nineteenth Century Socialism : Volume I*, ed. Ophélie Siméon (Milton, United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group, 2020), 248.

13 Owen, "'Rules and Regulations of the Equitable Labour Exchange,'" 248.

Figs. 2 and 3
"One Hour Labuor Note," from Robert Owen's National Equitable Labour Exchange in London, 1832.
Recto and verso.

of socialism into the fray of capitalism—a way to work within the system. Incrementalism, not revolution. Owenism economics were highly influential to Proudhon, heralded as the founder of anarchism, who attempted his very own "People's Bank" in 1849 which would have facilitated the indirect exchange of products through labor vouchers.[14] Initially, Marx disagreed with the Owenism time-based economic systems in which he thought labor was overweighted as just one of several factors in valuation, but he did originally concede it as a functionally necessary junction in the transition away from capitalism, as socialism would be "stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges."[15] Later, however, in the *Poverty of Philosophy*, Marx dismissed the idea outright, claiming that it was merely a utopian apology to capitalism. To Marx, the important factor is not simply the number of hours labored, but rather a degree of abstraction he describes as the "socially necessary labor time" required to produce commodities.

Nevertheless, Labor currencies have continued to proliferate throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, always on the bleeding edge of obscurity without massive public uptake. (Even today one can buy time-backed cryptocurrency tokens on the Blockchain, but they remain relatively minor crypto coins.) Time banking systems

14 Like Owen's Exchange nearly two decades earlier, Proudhon's "bank" was also short-lived, lasting not even one year in the unrest following the overthrow of King Louis Philippe and presidential election of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte.

15 Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme: I," 1875. https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1875/gotha/ch01.htm.

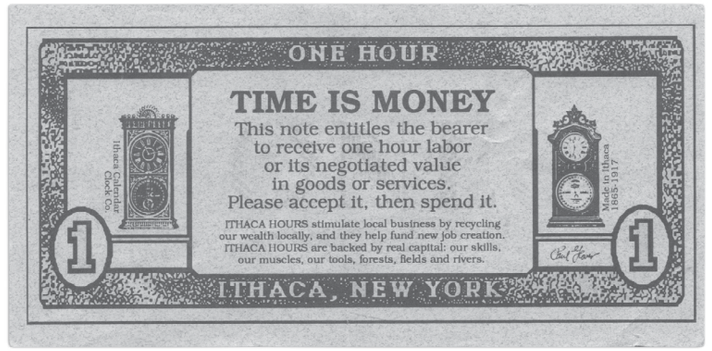
often cropped up in liberal college towns and economically depressed post-industrial communities. Ithaca, New York, in 1991, had the privilege of being both. From this primordial soup of impoverished economics and anarcho-libertarianism, Paul Glover, a community organizer, university professor, and local Ithaca historian, along with a group of friends and advisors, established one of the most successful local currency campaigns to date.[16] At its height, the Ithaca HOURS were accepted at hundreds of businesses and even some local credit unions [figs. 4 and 5]. It grew out of a double-pronged critique of the unreliability of the dollar and the dearth of money circulating in the local economy. The Ithaca HOURS project flourished from 1991 until it petered out in the early 2010s. Around this time, Glover penned an essay reflecting on the origins and impact of the project, writing that "HOURS are as steady as the clock, because minutes neither expand nor contract. HOURS when properly issued represent basic labor that produces real goods and services. As Adam Smith said, 'Labor was the first price, the original purchase-money that was paid for all things.'"[17] His assumption that subjective, phenomenological time is invalid betrays an ideology of universalized and mechanical time. Much like Owen and Warren—for whom the important factor is the quantifiable number of hours it takes to produce a commodity—the underlying premise is a scientific and rational measure of time in which, furthermore, all bodies experience time equally. Common wisdom continues to uphold this premise, suggesting that we each have, as the saying goes, "the same 24 hours in a day." At the crossroads of ableism and classism, this proverb assumes a homogenous playing field in which tasks (including commodity producing labor) can be assigned to this ostensibly universal timeline. Glover's statement assumes the availability of time not given to varying rhythms of individual life and leisure, nor to the daily rituals of cooking, cleaning, laundry, and all sorts of domestic labor that has historically been excluded from the category of waged work and assigned to the domain of women. At the same time, already monied individuals have the option to buy time—that is, to buy more hours in a day by purchasing services they would rather not do themselves.

The Ithaca HOURS were a time-based currency backed by the belief in the average Ithacan's labor and good-will rather than the US dollar's backing in federal faith. Even the aesthetic of the Ithaca HOURS immediately recalls the layout and conventions of an American dollar bill, featuring on its obverse the motto, "In Ithaca We Trust," and on its reverse, "Time is Money." With one HOUR pegged to ten US dollars, each bill is serialized, contains anti-counterfeiting graphics, and is endorsed by a treasurer who is governed by an advisory board, making the Ithaca HOURS a highly sophisticated monetary system, if not ironically dependent on the dollar's value.[18] Without completely entering a teleological historical narrative, it is still notable that each iteration of time banking or labor-backed currencies that

16 Glover was inspired to jumpstart the Ithaca HOURS after hearing a story about the "BerkShares" local currency from the Berkshire region of Massachusetts, which now houses the Schumacher Center for a New Economics.

17 Paul Glover, "Labor: The New Gold Standard," 2012. https://www.paulglover.org/1107.html. It is significant that this article was written in 2012—at a time when the economy was still reeling from the 2008–2009 financial crisis.

18 Paul Glover, "A History of Ithaca HOURS," 2000. https://www.paulglover.org/0001.html.



Figs. 4 and 5
"One Hour Labor Note," from the Ithaca HOURS project, 1994. From the first series prints. Recto and verso.

I have discussed, in their design and policies, have progressively adopted more and more of the conventions of state-backed bank notes. Already in 1992, just one year after its implementation, a college student involved in the organization of the HOURS, Patrice Jennings, expressed concern that the project was turning into a "new economic institution [or] financial regime," that would be in service less as "a tool for empowerment in the economic sphere and more simply a hobby or novelty for white, middle-class individuals."[19] According to many on the anarcho-left, time banking and time-based economic systems miss the mark completely and, in the words of Kevin Carson, function as a mere symbolic tool for the "greenwashed lifestyle choice for NPR liberals who have the money in the first place."[20]

Much of the history of labor currencies and time banking is couched in political ideologies located somewhere in the gap between anarchism and libertarianism on the horseshoed political spectrum. While Owen remained committed to ideas of cooperation and communalism, Warren altered those positions to fit his brand of collective individualism[21]—a position of tension between the emerging schools of capitalism and socialism, to which we are now quite acculturated, but at the time were both seen to contain some agents of change. On this basis, it is interesting, but not necessarily surprising, that the Ithaca HOURS sought to bring stability to a currency through a universalized shared time and a denial of individual subjective time.

19 Eric Fleischmann, "A Brief Look Back at Ithaca HOURS," The Anarchist Library, July 23, 2022, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/eric-fleischmann-a-brief-look-back-at-ithaca-hours. See also Bill Maurer, *Mutual Life, Limited: Islamic Banking, Alternative Currencies, Lateral Reason* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 47–49.

20 Carson quoted in Fleischmann, "A Brief Look Back at Ithaca HOURS." Carson was referring to the BerkShares local currency, on which Ithaca HOURS are based.

21 The motto of Modern Times was, "[m]ind your own business, do your own thing." See Carol Strickland, "Legacy of Modern Times, an L.I. Utopia," *The New York Times*, July 30, 1989. https://www.nytimes.com/1989/07/30/nyregion/legacy-of-modern-times-an-li-utopia.html.

While Owen and Warren's historical positions might be best summed up as simply dissatisfied with the then-current state of society and sought new ideas to disrupt this—less led by ideology than by upheaval—the ethos of a project like Ithaca HOURS only affirms the social functioning of currency by a simple replacement of its backing value. In his book, *Mutual Life, Limited*, anthropologist Bill Mauer affirms that while alternative currencies may very well hold potential "survival strategies for everyone in the era of financial globalization," they are often conceived as a one-for-one adaptation of conventual economics.[22] In other words, while histories of time-based economic systems contain a utopian wish for what could be, revealing the mutable and contingent systems for valuing products and time as it relates to human labor power, they also contain elements of the very monetary system that required their intervention in the first place. Moreover, such experiments have far too infrequently considered the human relation to time and the varied subjective experience of it.

SPENDING TIME: ECONOMIES OF LABOR AND PLEASURE

At least one economist interested in currency reform, Shann Turnbull, has recognized this temporal irregularity. But because he is still an economist, he speaks of time not as felt or embodied, but simply as valued. Against Glover's justification of the Ithaca HOURS, Turnbull writes that because "one hour of one person's time may not be worth one hour of another's, a currency based on labour hours does not provide a useful unity of value."[23] As such, his essay proposed an alternative currency based not on the labor hour, but a more stable measurement: The *kilowatt hour*. More of a thought experiment than an executable plan, Turnbull's proposal significantly alters the meaning of an "hour" within the larger context of direct labor time-based currency (defined here as the unit of energy used to power one kilowatt for one hour). Drawing on an abstract idea of the "hour," such as the one suggested by Turnbull, I turn now away from the kind of direct labor time exchange expounded by Owen and Warren, and towards a new notion of labor time—one based on the human relationship to it. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this finds acceptance less in the field of economics, and more in socially engaged artistic practices.

In their film, *Notes for a Time/Bank* (2012), artist duo Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, under the name e-flux, reflect on the historical and mechanical processes through which the dominant social understanding of time became technologically derived and uniform. They claim that "universal time appears to be no more than a hypothetical projection, a time of generalized equivalence, a 'flattened,' capitalistic time."[24] They go on to poetically assess the process of economic valuation and its correlation to one's time on earth and the pleasure derived from it. Asking "[c]an a good time and a bad time

22 Maurer, *Mutual Life, Limited*, 4.

23 Shann Turnbull, "Kilowatt Hour Currencies (1977)," in *The Money Changers: Currency Reform from Aristotle to e-Cash*, ed. David Boyle (Sterling, Va: Earthscan Publications, 2002). This proposal has the added benefit of rewarding locally produced renewable energy.

24 Quoted in the film by Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, *Notes for a Time/Bank* (2012).

produce the same value?" their work cuts to the relationship between time and the human subject experiencing it.

Aranda has spoken of the notion of "time-laundering"—a process of labor exchange that focuses on changing bad times for good times, or in other words, a market exchange that privileges time spent on pleasure. Citing the so-called "exposure economy" in which creative labor is ostensibly compensated by publicity to a field and its players, in the hopes of experience working in itself (which is to say, for free), Aranda questions the potential for such labor to become fungible. One justification given for compensation in exposure is the notion that the work itself is pleasurable. Building on this, Aranda observes, "[t]ime is money, but time is much more than money. How could we create that kind of value for ourselves?"[25] *Time/Bank* (2009–2013) was not simply a platform for mutualism and labor exchange, but rather an attempt at the valuation—exceeding strict monetary renumeration—of artistic production. Vidokle, when asked to reflect on the mimetic structure of the *Time/Bank* project to that of preexisting economic systems, explains, "the 'art world' is partly comprised of the artistic community, which in essence is a group like any other: a group of senior citizens, an association of plumbers, immigrants, etc. So if these other groups can organize mutual aid societies and other alternative economic networks, why shouldn't we—artists, curators, writers—try to do this as well?"[26] While a one-to-one comparison of affinity groups does not seem to track flawlessly unto the "art world," *Time/Bank* ventures beyond a mere system of compensation or an attempt at creating an art workers lobby. Aranda interjects, "[t]he *Time/Bank* is not only about creating a valuation system for immaterial labour—that would be like substituting money with money. More important is to create an alternative notion of compensation, rooted on the weaving of a community that can be dependable to perform a range of functions for itself within the boundaries of the community."[27] It is essential to understand *Time/Bank* not as a true practicing economy, but rather take it for what it is—an art project intended to evoke in the participant contingent possibilities beyond the current reality. In this way, it reflects the element of disruption and a sense of "what ought to be" similarly embodied in the exchange systems proposed by Owen and Warren.

The actual projects of Owen and Warren are almost always written into history as failures, and pointed to as a thinly veiled excuse of why such alternative economies will never work (thus, implicitly, serving to maintain an economic and social status quo). Aranda's and Vidokle's project embraces this notion of failure by appropriating the preexisting time-banking structures and attempting to revive them—not in service to some kind of historical romanticism, but to showcase the functioning of alternative economic systems beyond theoretical speculation and debate. Witnessing and participating in a functioning time bank, no matter how short-lived, reignites the possibilities of contingent worlds and motions towards the potential to overcome the

25 Quoted from documentation of a presentation by Julieta Aranda, "disorganising: Julieta Aranda on Time/Bank" presented at Bus Projects, Australia, March 13, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tunbpK-AV6E.

26 Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, "Time/Bank: A Conversation with Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle," in *Facing Value: Radical Perspectives from the Arts* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2017), 199.

27 Aranda and Vidokle, "Time/Bank: A Conversation," 200.

inertia of the present in order to build a better, more equitable society.

Time/Bank manifested in about twenty venues globally, each iteration adjusted for site-specific community needs and desires. Some iterations included pop-up restaurants, food exchanges, bazaars and shops, and, of course, the facilitation of direct labor exchanges, both in person and via their online web platform. The ethos of e-flux's project taps into the larger tradition of socially minded and communal self-organization, particularly typical of the 1960s and 1970s art scene in Lower Manhattan, which Aranda and Vidokle reference. This time and place, often tinged with an air of (sometimes naïve) utopian optimism, included artist projects aimed to understand and organize against rising capitalization and neoliberalization.[28] One such project, was the relational art platform and restaurant, FOOD, cofounded by artists Carol Goodden, Tina Girouard, and Gordon Matta-Clark in 1971, which served artist-created concept dishes—and sometimes also edible food. In their September 2011 iteration of *Time/Bank* at the Abrons Art Center, Aranda and Vidokle tip their hats to the legacy of this restaurant with the slightly altered project title, *Time/Food,* which offered meals in exchange for one half hour labor time.

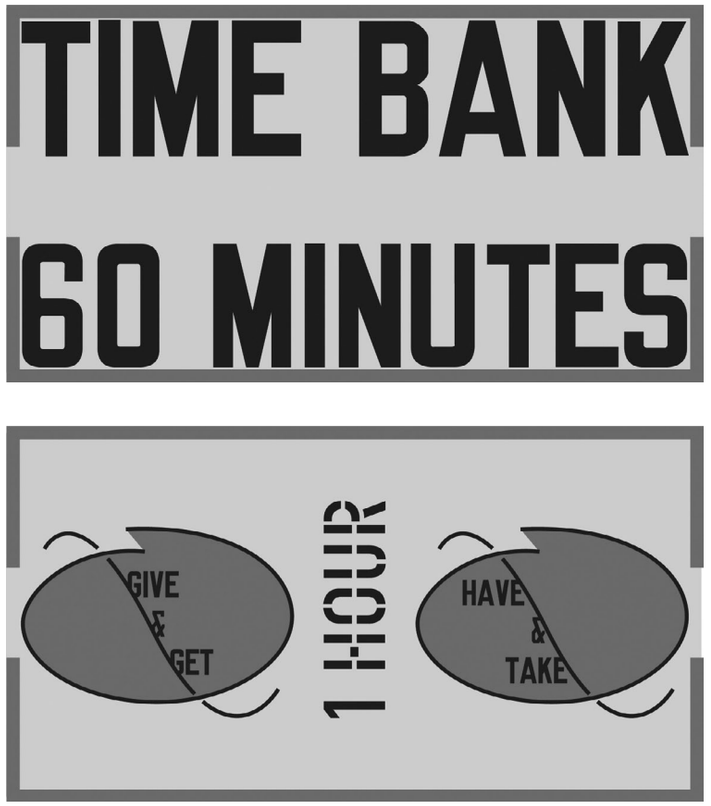
Aranda and Vidokle situate their own project within the post-war social art movement not only with this reference, but also in the production of their own labor-backed currency notes. The use of currency as a visual motif, through its reproduction or vandalization, as a critique of the capitalization of art is an established tradition ranging from Andy Warhol's *200 One Dollar Bills* (1962) to Joseph Beuy's "Kunst=Kapital" performance (1979) and continues through today. And Aranda and Vidokle, too, minted currency notes of their very own—but with a specific caveat. Evoking the phenomenon of *Notgeld* (German for "emergency currency"), in which hyper-localized currencies emerge due to a loss of faith in official currency, usually due to hyperinflation, Aranda and Vidokle were interested in developing a currency which, like *Notgeld*, would have a kind of value in the beauty or uniqueness of the documents, so that it's bearer would not feel compelled to trade it further and its value would hold steady. Nora M. Alter, in her essay on the political, economic, and cultural history of *Notgeld* writes, "on the one hand it substitutes for and even mocks the arbitrary nature of values (currency as economics). On the other, on this self-referential negative dialectical basis, *Notgeld* nonetheless seeks to assert 'authentic' or 'genuine' values (currency as ideology)."[29] The mimetic structure of *Time/Bank* too has a practical function. As the jumping off point to their project, Aranda and Vidokle propositioned over thirty artist friends and organizations to create Time/Bank prototype currencies.[30] Ultimately, they selected a design from Lawrence Weiner in the hopes that the notes' beholders might feel satisfied retaining a serialized print by a preeminent artist for their personal collection—a kind of currency unto itself [figs. 6 and 7]. Like *Notgeld*, if the bills are stashed away and saved, the debt never has to be paid.[31]

28 It is certainly not lost on me that the Whitney Independent Study Program came into being during this time and reciprocally shaped and was shaped by desires of communal education, work, and living. See Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "On the Whitney Independent Study Program: A Conversation with Ron Clark," *October*, no. 168 (May 2019): 5–34.

29 Nora M. Alter, "On Notgeld: Toward a Theory of Emergency Currency," *Julian Irlinger: Fagments of a Crisis* (Leipzig, Germany: Spector Books, 2019), 77.

30 Artists and organizations invited to submit prototypes included Jimmie Durham, Liam Gillick, Mladen Stilnovic, Raqs Media Collective, and W.A.G.E., among many others.

31 Julieta Aranda, "disorganising: Julieta Aranda on Time/Bank."



Figs. 6 and 7
"One Hour Labor Note," from Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, *Time/Bank*, 2009. Designed by Lawrence Weiner. Recto and verso. Courtesy e-flux.

Through its community engagement and conceptualization, *Time/Bank* signifies the invisible labor that goes into the creation of a community—the "art world"—that does not necessarily traffic only in money. Cultural currency, prestige, aesthetic value, personal achievement, and even friendship fuel a kind of economy that is impossible to be quantified in a typical monetary sense. The will to create may be influenced by the power of money, and surely the art world is one of the most capitalized markets, yet it also exceeds the grasp of capitalism. ("Time is money, but time is much more than money.") While the aims of *Time/Bank* are at some points under-conceptualized and historically derivative, the true value in the project, in my view, is the insistence on an economy of pleasure, thereby facilitating a rare moment when hobbies are not monetized, but exchanged within a specialized community to the mutual benefit of all. It emphasizes the individuality of specialized skill while centering the community. Rather than a collective of individuals, *Time/Bank* demonstrates that a true collective mutualism is not only possible, but within reach—albeit on a limited scope. The currency of *Time/Bank* is not quite labor time as Owen and Warren meant it, nor units of energy as Turnbull intended, but rather a commerce of pleasure—exchanging bad times for good.

Yet, the boundary between pleasure and labor is not always clearly delineated. While *Time/Bank* offers one way to represent an economy of pleasure, Simon Gush offers another perspective. His film *Sunday Light* (2013) is a meditation on the blurring of these lines through the lens of his own labor. He features black and white, mostly static shots of the Central Business District (CBD) neighborhood in Johannesburg, South Africa, filmed on Sundays over the course of several months. The calm cityscape is nearly devoid of human activity, beyond a rare pedestrian or car driving by. The sound is muted, almost white noise—certainly not that of the bustling metropole of Johannesburg that often comes to mind. The artist's presence is only noted by the fact the camera is filming—the viewer is left to imagine Gush standing with his equipment in these sleepy streets. The film's images are intercut with prosaic white text on a black screen written from Gush's perspective, reflecting on the material conditions under which the film was produced. He writes of his move to the CBD several years back, and the precarity of his own laboring as an artist—often required to work on Sundays when the businesses that primarily occupy the CBD are shuttered. As an artist, he is not confined to a nine-to-five schedule, and is instead trapped in a kind of mode that defies time off. He writes,

> I am as likely to work on a Sunday
> as I am to have Thursday off.
> This lack of a coherent working week
> seems to make the structures around me more visible.
>
> I count the hours of my work,
> matching them up to the standard.[32]

With the very film one watches as evidence, Gush tells the viewer about the nature of his Sunday labor. Walking the streets and filming is considered labor when it is in service to Gush's livelihood as an artist, however it may appear from the outside to be an act of leisure. It does not look like the typical office work happening in the CBD, and to the perspective of a day laborer, service worker, or sex worker, Gush's filming certainly does not appear as work at all. As Gush contemplates his own subject positionality within this matrix of labor and leisure, he has documented his own labor on the day of rest. Still, artistic production occupies a different mode of labor in the minds of many. Gush points to this unique standing, as he is self-employed and thus, his laboring here is in fact "what he will."[33] The line between work and pleasure is blurred, as is his profession with his identity.

32 Formatting of the text is kept from the original video.

33 This alludes to Gush's citation of the progressive-era labor slogan, "8 hours for work, 8 hours for sleep, 8 hours for what we will."

> The question
> 'What do you do?'
> is almost always an inquiry about
> what form of work you do.
>
> We are expected to identify with our jobs,
> whether or not they are fulfilling
> or we pursue meaning elsewhere in our lives.

Gush's film concludes with a shot of men in hard hats and harnesses lying prostrate atop a glass atrium nearby the High Court building. He comments that the positioning of these men's bodies and the context of seeing them on Sunday initially confused the artist. The men are almost motionless as if they were dozing on the beach, yet it does not make sense to describe what they are doing as relaxation or leisure.[34] Indeed, they are working, and working on a Sunday as to avoid any disturbance of the weekday happenings that take place under the atrium, inside the building below. The spectacle of the prostrate workers becomes an auto-reflection on Gush's own conditions of labor. Filming Johannesburg every Sunday for several months, he labors on a passion project—one not motivated (exclusively) by financial reward, but by poetic expression. Through the entanglement of labor and leisure, he confuses his profession with his personhood. When the accountant leaves at 5 o'clock, she does not bring her work home. The artist does not have this privilege, however that does not make him unique. The domestic worker, the home office worker, the mother, may also bring their work home, if the home is not already the site of work itself. The flaneuring artist is privileged in a manner that allows him the slack to conflate his identity and work, blurring together professional aspiration with private desire.

Returning to a central question in *Time/Bank,* if it takes (for argument's sake) half an hour to complete a painting, Aranda asks, "[w]hat counts there, the half an hour that you spent in the work or the two months that you agonized over it, how many times you got drunk with friends talking about it, the night that you could not sleep. You know, those hours are worth something."[35] Under capitalism, there can be no doubt that time is money. Regardless of one's personal resistance, we live in an age of compulsory capitalism that sees time as empty and demands it to be filled up with productive labor. When labor appears to be unproductive, as is the case with Gush, it exposes this condition. While Aranda correctly claims that "those hours are worth something," must they be worth money? *Time/Bank* addresses this question head on, while Gush presents a more ambiguous take. The construction workers work for money—while they may enjoy their job, they do not do it for free. This is different from Gush's labor—he may or may not produce art videos for free, as there is no guarantee of their marketability, thus he must have additional motivations. If *Time/*

34 There is an interesting parallel between this work and Mierle Laderman Ukeles's *I Make Maintenance Art One Hour Every Day* (1976), in which the artist photographed hundreds of maintenance staff at the 55 Water Street satellite building of the Whitney Museum of American Art. She asked all participants to dedicate one hour of their workday to the production of "maintenance art," which appeared as identical to their typical work tasks.

35 Julieta Aranda, "disorganising: Julieta Aranda on Time/Bank."

Bank addresses this question in the context of a community, Gush's contribution is limited to the individual. In the next and concluding section, I consider the role of the individual and collective in liminal spaces that are demarcated by the control of one's own time.

TEMPORAL BOUNDS: THE EMPLOYER AND THE STATE

Consider this cinematic trope in films about prison: the camera finds its way into a prisoner's cell, zooming in on tally marks that adorn the wall. Four vertical lines pierced by a fifth diagonal, the tally mark is one of the oldest systems of counting large sets, which is likely why its adoptive use has been employed to demonstrate the punishment of incarceration, providing a visual referent for a long duration of time. There are few losses over one's own time more totalizing than imprisonment. The colloquialism (or, perhaps better stated, euphemism) of "doing time" in reference to incarceration reduces the individual to a number, to the time that must be "served." For her contribution to the e-flux *Time/Bank* currency prototype, artist Judi Werthein suggested a monetary system in reference to the tally, thereby connecting the social and economic impact of time to the people most affected by the carceral system [fig. 8]. The visual language of Werthein's proposal functions as a direct index of time—in particular time imposed upon an individual—while its social function as a prototypical currency remarks on how time is spent, saved, invested, wasted, budgeted, borrowed, taken, given, or served.

As Gush states, the seemingly innocuous pleasantry of "What do you do?," is nearly always a coded inquiry about one's profession, rather than truly asking about one's hobbies and interests. Following this logic, what then does it mean to "do time"? For incarcerated individuals, this euphemism is tied deeply to identity and subjugation—an allegory for the social conditions of the carceral system. Moreover, incarcerated people in the U.S. do not only lack control over their

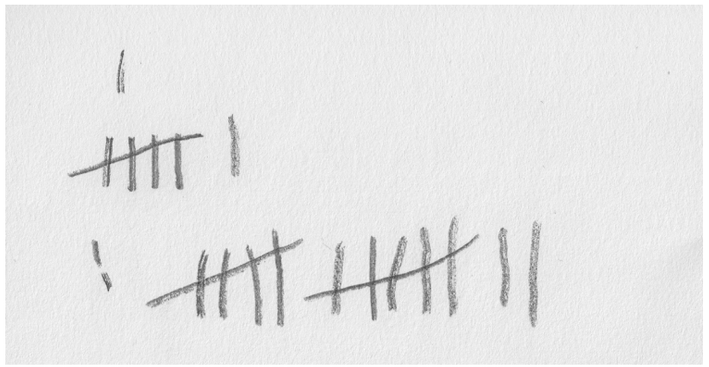


Fig. 8
Prototype of a "One Hour Labor Note," for Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, *Time/Bank*, 2009. Designed by Judi Werthein. Courtesy e-flux.

time (as far as it must be spent imprisoned), but also to their labor.[36] Much of the writing on prison abolition discourse and the school-to-prison pipeline reflect on the conditions of the prisoners as exploited laborers—and rightfully so. Yet, without detracting from the very real and urgent attention given to incarcerated individuals, the filmmaker and artist Kevin Jerome Everson depicts the daily mundane inspection and timekeeping endured by corrections officers in the very waged work that maintains the institution of the prison or jail's carceral temporality. In doing so, Everson brings a level of nuance into the conversation without undercutting the plight of incarcerated peoples. Indeed, the prison guards police the boundary between individual sovereignty and incarceration.

In one of his first short films, *Second Shift* (1997), Everson draws explicit attention to the moment when the guard traverses the boundary between time to himself and time spent working to police prison life. The camera follows an unnamed and tightly cropped protagonist (played by Everson himself) as he clocks in during a shift change. The cuts and changing camera angles give the sense that the transition is taking a while, as if he is lagging in the liminal space between free time and labor time. The metal detector he must pass through is nothing more than a door, but it is that door that determines one's sovereignty—or lack thereof—in how their time is spent. Everson's character empties his pockets of keys, wallet and coins and lugs his lunchbox. This film (like so much of Everson's work) draws references from the cities and towns important in his family's biography—including Mansfield, Ohio, where the artist grew up and where the Department of Corrections is one of the city's largest employers. Short of sympathizing with the guard, Everson's work makes certain parallels (though far from equivalences) between the prison guards in such towns, the conditions of the working class without many employment options, and the incarcerated. In short, *Second Shift* presents an opportunity to think through the prison industrial complex by way of the strange managerial class of prison guards.

Celebrated for his depictions of quotidian rituals and frankness towards the material conditions of life for working class Black Americans, Everson's *Second Shift* is elucidated even more when read with another film made two years prior. *Eleven Eighty-Two* (1995) features vignettes of a man (also played by Everson) gathering his hanging laundry from the outside clothesline as a thunderstorm rolls in.[37] As the film progresses, one begins to see more clearly that the man's laundry consists entirely of his corrections officer work uniform. A re-enacted, informal interview plays over the film's visuals. The credits identify the interview as one between the filmmaker himself and his uncle, William "Wanky" Everson. "Wanky" recounts being laid off from his previous job as a washing machine mechanic, after which the only work he could find was in the prison. The film is encoded with subtitles that reveal the benefits and compensation offered for this job: "full medical coverage;

36 Amendment XIII, Section 1 to the US Constitution reads: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

37 Though Everson has long worked in film, *Eleven Eighty-Two* is the earliest work by the artist that is still in circulation.

after the first year, full dental; five days a week; eight hours a day; starting pay is $11.82 an hour; two weeks paid vacation; overtime not guaranteed." Everson depicts the mundane chores of life as a prison worker—or any blue-collar worker—washing of the uniform and clocking into work. Yet, Everson's role as a guard is almost incidental. He could be any type of nine-to-five worker, but the ways in which capital shaped society in his hometown determine the types of work available.

In a published interview about his artistic practice from the mid 1990s, Everson recalls a series of his sculptures, *The Mansfield, Ohio End Tables* (1994), which feature framed photographs of Black prison guards.[38] He comments, "[m]y concept was to display the new economy, which was and still is the penal institution."[39] Although satisfied with the result of the sculptures, he felt their overall function left something to be desired. Seeking to remedy this, he shifted his practice towards the use of time-based media that it is known for today. *Second Shift* and *Eleven Eighty-Two* belong to early efforts in this new form of practice to understand and display the economy of the penal institution.

Of course, the prison system is not the only authority that controls one's mobility and access to the world. It is also within the purview of states and nations to authorize and oversee the geographic movement of people through the issuing and stamping of passports. The passport is at once an individual and collective document, functioning as personal identification and validation of one's citizenship status. Indeed, one can glean as much about the nature of a person as they can about the nature of a nation from a passport—intermixed with the name, date of birth, height, and weight of its beholder are national symbols, mottos, and foundational beliefs. The passport thus functions as a metonym for the citizenry and a symbol of a country's self-mythologization and collective identity.

The Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) is a loose association of several artist collectives across media and genre that preexisted Slovenia's break from Yugoslavia in 1991.[40] After the splintering of the country, the group rebranded as NSK State in Time, defined a conceptual "territory" as a nation-state, and began to issue passports and citizenship under its own governing authority [fig. 9]. The passports proclaim their holder as "a participant in the formation of the first global state," which "denies the principles of (limited) territory [and] advocates the Transnational Law."[41] As the name implies, the nationhood of NSK State in Time is temporally oriented and not identified in space whatsoever. The NSK passports are highly sophisticated, blurring the lines between the artist project and sovereign power that clearly references the arbitrary nature of statehood in the post-Yugoslavian countries.

Still, the passport is more than a national symbol or personal identification for its beholder—it contains a kind of social currency. It is not uncommon to hear the passports of the world spoken about in terms of the "best" or "most powerful," referring to which passports allow their holder to travel through borders with the greatest ease. It is

38 *The Mansfield, Ohio End Tables* (1994) were featured in Thelma Golden's exhibition, *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art*, Whitney Museum (November 10, 1994–March 5, 1995).

39 Claudrena Harold, "A Conversation with Kevin Jerome Everson," *Callaloo* 37, Number 4 (2014): 804.

40 The original collectives belonging to NSK were IRWIN, Laibach, and Scipion Nasice Sisters Theatre. Additional collectives have since been incorporated into the NSK.

41 NSK Information Center, Letter to Zachary B. Feldman accompanying the delivery of his NSK passport, December 24, 2022.

Fig. 9
Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK), State in Time Passport, issued to the author, 2022.

no surprise that the "strongest" passports in this regard often correlate to the purchasing power of particular national currencies. Certain passports—and thus citizenship—encompass the social currency of mobility and indicate a ranked hierarchy of power on the international stage.[42] Moreover, the NSK State in Time passports blur the line between social reality and artist invention to a very real effect: Many Bosnians who lost their documentation in the chaos of the war sought NSK passports and used them to escape the country. Continuing well into the 2000s, NSK project leaders have noted a large influx of passport requests from Nigeria to flee from regions facing armed conflict.[43] While the passports may be "fake" in the eyes of other nation states, they have a real currency not dissimilar in ethos from *Notgeld*—they work in the moment.

The NSK State, defying geographic boundaries in favor for temporal ones, toys with the notion of state hegemony by mimicking its structure. Through the adoption of the state construction, NSK takes on both the utopian and dystopian elements of the state it parodies. The détournement in NSK's project, however, breaks the typical spatial boundaries with which we are familiar and instead proposes time as a unifying factor that defies geography. Both the NSK State and Everson's self-depictions as a prison guard reference institutional control over a boundary. On one side, the individual owns her own time, while on the other side she is indebted or controlled by the will of another. In other words, if time is money, the prison wall and the NSK state boundary in time determine how one's time is *spent*. While Everson's prison guard is just one individual caught in a system beyond his own control, the NSK critiques collectivism through the appropriation of the state structure. Teasing out the tension between free time and owned time; individualism and collectivism, and leisure and labor, these works re-present social reproduction to show us how it is structured to leverage time and the financialization of it. Time may be money, but it need not be.

42 One project that plainly demonstrates the cultural currency of certain passports is Tanja Ostojić's *Looking for a Husband with EU Passport* (2000–2005), in which the artist sought and found a husband online. Ostojić, who is Serbian, was able to move to the EU only after she married a German artist who connected with her through her online husband-searching platform.

43 Arns points out, rightfully, that Bosnia allowed this to occur because Bosnia, at that time, was not internationally recognized, and thus its citizens had no documentation. This was admittingly quite a different situation than the one in Nigeria. See Inke Arns, "The Nigerian Connection: On NSK Passports as Escape and Entry Vehicles," *e-flux*, Issue 34 (April 2012). https://www.e-flux.com/journal/34/68336/the-nigerian-connection-on-nsk-passports-as-escape-and-entry-vehicles/.

Kobby Adi, *hold*, 2021.

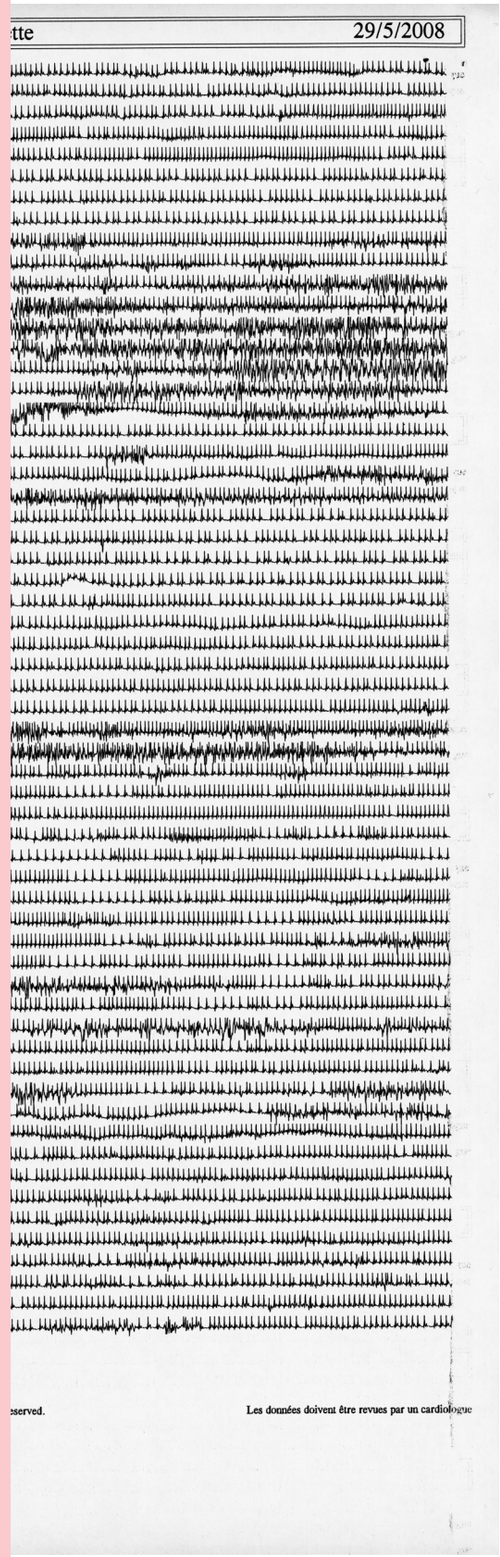
Kobby Adi's practice encompasses film, sculpture, and site-specific installation. Steeped in the politics and poetics of opacity and refusal, Adi's work centers the material constitution of objects—pulled from contemporary culture, personal narratives, and disparate cultural histories—interrogating their indeterminate and potentially fugitive communicative capacities. Pushing against the limits of hegemonic visual grammars, especially those that historically and ongoingly regulate racialized and colonial subjects, Adi's works give spectral form to the invisibilized processes that govern meaning-making in the spectacle-driven, image-saturated present.

Akin to his elusive films and sculptures, which assert their presence via corporeal absences and insist on their irreducibility via tactical withdrawals of meaning and narrative, Adi's installations similarly dislocate the fixed spatio-temporal boundaries of exhibition spaces. In doing so, Adi's practice not only engages with the materiality of objects but also the materiality of exhibition sites and their institutionalized protocols. For instance, in works such as *hold* (2021), which contains six DVD copies of a 16mm twelve second film made by Adi, viewers are able to rent one of the DVDs to view at home once they establish an oral contract with the gallery outlining the rental terms.

Public and private spheres, and their attendant temporalities, also collapse in works such as *Palm Wine Developer for B/W Motion Picture Film* (2023). Inconspicuously presented as a one-page document, which is then translated into the languages most spoken in the given exhibiting context, the work offers a recipe for developing celluloid film at home using palm wine. Given palm wine's charged use in West African ritualistic contexts (as a means of acknowledging and calling forth ancestral spirits and deities), the work attempts to enfold, perhaps impossibly, sacred indigenous temporalities into the disenchanted cinematic apparatus. Concerned less with the filmic image such a process would yield but rather with its puzzling material constitution, Adi's work calls into question the colonial temporal biases that separate what is "modern," "secular," and "rational" from what is not.

Kobby Adi, *hold*, 2021.

Kobby Adi, *Whiskey*, 2022.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Les données doivent être revues par un cardiologue

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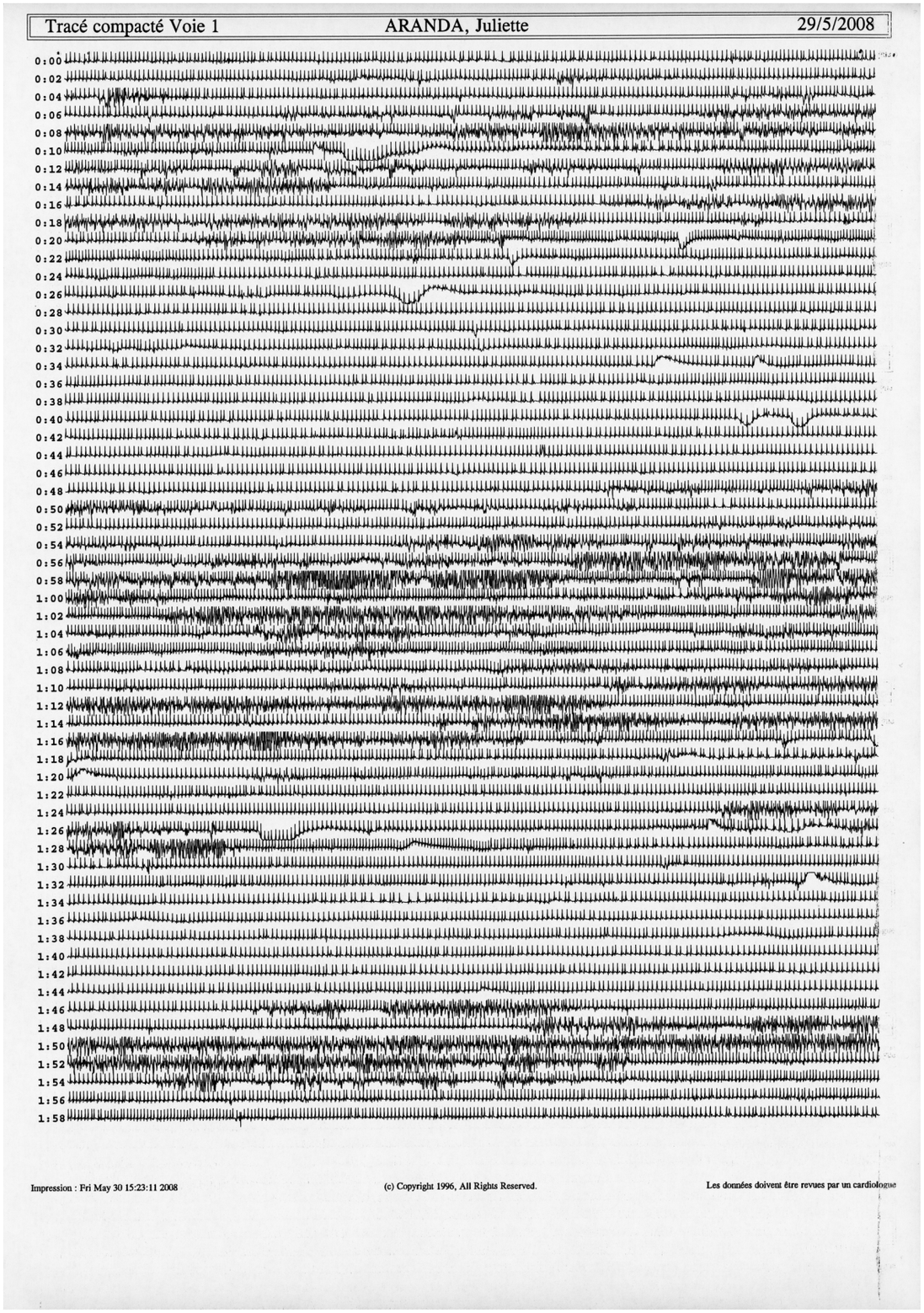
Julieta Aranda,
slowly
mulled over
matter, 2009.



Julieta Aranda,
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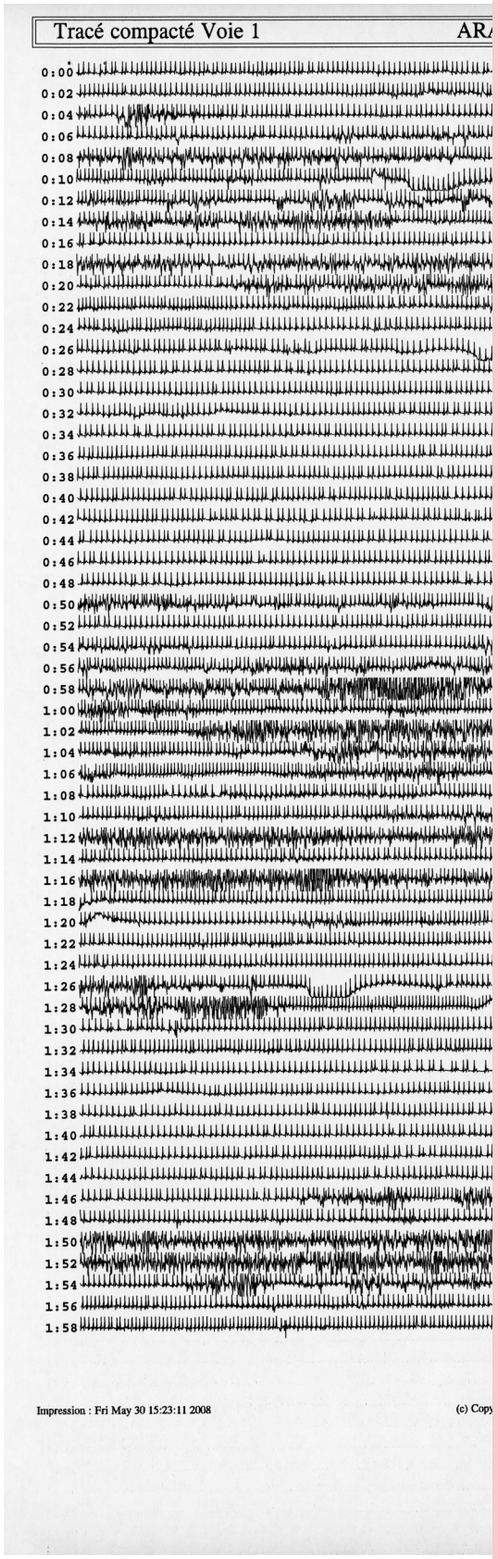


Julieta Aranda,
slowly
mulled over
matter, 2009.

beats along with her pulse, thus presenting two simultaneous alternative time scales—revolutionary time and the beat of one's own heart: a "ticker," if you will. In this exhibition, the viewer is invited to see and hear the intimate beat of Aranda's heart, as her body serves as a biological index of the twenty-four hour day on its own scale.

b. 1975 in Mexico City, Mexico.
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany,
and New York, NY, USA.

Presented for the first time in *Clocking Out* are materials pertaining to the production of what Aranda calls "un-clocks." On May 30th, 2008, at 3:16 pm, Aranda strapped an electrocardiograph (EKG) machine onto her chest. For the next twenty-four hours, the machine recorded and registered her pulse as she went about her daily tasks. Aranda lives with an arrhythmia heart condition that produces an irregular heartbeat. On view in *Clocking Out* are the raw data collected by this EKG, both visualized and sonified.

Aranda has actively produced work concerning themes of time and time-standardization for the better part of the last decade. Some of her most ambitious works on time include two installation sculptures in the Guggenheim Museum's collection, *Two shakes, a tick and a jiffy* (2009) and *Saving it for later* (2009). The former presents time in a ten hour decimal-based clock format (following the brief period of decimal-based time initiated in the aftermath of the French Revolution), while the latter work plays audio of Aranda's own heartbeat. The audio element from *Saving it for later* was then synched to the ten-hour clock's second hand so that Aranda's clock

Julieta Aranda & Anton Vidokle, stills from *Notes for a Time/Bank*, 2012.

Julieta Aranda & Anton Vidokle, stills from *Notes for a Time/Bank*, 2012.

e Gallery.

In Yto Barrada's series *Untitled (After Stella)* (2017–23), textiles are hand-dyed, cut, and then stitched together in patterns referencing Frank Stella's fluorescent series "Morocco" (1964–65). Stella created this series of paintings after returning from his honeymoon in the titular country, crediting the trip with informing the series' palette and naming conventions. Barrada—whose practice closely studies the histories of political science, personal agency, and place within and around Morocco—replaces the bright and fluorescent colors of Stella's Moroccan imaginary by recreating her works through natural-dyed and sewn strips of cloth.

Barrada turns a decolonial lens to the art history of Modernism and the industrialization of textiles to look at materiality as a record-keeper of representation. As wear and sun lighten and shift the colors of hand-dyed cloth, time and the natural world reveal their presence in Barrada's works, standing in sharp contrast to the synthetics of Stella's series. Synthetic pigments are identified by William Morris in "The Art of Dyeing" (a text referenced by Barrada herself) as products of the West, developed through industrialization and a capitalist temporality structured by mass consumer demand. These colors, in short, are concocted in and for a Western audience. When they are used in Stella's paintings they are not the colors of the place they describe, but those that describe a Morocco made after Stella's own image. Annotating Stella's take on color, Barrada's work mimics the forms of art history, yet steps outside its bounds.

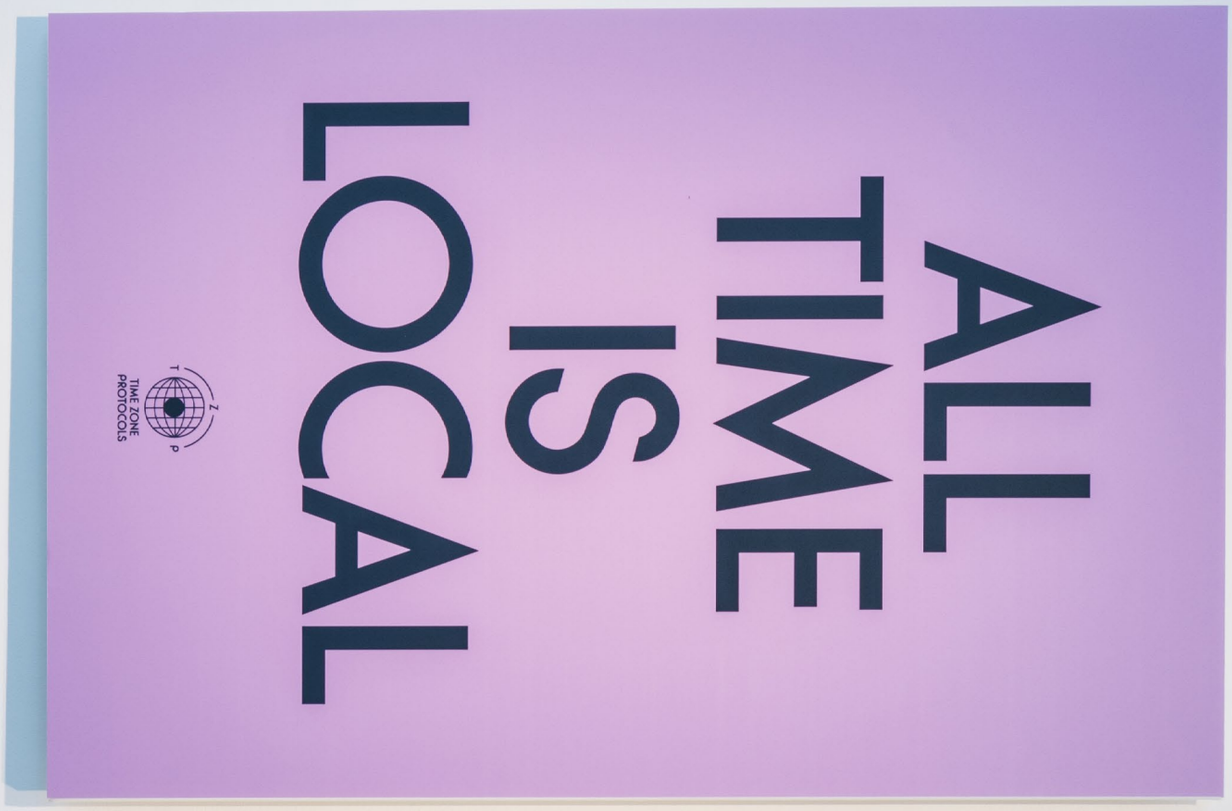
b. 1971 in Paris, France.
Lives and works in Tangier, Morocco, and New York, NY, US.

Yto Barrada, *Untitled (After Stella, New Marrakesh)*, 2023. Courtesy the artist and Pace Gallery.

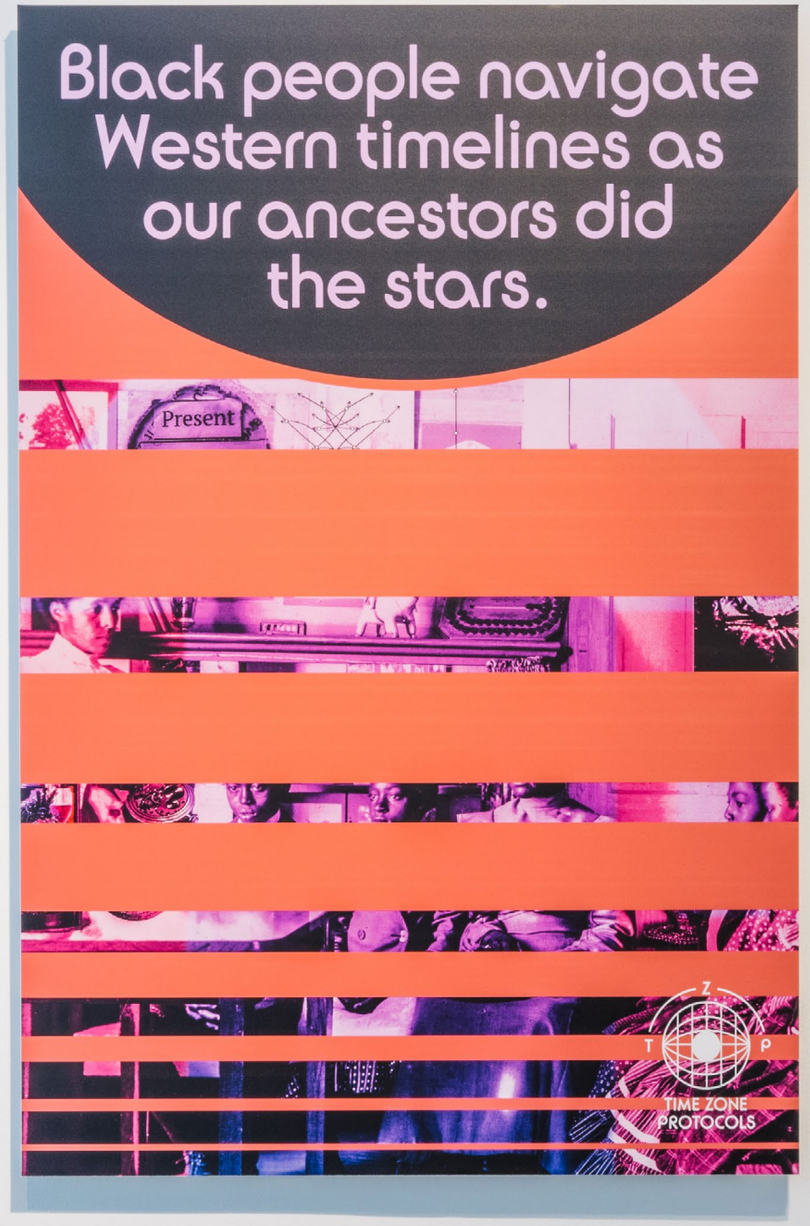
. Parsons School of Design,
st Center for Art and Politics.

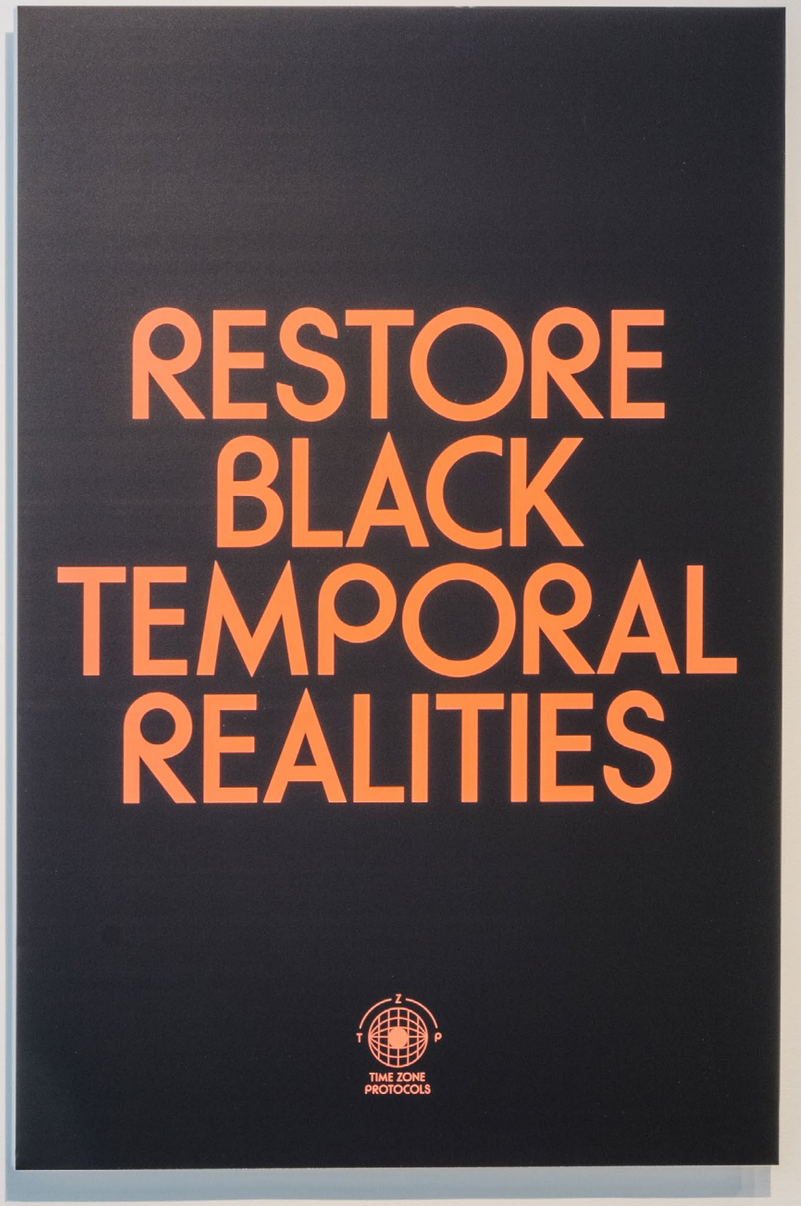
Black Quantum Futurism (BQF) is a multidisciplinary collective founded by Camae Ayewa and Rasheedah Phillips. Their research-based practice devises radical, alternative modalities of conceiving and relating to time and space. Through writing, film, music, and performance, BQF unsettles the racial and colonial structures that uphold hegemonic notions of linear time and universal progress. To realize their imaginative gestures of temporal transgression and reclamation, BQF draws on a wide range of sources and frameworks, including Afro-diasporic temporalities, quantum physics, housing futures, and speculative fiction.

In 2017, BFQ launched their ongoing *Time Zone Protocols* project, which addresses how Westernized time enables and perpetuates the subjugation of Black people living all around the world. In a subversive nod to the International Meridian Conference held in 1884 in Washington DC, which imposed an imperial order of standardized time zones on the globe, BFQ later organized the "Prime Meridian Unconference"(2022). BQF's posters and *Just in Timekit* (2022) prompt visitors to construct and imagine space-times that are not beholden to colonial temporal logics. The collective's accessible, text-based materials foreground the importance of pedagogy and community engagement, and allude to the frictional resistances of Black temporal agency—past, present, and future.



Rasheedah Phillips, detail from *Black Quantum Futurism: Time Zone Protocols*, 2022. Parsons School of Design, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery (April 4–18, 2022). Presented by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics. Photos by Da Ping Luo. Courtesy the Vera List Center.





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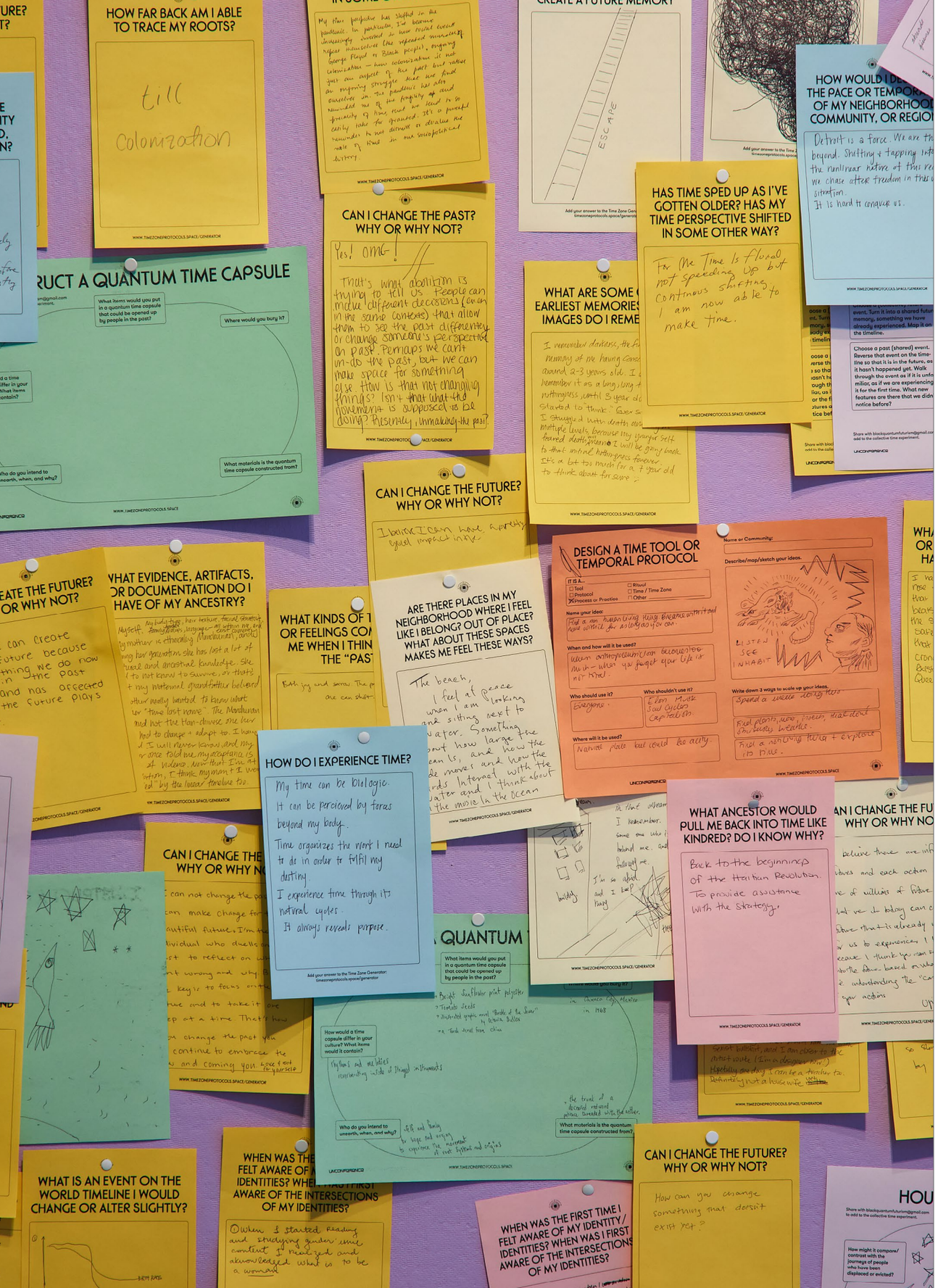

Left: Detail of "The Prime Meridian Unconference," presented as part of Rasheedah Phillips's *Time Zone Protocols* exhibition, a 2020–2022 Vera List Center Fellowship-commissioned project. Photo by Argenis Apolinario. Courtesy the Vera List Center.

Rasheedah Phillips, installation view of *Black Quantum Futurism: Time Zone Protocols*, 2022. Parsons School of Design, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery (April 4–18, 2022). Presented by the Vera List Center. Photos by Da Ping Luo. Courtesy the Vera List Center.

lacGarry, London.

38

Helen Cammock

b. 1970 in Staffordshire, United Kingdom.
Lives and works in Brighton and London,
United Kingdom.

Helen Cammock's practice enacts historically situated readings of contemporary places, narratives, and social formations. Spanning film, photography, print, text, and song, Cammock's works transform rigorous historical research into open-ended, poetic meditations that unearth marginalized voices from the past. The voice, for Cammock, is of central importance. Her works consistently pose the question of who speaks on behalf of whom and on what terms. Materializing history's irreducibly polyphonic character, her works adopt non-linear, fragmentary arcs that embrace imaginative leaps between disparate times, places, and figures.

Cammock's film, *They Call It Idlewild* (2020), examines the politics of labor by focusing on its elusive obverse, idleness. The work slowly reflects on what it means to be idle, especially under a neoliberal regime that mandates hyper-productivity. Cammock explores these themes by pairing still, observational shots of domestic interiors, roads, and natural landscapes with vocalized readings of writers and theorists such as Audre Lorde, Mary Oliver, James Joyce, and Jonathan Crary.

They Call It Idlewild also probes the racialized and class-based hypocrisies that haunt collective understandings of idleness. Soon after Cammock sings Johnny Mercer's "Lazy Bones," a depression-era song that perpetuates stereotypical associations of Blackness and laziness, she alludes to the exploitative and expropriative racial capitalist processes that made the lauded idleness of the European landed classes possible. Yet, investing idleness with agential valences of resistance and refusal, Cammock's work ponders how quotidian practices of idleness could suggest wayward modes of temporal reclamation.

Helen Cammock, still from *They Call It Idlewild*, 2020. Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry, London.

Helen Cammock, still from *They Call It Idlewild*, 2020. Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry, London.

Measures of Time

Countering the Clock, Troubling the Timeline

Most contemporary timekeeping devices one carries around or uses to furnish a home no longer produce any audible tick, yet the clock silently but steadily dictates daily rhythm. Clock time not only regulates work and leisure, but it also prompts or sanctions activities throughout the day, from eating and sleeping to sociality. The temporal orientation around the standardized twelve-hour clock—and the abstract, measurable, and homogenous time that it embodies—has become so naturalized and structuring of everyday life that one easily overlooks that its emplacement was a century-long process. This essay explores the performativity of timekeeping devices and how measurements of time are installed, lived, and contested. For the clock does not merely measure seconds, minutes, and hours as given entities—by marking each second, it enacts and produces the second as a measure of time. Similarly, the way in which the timeline represents a sequence of events instills the idea of time as linear. Mapping the historical formation and ideological underpinnings of the clock and the timeline, this essay examines how the representations and measurements of time produced by such devices can be disarticulated and rearticulated through artistic interventions.

In *Technics and Civilization* (1934), the American historian and philosopher of technology Lewis Mumford traces a genealogy of the clock from the routines of prayer and devotion in Western monasteries to its emergence as a tool of temporal discipline in service of capitalist society. Whereas the mechanical clocks did not appear and spread in

cities until the thirteenth century, Mumford argues that the regular striking of the bells in monasteries can be seen as an early prototype of measuring and regulating the routine of the day. The habit of order and regulation of time in the monasteries "helped to give human enterprise the regular collective beat and rhythm of the machine; for the clock is not merely a means of keeping track of the hours, but of synchronizing the actions of men."[1] The inception of clock towers in public space and the spread of watches endowed urban life with a new regularity and gave rise to new routines for work.

From the initial incentive to occasionally synchronize individuals for punctual actions, such as worship, the practice of timekeeping developed into a constant demand for synchronicity, to always be in and on time. In *Translating Time* (2009), film and media scholar Bliss Cua Lim notes that, for workers, the technology of timekeeping was from the very outset "experienced and resisted as a form of time-discipline, a means of controlling and standardizing the regularity, intensity, and length of periods of labor and intervals of leisure."[2] The rise of labor regimes informed by precise time regimentation coincided with, and further fueled, the upsurge of factory and workshop discipline. Clock technology was not merely used to mark when workers arrived and left the workplace, it was also employed to measure the worker's performance in the execution of specific movements. The surveillance and management of workers' bodies often involved the use of film and photography. This temporal discipline of labor comes to the fore in Kajsa Dahlberg's video *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force* (2015), where the artist intersperses archival footage of early movement analysis with new footage of workers and interviews that attest to how film, since its early days, has been utilized to scrutinize and improve bodily movements. Not only were records of workers compared to a normative measure of time spent on specific tasks, but the camera itself performed as a "clock for seeing," by means of which manual labor could be captured, divided into minimal components, and studied to be rendered more time-efficient.[3] Foregrounding the role of timekeeping in capitalist production and labor organization, Mumford contends that "the clock, not the steam-engine, is the key-machine of the modern industrial age."[4] Along these lines, capitalism might be examined not primarily as a materialist mode of production but rather as a regimentation of time.

The expansion of transportation and communication networks on a global scale instilled the need for, and the imposition of, a synchronized timekeeping in lieu of a multiplicity of incommensurable metrics of time. Instigated by the US railway industry in 1883 and the implementation of world standard time by the International Meridian Conference in 1884, the standardization of time was met with objection among both urban elites, rural workers, and people whose local solar time or other timekeeping practices were at odds with standardized time.[5] Protests against an imposed standard of time certainly

1 Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* (London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 1934), 13–14.

2 Bliss Cua Lim, *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 10.

3 The poetic formulation "clocks for seeing" is borrowed from Roland Barthes as he ponders on the mechanical click emitted by the camera when the shutter goes off. See Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1982), 15.

4 Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, 14.

5 Ryan Gurney & Bliss Cua Lim, "The Culture of Time: An Interview with Bliss Cua Lim," in *Octopus*, June 15, 2011. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7st582p7 (retrieved 01/11/2023).

arise in response to the uprooting of customs, yet the refusal to adopt a new metrics of time can also be understood as a resistance to the exercise of power made manifest through the imposition of such a standard. When long-standing temporal organizations become the symbol of hegemonic regimes, strategies of rearticulating and disarticulating time become more than a recalcitrant attitude toward efficiency. For instance, following the French Revolution, there was an attempt to discard the twelve-hour clock system in favor of decimal time (described as "revolutionary time") which had ten hours per day, with hundred minutes per hour, and hundred seconds per minute. Less constructive than this proposed alternative, Walter Benjamin recounts how, during the second French Revolution of 1830, Parisian revolutionaries were said to have fired on clocks in towers—symbolically attempting to arrest time itself. An eyewitness, relayed by Benjamin, compares the revolutionaries, who try to make the clocks stop, to the biblical figure Joshua, who made time stand still by asking God to stop the movement of the sun.[6] Benjamin situates this iconoclastic act as an attempt to produce a radical break in the current order, to make the "continuum of history explode."[7]

While clock technology itself revolutionized—and remains an integral part of—capitalist production, equally transformative, if not more radical, is the pervasive effect that the clock has had on perceptions of time. The hours, minutes, and seconds that the clock performatively brings forth are all measurements which, as Mumford writes, "dissociated time from human events and helped create the belief in an independent world of mathematically measurable sequences."[8] Clock time was—and still is—alien to the fluctuations and shifting tempos that characterize the subjective experience of time. Altered by excitement and rest, the beat of the heart varies throughout the day and is at odds with the rigid and regular ticking of the clock. Even as the length of daylight shifts throughout the year, the clock's organization of the day remains seemingly unchanged. Despite objection and a sense of alienation, the regime of the clock proved so pervasive that, as Mumford argues, "abstract time became the new medium of existence."[9] It is precisely by becoming so ingrained in human existence that the twelve-hour clock masks the historical and cultural contingency of its measurement.

: : :

From afar, Finnegan Shannon's *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?* (2021) might appear as a standard clock, but upon closer look, the clock has only one hand and the face of the circle-shaped dial is split between the seven days of the week, each spelled out in capital letters [fig. 1]. Advancing with a slowness that renders its movement imperceptible, the hand takes a week to make a full revolution. Even if the clock technically remains accurate, it becomes useless for someone in

6 "In the July revolution an incident occurred which showed this consciousness still alive. On the first evening of fighting it turned out that the clocks in towers were being fired on simultaneously and independently from several places in Paris. An eye-witness, who may have owed his insight to the rhyme, wrote as follows: Qui le croirait! on dit, qu'irrités contre l'heure / De nouveaux Josués au pied de chaque tour, / Tiraient sur les cadrans pour arrêter le jour." Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken, 1969), 262.

7 Walter Benjamin "Theses on the Philosophy of History," 262.

8 Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, 15.

9 Ibid.

need of a precise indication of hours and minutes, around which most schedules are structured. A niche—even gimmicky—commodity, the day clock is marketed as a retirement gift or decoration for the vacation home, catering to people and places where exact timekeeping has lost its relevance, as it were. Playfully disjointed from the routine measure of daily life, this clock now strangely brings to mind the altered temporality that many experienced during the Covid pandemic, where the question "what day is it today?" suddenly seemed more pertinent than "what time is it?"

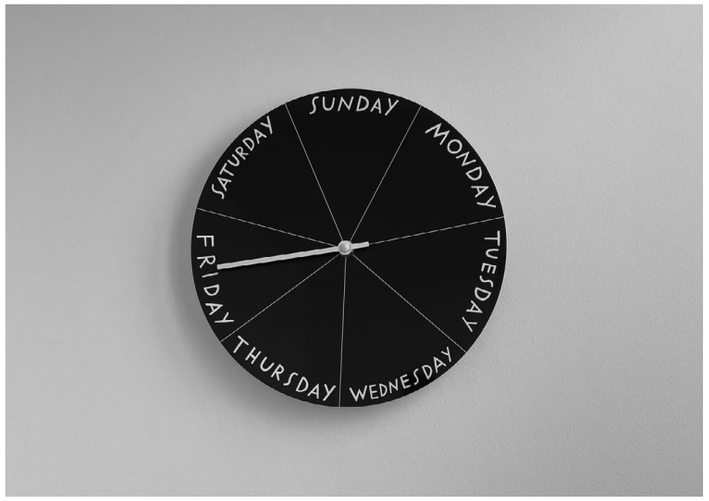

Fig. 1.
Finnegan Shannon, *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?*, 2021. Photo by Ulrich Gebert. Courtesy the artist and Deborah Schamoni.

Strategically placed in exhibition venues, Shannon's tweaked version of this commodity becomes an invitation to live time differently, propelling us into another temporal regime, wherein hours and minutes no longer count. The work's installation often marks places where visitors can rest or wait—areas that are often far too few in contemporary exhibition design, and that are particularly necessary for visitors who might suffer from standing over long periods of time. Shannon's day clocks attest to how art institutions and their furniture often fail to meet the needs of bodies they anticipate as their audience.[10] The clock series emerged from the artist's experience of living with disability and a sense of being out of synch with the speed of others in public space. *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?* not only speaks to how people with disabilities or chronic illnesses experience time differently, but it also underscores how failing to cope with the normative temporality—whether unwillingly or deliberately—might make its tacit regime tangible as the deviation from the norm is felt. "Crip time," as a radical proposition that emerges from the temporal experience of disability, can be turned into a locus and a lens of critique.[11] Through a reversal of the terms, "crip time" points us to the

10 Even as lengthy moving-image work and other durational formats become increasingly common in exhibitions, the way in which gallery spaces are designed still privileges walking and standing, whereas lounging, resting and activities of leisure are relegated to areas away from the art. In their historical study of the museum bench, Fuss and Sanders poignantly note how the reduction or elimination of seating devices in the modern exhibition is coterminous with the notion that the appreciation of art is a matter of disembodied spectatorship. See Diana Fuss & Joel Sanders, "An Aesthetic Headache: Notes from the Museum Bench," in Johanna Burton, Lynne Cooke, and Josiah McElheny (eds.), *Interiors, CCS Readers: Perspectives on Art and Culture* (Annandale-on-Hudson, NY: Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College/Sternberg Press, 2012).

11 In her nonfiction essay on "crip time" and its relationship to normative timeframes, Ellen Samuels quotes her friend Alison Kiefer who says that "rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds." See Ellen Samuels, "Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time," *Disability Studies Quarterly (DSQ)* 37, No. 3 (2017), https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/5824/4684.

malfunctioning inherent to normative temporality, which affects not only people with disabilities, but is a generalized and shared condition that hits everyone, albeit to different extents.

Under neoliberal capitalism, most people suffer from the pressure of speed inflicted by the capitalist drive to increase productivity and the accumulation of value. In *24/7*, Jonathan Crary critically notes the dissolution of boundaries between work and non-work time brought about by the increased "temporal alignment" of the individual with the relentless workings of the financial market. Crary shows how today's permanently operating communication and circulation networks have made possible a "broader and much fuller integration of the human subject with the 'constant continuity' of a 24/7 capitalism."[12] The imperative to do more, better, and faster permeates almost all spheres of our life with detrimental effects on both physical and mental well-being. Crary depicts an anxious world in which seconds are subdivided at an almost molecular level to the benefit of capitalist accumulation against which Shannon's clock—which reabsorbs seconds, minutes, hours, into the broader category of days—posits a measure of time commensurate with a kind of love.

Still, the ever-increasing pressure of speed presents itself as a paradox—even as new technologies help to save time in daily undertakings, one still experiences a deficit of time. The list of things one sets out to accomplish—or is expected to do—grows faster than the capacity to invent new forms of so-called "timesaving." Yet, the very idea of timesaving only emerges within the paradigm of a homogenous and measurable time. It pertains to a new economy of time bound up with the metrics of the clock. As Mumford puts it, "when one thinks of time, not as a sequence of experience, but as a collection of hours, minutes and seconds, the habits of adding time and saving time come into existence. Time took on the character of an enclosed space: it could be divided, it could be filled up, it could be even expanded by the invention of labor-saving instruments."[13] Within neoliberal capitalism, many individuals deliberately subject themselves to temporal discipline by using ever-new techniques and tools for time-management to cope with the demand for increased efficiency. Time-management is ultimately a highly ambivalent form of self-government, whereby allegedly emancipatory tools partake in the submission to a harmful temporal regime. In line with what Crary diagnoses of the "relentless financialization of previously autonomous spheres of social activity,"[14] an acute awareness of how time is "spent" encroaches on one's supposedly free or spare time. Timekeeping turns into timeserving.

Shannon's clock does not annul clock time. After all, the imperceptibly slow-moving hand still obeys standardized time, but it produces an estranging effect that denaturalizes the givenness of the clock's measurement and proposes another experience of speed, or a relieving lack thereof. The interference with the scale of the clock's measurement—stretching a full revolution from twelve hours to a

12 Jonathan Crary, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* (New York, NY: Verso, 2013), 74.

13 Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, 17.

14 Crary, *24/7*, 74.

whole week—has a critical force comparable to the one Benjamin saw in the film's use of enlargement and isolation, slow-motion and acceleration. Through such cinematographic techniques, Benjamin argues that film does not merely render more precise what was already visible, it also reveals entirely new structural formations or qualities in the subject it depicts, thereby endowing audiences with the means to not only see but to act on the world they encounter through this expanded lens.[15] In a similar vein, Shannon's intervention draws the exhibition goer's attention to the clock, whose ubiquity had until then made it pass unnoticed, and opens up a space for contestation of the way in which clock time rules the very notion of daily life. *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?* détourns a clock commodity catered to those with the luxury of not having to keep track of hours and minutes, putting the device at the service of a critique of the unsustainable pace of neoliberal capitalism, and its regimentation of an ever-shifting sense of what it means to be a standard, productive subject. Shannon's day clock is an invitation to shift gears, move slower, and resist the impetus to be efficient at the cost of one's own well-being. By intervening in the hegemony of standardized clock time, *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?* momentarily suspends its order and indicates another relationship to temporality.

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Perhaps more deeply rooted than the measurement of time enacted by the clock is an underlying conception of time as linear. In colloquial expressions, one speaks of intervals of time and refer to the past as something situated behind, whereas the future lies ahead. Both visual and linguistic descriptions of time often resort to the spatial mediation of the line. Theorist W.J.T. Mitchell presents it as an unavoidable fact that "spatial form is the perceptual basis of our notion of time, that we literally cannot 'tell time' without the mediation of space."[16] But is it really the case that one cannot perceive time outside of spatial forms, or does this not rather point to the problem that our representations of time heavily shape the perception of time itself? This is one of the concerns addressed by the French philosopher Henri Bergson, who famously denounced a tendency to "project time into space" at play both in classic mechanics and ordinary representations of time.[17] Following Bergson, using space to describe time is symptomatic of a more fundamental confusion of time and space, which is untrue to the nature of time. In *Time and Free Will* (1889), Bergson takes pain to show that our experience of time, which he names duration (*durée*), is a "succession without distinction" of heterogenous states of consciousness that permeate each other.[18] By representing time as a measurable and divisible succession of discrete moments, one ultimately confounds it with the "empty homogenous medium" of space.[19]

Clocks paradigmatically illustrate this spatializing tendency, as

15 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken, 1969), 235-36.

16 W.J.T. Mitchell, "Spatial Form in Literature: Toward a General Theory," *The Language of Images* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 274.

17 Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. by F. L. Pogson (London, United Kingdom: George Allen and Unwin, 1910), 101.

18 Ibid., 101.

19 Ibid., 95.

the progress of their hands across the radial face translates the flux of time into a movement through space. Whereas the clock visually represents the passing of time, the timeline is a ubiquitous illustration of events in an already passed time, and of history, to some extent. For the authors of *Cartographies of Time* (2010), "the timeline seems among the most inescapable metaphors we have. And yet, in its modern form, with a single axis and a regular, measured distribution of dates, it is a relatively recent invention... As a norm, as an ideal standard of what history *looks like*, the timeline does not appear until modernity."[20] Offering a totalizing overview and often teleological account of events, the timeline resonates with the ideas of the Enlightenment as it "provided an intuitive visual analogue for concepts of historical progress that were becoming popular during the eighteenth century."[21] Using the spatial mediation of the line, the time represented by the timeline is just as abstract and divisible as clock time. More precisely, the timeline embodies the "homogenous, empty time" that Benjamin denounces as the basis of the concept of historical progress, and which must be dismantled as the starting point of any critique of progress.[22] As a powerful and reductive representation of time, the timeline not only has repercussions on the understanding of historical time, but also on experiential temporality. How else might we look back onto our own pasts as an unfolding, but also a folding, of events?

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Timelining (2014), a performance by artist duo Gerard & Kelly (Brennan Gerard and Ryan Kelly), unsettles the unidirectional, single axis timeline in an exploration of the interwoven histories of two people through writing, movement, and speech [fig. 2]. In each iteration, a pair of performers involved in an intimate relationship—be it a romantic couple, siblings, a parent and a child, close friends, or ex-lovers—walk alongside each other in a circular shape. One says, "now," and starts to recount their individual chronology from the present backwards. As this performer loses momentum, the other takes over and narrates their own chronology from the moment in time where the first performer left off.

Timelining is as much a practice as a performance. As part of the "transmission" of the piece, performers do a series of writing and movement exercises. The first exercise involves a free association of memorable events, written down following the repetitive structure of "I remember...I remember...I remember...." The writing exercises culminate in a score, developed in collaboration with Gerard & Kelly, that serves as a structure for the spoken material of the performance. The movements follow a game-like score with rules of call and response framed by an "if...then..." structure, where the action of one performer triggers the other to change direction, stand still, move simultaneously, or relocate in relation to one another. The choreography visually echoes the audible interweaving of the spoken chronologies. Like a

20 Anthony Grafton & Daniel Rosenberg, *Cartographies of Time: A History of the Timeline* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010), 14-15.

21 Grafton & Rosenberg, *Cartographies of Time*, 19-20.

22 "The concept of the historical progress of mankind cannot be sundered from the concept of its progression through a homogeneous, empty time. A critique of the concept of such a progression must be the basis of any criticism of the concept of progress itself." Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," 261.

Fig. 2.
Gerard & Kelly, performance view of *Timelining*, 2014. The Kitchen, New York, 2014.
Performed by Lissy Vomáčka and Anna Vomáčka. Photo by Ian Douglas. © Adagp Paris, 2023.

recursive spiraling into the past, the pair moves, clockwise and counterclockwise. At times, they fall out of synch, drift apart and reunite. Shared memories that link the two performers are foregrounded, like knots in the interlacing of their lives, pointing to how any individual's timeline is shaped in relationship to significant others. The score also remains sensitive to its environment since it is the arrival of a viewer in the space that catalyzes the performance to start from "now." Each time a new viewer enters the space, the narration is propelled back into the present.

A narrator can tell time differently than a graphic line, yet the performers in *Timelining* verbally cite the spatial parameters of the timeline by using "in front of" between every memory or significant event as if to expose the device. For example:

> Up all night in Echo Park in front of hit a parked car, didn't leave a note
> Hit a parked car, didn't leave a note in front of read Douglas Crimp's essays on AIDS
> Read Douglas Crimp's essays on AIDS in front of confused how I felt about gay marriage
> Confused how I felt about gay marriage in front of DOMA repealed[23]

This suite of memories illustrates how the chronologies in *Timelining* swiftly move between different registers. Here, the performer passes from a memorable night out, to an incident, to a formative reading experience, to an affective state, to a legal affair, in a way that highlights how juridical and political matters bleed into lived experience and our personal paths.

Conceptually, *Timelining* can be situated in the legacy of Felix Gonzalez-Torres' *"Untitled"* portrait pieces which manifest like thin friezes of dates and words that denote decisive events in the life of the portraited person.[24] Initially selected by Gonzalez-Torres in collaboration with the person the portrait depicts, the events may be changed with each new iteration of the piece. This constitutive alterability of the piece is not merely a formal decision, but it also attests to the "deferred action" of psychic temporality, accounting for how events of the past gain meaning and significance retroactively in the light of the present.[25] The events that will-have-been important in one's history may change as memories are constantly revised and worked through by the subject. Whereas the dates make each *"Untitled"* portrait legible as a timeline, Gonzalez-Torres subverts its conventions by interrupting the strictly chronological succession of personal memories through the insertion of anachronisms and political events.

Sharing a similar set of concerns regarding the openness of any individual "timeline" to both political events and retroactive resignifications, Gerard & Kelly's *Timelining* proposes a representation of chronology that is neither static nor strictly linear. Recasting the noun "timeline" into a present participle, *Timelining* takes the timeline out of its thingliness and turns it into a continuous action. A choreography of intertwined histories, the performance spatializes the recursive retrospection into memory, but eschews the straight line by re-presenting the flow of time in circular, multidirectional movements and speech marked by gaps and leaps. As one performer often evokes the other performer, each individual chronology is constantly rearticulated in relation to the other. It provides an image of how subjectivity is formed and reformed in relation to others as we recount and reperform ourselves in the "now."

In his account of how the subject rearticulates its own history, Jacques Lacan turns to the grammatical tense "future anterior," a strange compound that disjunctively holds futurity and antecedence, denoting an action or event that will have been accomplished in the future. "What is realized in my history," Lacan writes, "is not the past definitive of what it was, since it is no more, or even the present perfect of what has been in what I am, but the future anterior of what I shall have been for what I am in the process of becoming."[26] The image of history that Lacan presents—understood as rememoration—allows for mutation through a future-orientated re-engagement with the past. Yet, the future anterior not only concerns how the meaning of one's past changes over time, but it rather names the potential configuration of the new within an interpretation of the past. The past does not determine what one is, or even what one is becoming, rather the work of retrospective interpretation allows the subject to partake in its own becoming. Gerard & Kelly recuperate aspects of the Lacanian approach to a future-oriented retrospection but uses it as a narrative device in a way that emphasizes how rememoration in both analysis and art creates something new. The result is a dialectic working-through of one's own chronology as something never fully accomplished but

23 Excerpt from Gerard & Kelly, "*Timelining* Tool Kit," revised November 20, 2017.

24 Andrea Rosen, "'Untitled' (Neverending Portrait)," in Dietmar Elger (ed.), *Felix Gonzalez-Torres Catalogue Raisonné* (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 1997), 44–59.

25 For an extensive discussion on the psychoanalytical concept of "deferred action" (*Nachträglichkeit*), see Jean Laplanche & Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (London, United Kingdom: Hogarth Press, 1973), 111-14. In this essay, I use the retrospective resignification of the past in psychoanalysis as an analogy to think through retrospection as an artistic strategy.

26 Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co, 2006), 247.

recursively rewritten. Through time-leaping movements and intersubjective intersections, *Timelining* disrupts the habitual measurement of the timeline and generates an image of what rememoration may look like.

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Despite their disparate expressions and strategies, what the estranging alteration of speed in Shannon's day clock and the disruptive rearticulation of the timeline in Gerard & Kelly's *Timelining* have in common is a way of inhabiting the representational device that they dismantle from within. Neither subscribing to nor fully abolishing the representations imposed by the clock and the timeline, they use them as material and form to expose the device. Whereas Shannon's clock simultaneously makes us acutely aware of the time pressure that clock time can exert and offers respite from it, Gerard & Kelly move us away from a temporal economy in which time is saved or spent, gesturing towards a notion of time that is primarily shared.

The ambiguity of the notion of a shared time—whether as a shared measurement of time or time spent together—gestures towards the vicissitudes of timekeeping. Sharing a measurement of time presents itself as a necessity for our practical needs, not only for work schedules, global communication, and transport networks, but also for social and personal life wherein the sharing of time is what makes up our being with others. The homogenous time of the clock will never be able to properly measure the simultaneously mutual and heterogenous time that we live in and with each other. As Lim argues, clock time can only ever be seen as a "socially objectivated temporality" and, in keeping with Bergson, "one that remains 'indispensable but inadequate'—a necessary illusion that must be exposed."[27] An accrued awareness of how representations of time shape our experience thereof may suffice to help us turning away from self-inflicted time-management to foster a more sustainable relationship to time beyond the detrimental logics of capitalist temporality. As timekeepers, the works by Finnegan Shannon and Gerard & Kelly attune their audience to the tick of the clock unmediated by the pressures of neoliberal efficiency—a time rearticulated with the incommensurate rhythms of different individuals sharing time and space with one another.

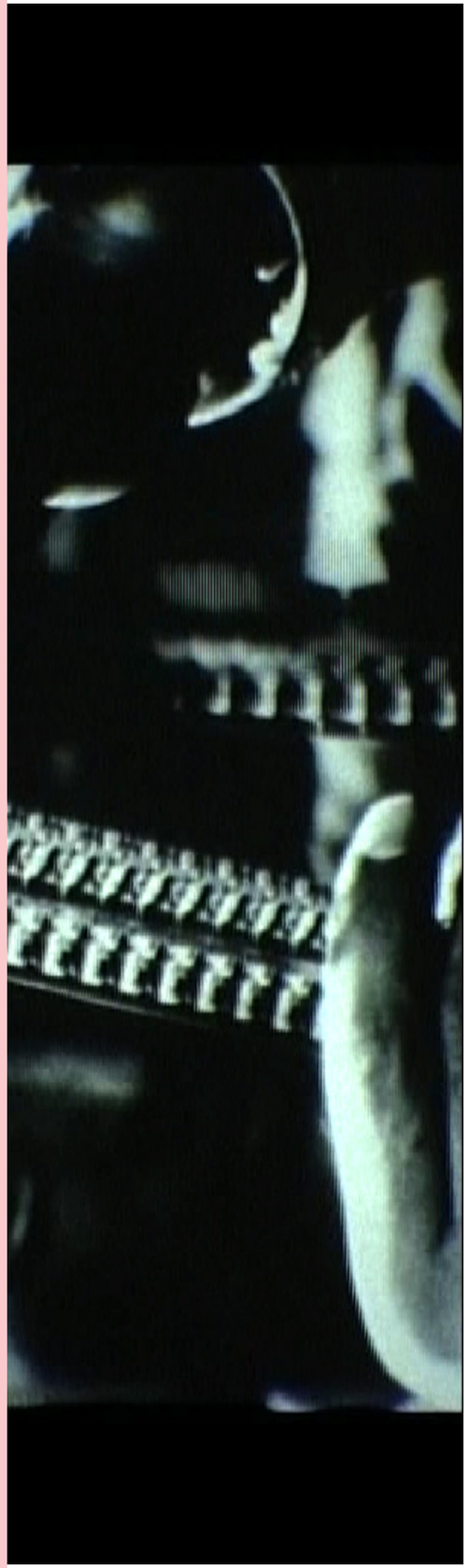
27 Lim, *Translating Time*, 10.

Maria Chávez is known for her abstract turntable works, as well as her practices as a sound artist and DJ. Working through experiments with chance and failure to limn the metaphysics of soundscapes, Chávez reimagines the sonic environment as a space that at once inhabits and is freed from material confines. The artist builds multifaceted compositions by culling strategies from historically subversive music genres. One score, for example, might apply chopped and screwed techniques of Houston hip hop to attenuate tempo as a means of generating new forms of perception. For her *HyperMemory* performances, Chávez layers field recordings from natural environments, sonically composing an architecture that both does and does not exist.

For Chávez, the act of aural layering parallels the accretion of geological strata and sedimentation. Sound is compacted in a soundtrack to overwhelm a listener. The artist thinks through both the limits and biases of a hearing human ear, as well as how the presumed superiority of a particular range contributes to the social hierarchies of the world through perception. In her sculptural practice, the artist carves enlarged microscopic images of record grooves in white Carrara marble—an ancient material that emblematizes the Eurocentric tendencies of canonical Art History. Like models of mountain ranges, the sculptures monumentalize the haptics of sound and memorialize that which is imperceivable to the visual senses.

b. 1980 in Lima, Peru.
Lives and works in New York, NY, USA

Maria Chávez performing an iteration of *Hyper Memory Installation*, n.d.



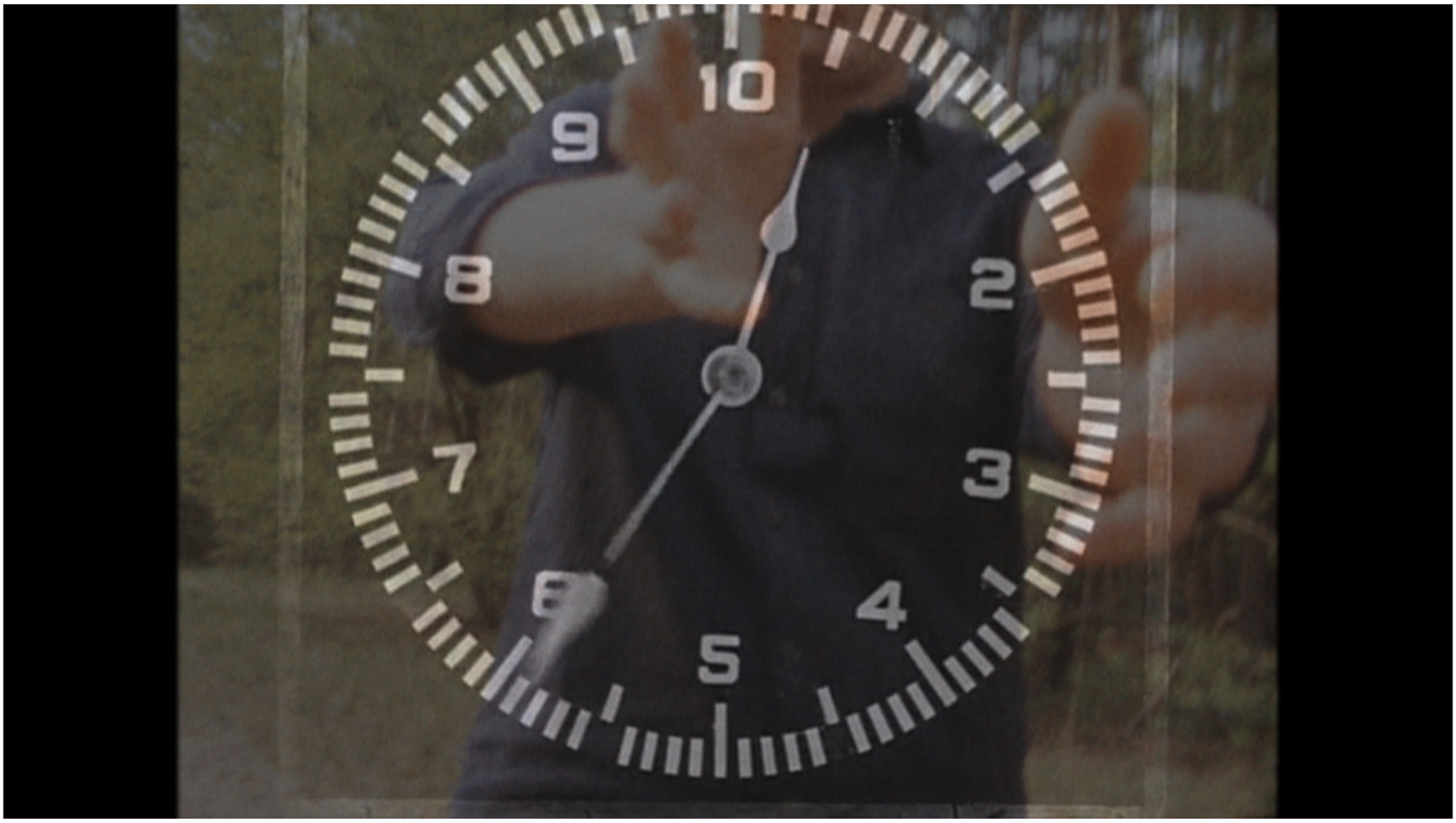
Kajsa Dahlberg, still from *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force*, 2015.

b. 1973 in Gothenburg, Sweden.
Lives and works in Oslo, Norway.

Kajsa Dahlberg's long-term research projects tend to manifest as videos and installations, in which she addresses questions of storytelling, politics of representation, and labor conditions. Often departing from documentary material, Dahlberg is interested in how narratives are constructed and mediated. A recurrent feature in Dahlberg's exploration of various subject-matter is the foregrounding of the media she uses as well as the conditions of the making of the artwork.

In *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force* (2015), Dahlberg examines how the camera has been used to perform a temporal discipline of labor. Since its early days, film has been mobilized in scientific experiments to analyze and optimize human movements. Systems like the Methods–Time Measurement marked a radical shift in attitudes towards manual labor as each bodily gesture engaged in the production (such as those referenced in the film's title) could be isolated and studied to be rendered more time-efficient. Dahlberg brings together archival footage of such movement analysis with interviews by workers, labor organizers, and advocates of the tools of time-discipline. Taking its own means of production as a starting point, *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force* investigates labor conditions and regimentation of time for workers in Amazon warehouses, Apple manufacturers in China, smaller-scale parcel deliveries, and precarious freelance translators. Hence, the film also reflects on the fabrication and acquisition of the technology that undergirds it, and technology's own imbrication in the politics of time.

Kajsa Dahlberg, still from *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force*, 2015.

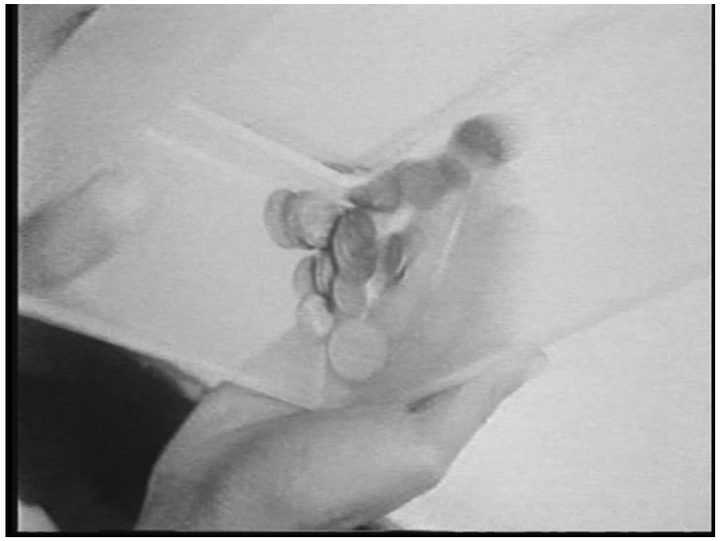


Kajsa Dahlberg, stills from *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force*, 2015.

b. 1965 in Mansfield, OH, USA.
Lives and works in Charlottesville, VA, USA.

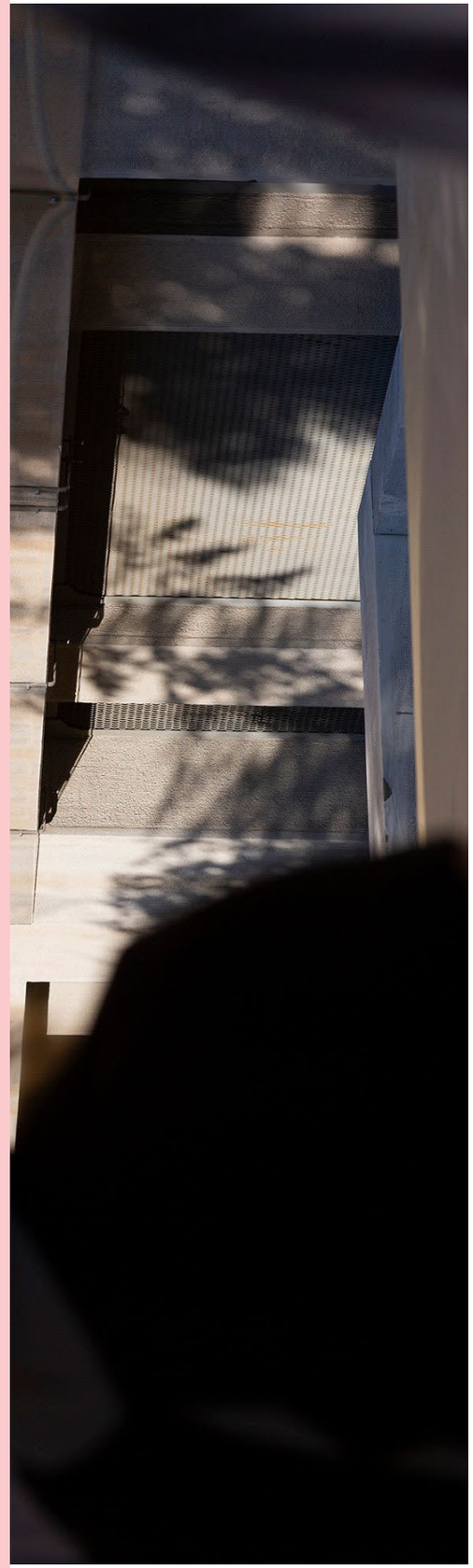
Since the late 1990s, filmmaker and visual artist Kevin Jerome Everson has created a vast body of filmic works combining documentary, archival, and scripted footage. With an observational tone, but thoroughly composed frames, Everson primarily portrays the everyday life and experiences of Black Americans in films that seem to eschew clear-cut narratives and representations. The two short films exhibited in *Clocking Out* depict distinct labor realities. In *Workers Leaving the Job Site* (2013), Everson transposes the emblematic scene of workers leaving the factory from the Lumière brothers' 1895 film into a job site in contemporary Mississippi, where Black Americans wearing high-visibility jackets stream out of a building one after another. In *Second Shift* (1999), one of Everson's earliest films, the camera follows a guard—played by the filmmaker himself—who arrives at work at a prison. Omitting the actual job shift, the montage foregrounds fragments of how the worker arrives for his shift and later leaves. Alternating between tightly cropped shots of the guard's torso as he moves through diverse security controls and close-ups of his hand putting coins in a tray, the film puts emphasis on the mundane tasks involved in the daily work routine. By pairing these films, the exhibition ponders on a continuity between the factory and the carceral complex as labor realities, hinting towards how, by the end of the 1990s and as an outcome of the transition towards a post-industrial economy, the local prison came to be a major employer in cities such as Mansfield, Ohio, where Everson grew up.

Kevin Jerome Everson, still from *Workers Leaving the Job Site*, 2013.



Kevin Jerome Everson, stills from *Second Shift*, 1999.

Brendan Fernandes



Brendan Fernandes, performance view of *A Solo Until We Can Dance Again*, 2021. Hellenic Parliament + NEON, Athens, Greece (June 11–December 31, 2021). Photo by Natalia Tsoukala. Courtesy the artist and NEON.

b. 1979 in Nairobi, Kenya.
Lives and works in Chicago, IL, USA.

Drawing on ballet technique, queer culture, and socio-political movements, projects by the Kenyan-Indian-Canadian artist Brendan Fernandes often manifest as performance, installation, sculpture, and video. In forms that build on collaboration with dancers and performers, Fernandes addresses issues such as mastery and submission, displacement and fluctuating identities, acts of resistance and political protest.

Investigating the dance floor as an ambivalent space of both exposure and increased agency, the artist's pieces often invite the audience to join in with the dance as a way of fostering collective movement and solidarity across communities. *A Solo Until We Can Dance Again* (2021) emerged during the Covid-19 pandemic, in a moment when the need for contact and intimacy was heavily compromised. Restaged for *Clocking Out*, this work prompts audiences with the question "Imagine/Without Fear/What Is Tomorrow?" and invites them to write on a gray, marley dance floor that lies on an elevated, stage-like platform.

At the closing of the exhibition, a dancer will activate the platform with an improvised choreography that draws on the audience's inscriptions. Like a living monument, multiple imagined futures are given form through the dancer's singular embodiment. In this iteration of the performance, the fear that audiences are asked to put aside when imagining tomorrow speaks less to pandemic conditions and more to the ongoing societal crises and geopolitical tensions that render the present unstable. Now that one can celebrate and dance together again, the *Solo* becomes the catalyst of a moment of collectively imagining future socio-political alternatives to the here and now.

Brendan Fernandes, performance view of *A Solo Until We Can Dance Again*, 2021. Hellenic Parliament + NEON, Athens, Greece (June 11–December 31, 2021). Photo by Natalia Tsoukala. Courtesy the artist and NEON.

Brendan Fernandes, performance view of *A Solo Until We Can Dance Again*, 2021. Hellenic Parliament + NEON, Athens, Greece (June 11–December 31, 2021). Photo by Natalia Tsoukala. Courtesy the artist and NEON.

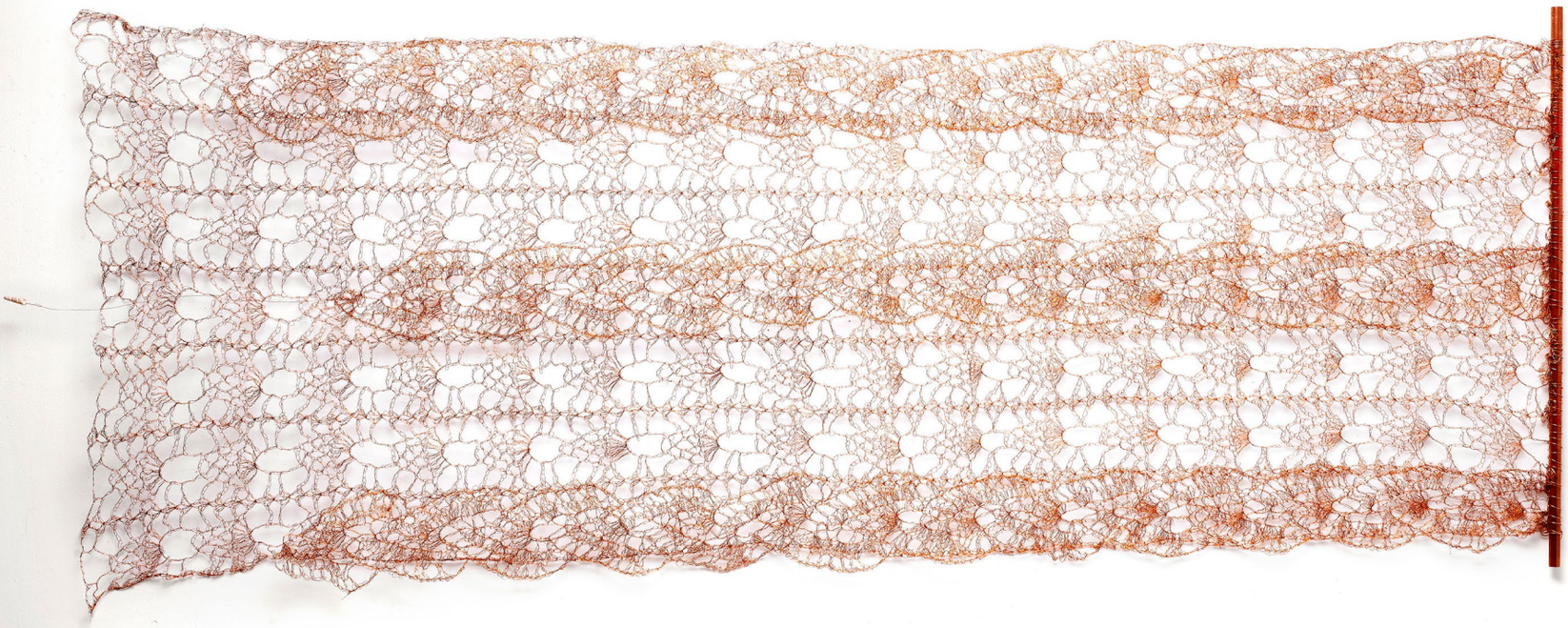
ektor garcia

b. 1985 in Red Bluff, CA, USA.
Lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico.

The temporary yet final forms of ektor garcia's work precipitate out of the contingent material and social contingencies that form during the multi-phase production of the objects themselves. Through direct contact with the sources of the fibers, yarns, metals, as well as various textile traditions, each resulting iteration bears traces of a nomadic methodology of making and moving. Yarn travels well, and throughout the course of a work's development, it is often knotted and then unknotted. When exhibited, it is rarely shown the same way twice. It is through these procedures of making and unmaking on a timeline that remains intentionally inconclusive that garcia records a social cartography of material movement and upends received understandings of the discrete or autonomous art object.

Copper works, such as *Portal DF/SF* (2021), depart from a matrix of consumer-consumption situated in the textile industry. This copper-crochet technique envisions a different kind of supply chain in both senses of the word, one that also links the material to the personal by denoting the identity-constructing systems that garcia passes when traveling throughout Central and South American to be with close family and friends.

Meanwhile, some works memorialize the textile's ephemerality—such as his projects where crochet pieces coated in wax are cast and burned out to allow for bronze to be poured into the mold. Memorializing the fabric in statue while simultaneously burning it away, garcia raises questions of visibility around making: what does it mean to memorialize a square of fabric that, through its material and mode of construction, symoblically links an artist's lifetime to that of gendered and racialized labor? Can looking at the material links between places, products, and people disrupt or level the hierarchies enforced upon those who partake therein?



ektor garcia, *Portal DF/SF*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco.

b. 1989 in Tangier, Morocco.
Lives and works in London, United Kingdom.

Working across photography, film, and installation, Hicham Gardaf investigates the impacts of displacement and capitalist modernization on inhabited spaces and the attendant sense of self. Addressing questions of belonging and uprooting, his artworks are often imbued with a sense of nostalgia that alludes to a state of homesickness. The poetic images that Gardaf generates become places wherein viewers can dwell, but also catalysts for critical conversations about the transformation of contemporary landscapes.

Set in modern-day Tangier, Morocco, the opening scene of Gardaf's video *In Praise of Slowness* (2023) follows the laborious journey of a man who collects empty bottles in order to sell them to the bleach vendors that roam the labyrinthian streets of the old city. Shot on 16mm film, the image has a delicately bleached and grainy quality that beautifully renders the colors and textures of houses, street signs, and fabrics in freeze-frame tableaux. The narrator recounts childhood memories of listening to the voices of the bleach vendors arduously announcing their presence and the availability of their product. In the face of the global economic and technological forces reshaping the city, the profession of the bleach vendor seems to be on the verge of disappearance, yet this filmic portrait of their supply chain—and notably their insistent chanting—conveys acoustic and visual images of endurance. *In Praise of Slowness* speaks to the accelerated urbanization and industrialization of Tangier, but also attests to how locally situated choreographies of slowness articulate modes of resistance to the speed of capitalism.

Hicham Gardaf, stills from *In Praise of Slowness*, 2023.

Moments that reverse the speed of global forces

Woven

Temporal Movement through Textile Practice

Fiber (n.) the substrate of yarn, the substance that comes from plants (organic fiber) or animals (protein fiber) that if weaving, knitting, knotting, or crocheting is spun into yarn, string, or rope. Not all fabric is made up of fiber as silks coming from caterpillars, mollusks, spiders, as well as man-made polymers such as nylon are known as filaments. Acknowledging this technical difference, in this essay fiber takes its place as an umbrella term that includes filaments as well, and makes distinctions when considering either natural or synthetic production.

Woven Fabric (n.) a categorization of fabric whose basic structure is a grid of yarns interplaced. These yarns are either called the warp, being the vertical running yarns secured to a loom, and the weft being the horizontal yarn running through the warp threads.[1]

Weave (n. / v.) could refer to either the actual structural make-up of a woven fabrics (the pattern which the weaver used to structurally construct said fabric) or the act of turning yarn into fabric through weaving itself.[2]

Knit Fabric (n.) a type of fabric which is constructed by one continuous yarn looping around itself in interlocking rows or patterns.

1 *Fabric* and *textile* in this essay are used interchangeably because their current signification in contemporary English language is synonymous and structure is the main focus of this essay for which fabrics other than exclusively woven fabrics alter, play, and subvert. However, it is important to mention that fabric comes from the Latin *fabricare* which denotes 'to build' or 'fabricate' and has historically been the generic term for all fibrous constructions, whereas textile coming from the Latin *texere* and literally means to weave, therefore has specifically referred to interplaced warp-weft fabrics. For more information see Irene Emery, *The Primary Structures of Fabrics: An Illustrated Classification* (New York, NY: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1995).

2 There are other structures of fabrics which do not include yarn, such as felted or agglomerated fabrics. These are important when thinking about the geography of fabrics and the fibers available to certain regions and eras; although this essay considers the history and movement of textiles across geographic planes as critical to its arguments, its analysis of fabrics focuses predominantly on those that are yarn-based.

UNRAVELING A TELEOLOGY OF TEXTILES

Can a medium be a model for history? Textiles are woven into time, reflecting humanity back to itself, from its most mundane qualities to its grandest technological feats. Textiles play with time as if a shared language—annotating, adapting, gleaning, collaging, and moving through subtle developments and encounters with trade, industrialization, domestication, political action, ceremony, art, and the environment across the span of human history. Textiles are spun with the intimacies of everyday life and simultaneously map an increasingly complex system of global industrialization. Crossing between the utilitarian, social, spiritual, technologic, and industrial spheres—the threads of history woven through textiles resist being tied up or resolved in any total description.

Historian Jennifer Harris points out that textiles were one of the earliest globally traded commodities, dispersing utilitarian goods along with the cultural symbols they contained.[3] Along these lines, Margarita Gleba argues against the biased enforcement in anthropological studies of notions of a fabric's 'authentic' origin, suggesting such extrapolations from the system through which textiles emerge reaffirms a colonial view of modernity.[4] The textile's myth of authenticity has often been highlighted as a point of intersection between notions of craft and contemporary art. For instance, Seth Siegelaub, in "A Very Speculative but Brief Note on Textiles and Society," reveals this as an underlying political project wrapped in the subconscious of our shared language around textiles. Furthermore, as Julia Bryan-Wilson describes in *Fray: Art and Textile Politics,* the categorization of textiles along an art–craft divide reveals certain social and class positions upon those who engage with the medium, highlighting the fabricated nature of those boundaries themselves. Associated both with handicraft and yet fundamental to the development of global capitalism, with increasing demand on a rapid, dismembered geographic labor force—the equation of the two suggests how this slow medium may, in fact, be the fastest, its frayed ends detailing the extremes of industrialization, where craft and mass production determine and define each other.

What this abridged description of the scholarship on contemporary craft suggests is that, textiles themselves thwart classification. Despite their ubiquituity, and the medium's haptic sensibility, the fundamental contradiction presented by the textile renders impossible any ideal of a comprehensive study. There will always be a loose end to attend to in the matrices of their contexts. Situational, functional, and symbolic, while constantly pulling patterns and procedures from the past into the present, textiles work with and against the sense of linear temporality that one understands today, particularly stemming from the mechanization of time through capital. This is why anthropologist Elizabeth Wayland Barber insists that, rather than looking for a time-

3 Jennifer Harris, "Textiles, Trade, and Global Culture," in *A Companion to Textile Culture* (John Wiley & Sons, 2020), 127-28.

4 Margarita Gleba, "Unraveling the Fabric of the Past: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Archeological Textiles" in *A Companion to Textile Culture* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2020), 33–44.

line of sequential links, the student of textiles must refer to their development through larger blocks of time based on material ages (from the neo- and paleolithic periods, to the bronze and stone ages, to antiquity and the early modern era).[5] One can find a correlation to this way of theorizing textiles in the broader field of New Materialism, in which time itself constitutes the construction of a fabric. For example, as theorist and physicist Karan Barad has argued, "Mattering is simultaneously a matter of substance and significance, most evidently perhaps when it is the nature of matter that is in question, when the smallest parts of matter are found to be capable of exploding deeply entrenched ideas and large cities. Perhaps this is why contemporary physics makes the inescapable entanglement of matters of being, knowing, and doing, of ontology, epistemology, and ethics, of fact and value, so tangible, so poignant."[6] In other words, how we build relationships (meaning) to and with the world is material-discursive. With this medium-as-history approach, one can imagine that far from the contemporary being an era of ambiguity in terms of cultural values and production, the present, in fact, represents a shift in the fabric of social reproduction, a reweaving of the material culture that makes up who we are, and, akin to changes in material eras before, signals a new shift in time and space.[7]

In short, textiles have the potential to complicate our relationship to time. Rather than arguing to include textiles in the category of time-based media, however, this essay aims to think dialogically about the way the textiles' temporality forces a reconsideration of this latter category, borrowing a few examples in contemporary art that use the textile-as-medium to various ends. In examining time-based media's margins through textiles, I hope to look at the shaping of this recent category to describe a greater persistence in time's bias structure, and to reveal connections and contradictions between the perceptibly accelerating, sequential, and progress-driven temporality of our own contemporary state.

A recent return to notions of craft in contemporary art have ensured that textiles have begun to garner all kinds of scholarship that provides the foundation for my own inquiry. Books such as James Essinger's *Jacquard's Web: How a Hand-Loom Led to the Birth of the Information Age* (2007) and Beverly Gordon's *Textiles: The Whole Story* (2014) trace how innovations in production and pattern making from the textile trade directly informed the technological revolution of today, especially in relation to the advent of all computer processing. Historian Julia Bryan-Wilson's book *Fray: Art and Textile Politics* (2017) was the first of its kind to take a historiographic approach to blur the boundaries between amateur and specialist textile makers—cutting between these dimensions of production—in order to consider the continuity of textile work across many social levels as part of its broader revolutionary potential. This scholarship has equally informed the collection and display of textile work. Notable examples include the Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition *Interwoven Globe: The*

5 E. J. W. Barber, *Womens Work: The First 2000 Years Women, Cloth, and Society in Early Times* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1995).

6 Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 3.

7 Inseparable from the development of binary code into computer processing systems—and therefore the technological turn of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century—is the invention of the Jacquard loom in the late eighteenth century (the machine was patented by Joseph Marie Jacquard in 1804). Through a series of mechanized punch cards, the loom brought about the first programmable image making device which, coordinated to the shafts of a loom, choreographed the warp ends of a woven fabric to reveal images in cloth. This leads directly to the advent of modern technology today far beyond the loom itself. The conclusion of this essay details this further.

Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800 (2013–14), which was the first of its kind to trace the transmission of design through the global textile trade and its effects thereafter, as well as curator Lynne Cooke's in-progress exhibition *Braided Histories* (2023) which links pre-digital technologies of textiles to the development of digitization, particularly by women in the field which power the social grids of our connected world today.

Textiles are ubiquitous, but textile artists can be defined as art practitioners working with cloth on a structural as well as material level. I take this description from historian Irene Emery's *The Primary Structures of Fabrics,* which remains one of the most comprehensive analyses of the history of fabric developments through its materialist approach. In her multifaceted hypothesis on how to approach a cartography of textiles, Emery writes,

> "[w]hile there are many possible bases for classification, it is the actual structural make-up of the fabrics and their component parts that provide data integral to virtually all fabric studies, regardless of origin of the fabrics, the special interest of the investigator, or the special purpose of the study. Structure is never absent; with negligible exceptions, determinable; it can be objectively observed; and it is varied enough for significant grouping and subgrouping. Although the details of structure (and element make-up) do not in themselves give a complete picture of a fabric, they prodive sound factual basis for more comprehensive description and, being determinable data, for comprehensive studies and for classification."[8]

A structural approach looks at not just the end result of a work of fiber art, but at what comprises it, recognizing that through the smallest shift in weave-structure, embroidery thread, lace detail, or print signature, the production of textiles have been personalized, assigned meaning, and moved through time and across spaces in ways that continue to unfold in the present. A structural approach means that the artists considered, both in this essay and in the accompanying exhibition, weave, knit, sew, dye, knot, unravel, and treat as core substrate fibers, yarns, and fabrics not merely as a formal aesthetic practice, but with consideration for the temporal and historical structures these works both take up and revise—with an eye to the greater social, political, and economic structures at play in their construction.

FIBER CONTENT OF THE EXHIBITION

Like language, the making of cloth is self-referential because it is a learned and taught craft that occupies both the domestic and industrial spheres. In Sarat Maharaj's essay, "Textile Art–Who Are You?" the writer and curator uses Jacques Derrida's notion of the undecidable

8 Emery, *The Primary Structures of Fabric,* xi.

(when something that belongs to one genre spills over into and appears to belong another, as descriptive of textile art, while also detailing the way textiles themselves echo diasporic identity in their disjuncture by space and time, "belonging to both, by not belonging to either".[9] As Maharaj's model suggest, more than a poetic metaphor, the literal raw material of textiles (such as dyes and fibers) are some of the earliest traded commodities, making fabric arts some of the earliest globally dispersed products and representations of culture.[10] Their ubiquity in global trade, as Amelia Peck outlines, at times allowed textiles to even function as currency itself, opening new kinds of markets to various trade routes.[11] Textiles have been a driving force behind the development of global capitalism, leading to extreme instances of resource extraction, labor extortion, and racial and gender-based capital accumulation. Recent history continues to demonstrate this—from ongoing soil depletion and deforestation for the wool industry of Scotland and New Zealand that has irreparably shifted those countries' social populations and climates, to a 2022 European Parliament report that the dyeing of textiles currently results in twenty percent of the world's polluted clean water supply.[12] At the onset of industrialization, textile mills were sites of extreme labor extortion, leading to the industry forerunning the implementation of laborer age and time regulations in response to horrific working conditions that still persist in many textile factories outside the West. It is also notable that the garment waste produced by much of the Global North is purchased by textile merchants that re-sell and ship that waste to Kenya, Senegal, and Ghana where over twenty million kilograms of textiles are deposited each year without infrastructure to receive them.[13]

With the emergence of global capitalism through the industrialization of textiles came a new conception of the scientific management of time itself. As Bryan-Wilson points out, the very concept of the division of labor Karl Marx describes draws from his observations of the stratification in textile production.[14] As she writes,

> Textiles suffuse Marx's theories about use value and the commodity; while yarn, loom, tailor, and weaver function as paradigmatic examples of broader processes of labor, they are much more than metaphorical. These materials and procedures were at the contested heart of industrial change and the concomitant emergence of the notion of craft. Glenn Adamson's *The Invention of Craft* crucially illuminates how handicraft as a category emerged in relation to, and remains inextricable from, industrial procedures.[15]

As textile processes become interpolated into craft, so too does the time of their making become bifurcated between notions of labor and leisure—-industry and artistry. Textiles continue to signify both an industry and a craft as if these spheres are entirely distinct from one another. Insofar as craft connotes a kind of handiwork it continues to

9 Sarat Maharaj, "Textile Art—Who Are You?" in *Gender and Identity (Reinventing Textiles)*, ed. Janis Jefferies, First Edition (Winchester, United Kingdom: Telos Art Publishing, 2001), 115–17.

10 Harris, "Textiles, Trade, and Global Culture,"128.

11 Amelia Peck, *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500 - 1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 3.

12 European Parliament, *The impact of textile production and waste on the environment (infographic),* March, 2022. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20201208STO93327/the-impact-of-textile-production-and-waste-on-the-environment-infographic.

13 *Textile Mountain: The Hidden Burden of Our Fashion Waste,* filmed and edited by Fellipe Lopes, produced by Caitriona Rogerson for https://makeeuropesustainableforall.org/, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC4oFmX8tHw.

14 Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Fray: Art and Textile Politics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 7.

be framed as out of step with the flow of contemporaneity.

Textiles appear in works by ektor garcia, Clare Hu, and Yto Barrada in *Clocking Out: Time Beyond Management*. They also appear in the costumes and flags in Sky Hopinka's *In Dreams and Autumn* (2021). In the exhibition's accompanying film program, archival scenes of women coming and going from textile factories permeate Kajsa Dahlberg's *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force* (2015). Even Robert Owen, founder of an experimental time-banking socialist community in New Harmony, Indiana, was himself a textile manufacturer.

Clare Hu's large woven works mimic and nod to the race and class-based systems of migration through construction and gentrification around her home city of Atlanta, Georgia. Working on a twelve-harness floor loom rigged with multiple warps, Hu builds large fabrics that strain under the weight and tension of their very making, packed with the stress of the loom itself and the drafting patterns selected.[16] A drafting pattern is used by loom operators to determine a specific interplay between warp and weft in order to produce a visual and structural pattern of fabric. Such patterns—like scores or codes that allowed for repetitious outcomes—were developed and shared among home-weavers during the colonial period. It was common for women working the loom to annotate the received pattern, giving it a signature of sorts— an extra pick here, an extra stripe there, or an elongation of the original pattern, for instance. The revised pattern drafts were, at times, named after specific events (however historic or intimate they might be)—thus allowing the unique weave to serve as a record and reminder of a particularly moment in time.

Working with the textile as a temporal record, Hu works with these draft patterns, annotating them to impart her own relation to history. Drawing specifically on the American colonial era, and even more precisely on patterns from the era of the Civil War, many of Hu's works camouflage a pattern called "Lee's Surrender," a reference to the surrender of General Robert E. Lee that ended the Civil War in 1865. More than simply annotating this pattern, Hu pushes to extremes the haptics and tension of the weaving process until her textiles begin to stretch and fall apart. She paints the warp ends as they pass through the loom, allowing tension differences to warp and distort images as they enter into the structure of the cloth. The fraying, slippage, and distortion of the warp and weft are all essential to Hu's process of revealing and inducing holes and distortions in this record of the American Confederacy. Once off the loom, Hu cuts and re-sews parts of these tarps together by patching holes and worn areas with small printed imagery taken from specific locations around the artists' home sites in the Atlanta-Metro area, and specifically Buford Highway. In this way, her textiles not only tug at history but structure into history's holes, legacies of Chinese-American heritage that has largely been ignored in portrayals of the American South.

In Laurent Berlant's book *On the Inconvenience of Other People*

15 Ibid., 7.

16 A twelve-harness floor loom is a standard type of loom which has the ability to weave larger types of drafting patterns. A loom can be set up with two or three warps running through the shaft (the middle point of the loom where heddles control the warp ends) which produces multiple layers of horizontal warp yarns while weaving, and unfolds once fabric is off the loom to produce a larger construction of work.

Fig 1
Clare Hu, *Perimeter*, 2022. Photo by Nancy Paredes.

(2022), the theorist argues for an affect theory stemming from a type of infrastructural thinking, which looks at systems from within the lives they operate, to identify failures and reclaim these sites of inconvenience as sites that could have revolutionary potential. Rather than spurring a proletariat to demand the government attend to failing infrastructure, the author observes that such inconveniences are adapted to, such that in adjusting to the failure of a new infrastructure one both reflects the compulsion of a public to record the existence of their struggle and spur new kinds of infrastructure from it. Nodding to groups (queer, femme, non-white) who have historically been deemed inconvenient to a hegemonic social sphere, Berlant identifies "the power of thinking the infrastructural mediation of the ongoingness of the ordinary, and the constant copresence of its intelligibility and creative generativity" as an un-interpretable, slippery, immersion in anti-capitalist living.[17]

Hu's work focuses on the tarp as a sign of political amnesia and as a tool of resistance. These works reflect a kind of inconvenience. Rather than propose a narrative-based statement about the Chinese immigrant population of Atlanta, Hu corrects a slowly erased history of the lives of Asian-Americans and the greater story of immigration through "snagging" moments of that history and pulling them back into the

17 Lauren Berlant, *On the Inconvenience of Other People*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2022), 21.

present in the work of art. This is a temporal critique insofar as Hu challenges the future-oriented project of gentrification by revealing the multiplicity of infrastructures and timelines that run through any given place. The work itself moves through time with a structural citation practice. Lee's surrender, Hu reminds us, is ongoing—there are far more temporal narratives that undergird the structuring decisions of the United States already set in place for construction-yet-to-come.

Artist Yto Barrada looks to natural dyeing to form a similar temporal critique. In an ongoing project in her home of Tangier, Morocco, Barrada has made a dye garden called *The Mothership* (2022) where she and others who visit the site investigate the histories of the textile dye industry, their evanescence with material culture today, and their indebtedness to specific ecologies. Historically, to be a dyer was to have amassed specific knowledge of fibers, chemical additives, sources of color from the natural world, and of course the temporal needs of different dye permutations.[18] Artificial dyes were only recently created in the mid-nineteenth century and synthetic dyes in the late-twentieth century. Before their creation, particularly bright colors, that demonstrated lasting vibrancy, were highly sought after, fought over, and even used as currency in various places. Historian Amy Butler Greenfield, for instance, details the historical pursuit of steadfast red dye in her book *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire* (2009). It wasn't until the Spanish landed in the Americas and found the Aztecs using the dye of a beetle (today known as *cochineal*) that European textiles began to showcase a bright red color in cloth.[19] The popularity of this color partly fueled the Spanish in their conquest to control the global supply of such red which rose to extreme value, leading to a century's worth of crusades, espionage, and campaigns to obtain and understand the source of the color. Over time, the conquest of red led to its manufacture and production as the infrastructure of trade and conquest evolved into a systematic process of producing and supplying the commodity of dyed fabric.

In Barrada's series *Untitled (After Stella)* (2017–23)—which stems from her work with the Textiles Art Center in Brooklyn, New York, that lead to *Mothership*—textiles are hand-dyed, cut and then stitched together in patterns referencing Frank Stella's fluorescent painting series titled *Morocco* (1964–65). Stella created this series after returning from a honeymoon trip to Morocco, where he said the colors he encountered informed his palette and the naming conventions for his works.[20] Where Stella approximates the visual appearance of Morocco using the same materials and techniques intrinsic to his earlier work in the field of American painting, Barrada recreates Stella's painting stitching together fabric that has been hand-dyed in her studio from cotton, madder, onion, iron, cochineal, and pomegranate. In reference to this work, Barrada cites William Morris, who himself writes in "The Art of Dyeing":

18 Dyeing cloth is a complicated process which has historically been a trade of masters and apprentices, dangerous chemicals, mass amounts of machinery, and the subject of generations of labor. First, you must have the thing that will color fabric which dyers refer to as dyestuff, a concentrated version of a color-producing agent such as flora or insects. Then a binding agent, such as cream of tartar, iron, or alum known as *mordants* which both aid in the holding of the dyes into fiber, while also enhancing or altering the colors of those dyes in some ways. Dyes are specific to the matter they come from: in plants the dye may come from roots, from bark, or from petals for instance. The amount of each dye needed per measurement of weight of cloth is also inconsistent, having some dyes carry great potency while others needing mass amounts to obtain a lasting color. Various fibers also need different treatments. Wool requires the heat in the dye process to absorb dye whereas it aids in the dyeing of organic fibers but is not always necessary.

19 Amy Butler Greenfield, *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2009), 9.

20 Peter Benson Miller and Helaine Posner, *Yto Barrada: The Dye Garden* (Purchase, NY: Neuberger Museum of Art and American Academy in Rome, 2019).

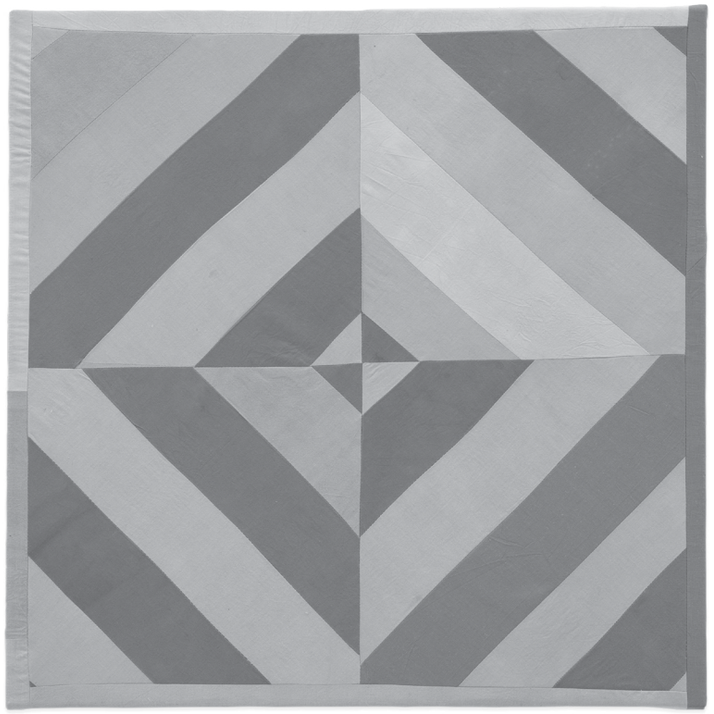


Fig 2
Yto Barrada, *Untitled (After Stella, New Marrakesh)*, 2023. Courtesy the artist and Pace Gallery.

Small

> [like] all dyes, [natural dyes] are not eternal; the sun in lighting them and beautifying them consumes them; yet gradually, and for the most part kindly, as... you will see if you look at the Gothic tapestries in the drawing-room at Hampton Court. These colours in fading still remain beautiful, and never, even after long wear, pass into nothingness, through that stage of livid ugliness which distinguishes the commercial dyes as nuisances, even more than their short and by no means merry life.[21]

Stella, in his paintings, used polymers on canvas—the color of which has a lifespan of around fifteen years without proper conservation, particularly those in fluorescent hues. As Morris reminds the reader, such synthetic colors are only captivating until their topographic application reveals them to be only a facade. Morris also reminds us that these pigments are developed, here in the W est, through industrialization and a capital temporality at the speed of the consumer. These colors, in short, are concocted in and for a Western audience. When they are used in Stella's *Morocco* paintings they are not the colors of the place they describe, but those that describe a Western (even distinctly American) vantage point—a Morocco made after Stella's own image.

Annotating Stella's Modernist take on color, which seems to look to the East as a static place of inspiration, Barrada's work mimics the forms of her Modernist predecessors. Yet she also returns life to the works by insisting on the very animated histories of Morocco and

21 William Morris, "The Art of Dyeing," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 19, Issue 6 (March 1892). https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1889/dyeing.htm.

greater North Africa through the equally animated state of cloth. Indeed there is a lived experience of the dye in Barrada's work, where time becomes perceptible as color changes through time and space only to become lightened with the sun. In a reparative sense, dyes' natural materials are alive themselves, moving and changing with time, sun, and wear. Not only an articulation of the appropriative gaze, *After Stella* reformulates a time of painting which appears concrete but in fact remains malleable to the incidences of history. Not a topical rendition of the colors of place, but a structural temporal proposal to imagine how a place may be conceived of.

LOOSE ENDS

In *On Weaving* fiber artist Anni Albers writes that a knowledge of construction is essential for understanding how the surfaces of our world come to be. That is, knowledge of the components that make up the structures one lives by is essential to being able to preserve the world and find sovereignty in doing so. Without it, Albers writes, one is in danger of losing oneself in "decorativeness," to the illusion of texture without the depth that texture provides.[22] I believe one can read Albers both literally, in reference to fibers, and expand her diction to imagine how the social fabric of the world is structured. Rather than reasserting a binary between "bad" and "good" technological development with regard to textiles, Albers enjoins the reader to consider how a deeper understanding of the structure, material, and even haptic dimension of textiles help to index the development of technology at large.[23]

Intractable from the histories of colonial extortion, resource extraction, and global capitalism, are the times and histories collected in textiles and their production today. Lauren Berlant's notion of "[i]nconvenience" reminds us that the affective agitation of slowness is a reciprocal response to its opposite, convenience of speed, machinic capital temporalities feedback looping our psychic understanding of production, virtual or otherwise.[24] Perhaps because even in our artworks we ask for immediacy, for something to be revealed to us, a screen to change, a noise to be heard, or a light to flash, we become stuck in our own feedback loops of revolution, repeating a future-oriented impulse associated with progress to 'fill' a type of time identified by Walter Benjamin as *homogenous, empty*.[25] However, even cinema and cinema theorists remind us that it is the *structural* assemblage of film that pulls out narratives to form attachments, and to re-articulate the way the world is to us.

From our current vantage, textiles are elemental to *being* in ways we often know little about: their origins, making, and fiber are structures both visible and hidden. In the face of capital-crisis-linked facets of textile production, this self-referentiality has been a tool of resistance in many ways. Along with the artists mentioned here, from communal embroidery circles as a means of sharing messages under Pinochet's regime in Chile, to the encoded quilts of the Underground Railroad that assisted those fleeing slavery, textiles have been a harnessable and covert power that, because of their equally mundane facade, can seem to stand both inside and outside the present, slipping through history to form an infrastructure of quilted social production. Entangled in the textile industry's foundational role in human civilization is the means by which we conceive of and structure time. Textile historians have long used material analysis to challenge our perceptions of the historic lives of things. As historian Jennifer Harris has written in her anthology, *A Companion to Textile Culture,* "like no other field of cultural studies [textiles] renders the boundaries of academic discipline elastic and defies geographic and chronological borders."[26] Imagining textile processes like weaving and dyeing as structuring principles to examine time allows us to visualize a multiplicity of temporalities when it comes to a material as complicated as fabric, which is an art, a product, and more depending on where you are located in space/time.

With the inclusion of the textile works in the exhibition *Clocking Out: Time Beyond Management*, I hope to find continuity around the potential textiles have to complicate our relationship to time in varied ways, revealing that they are indeed time-based. Thinking structurally, locating and threading through each component part of a greater whole, may reveal to us the ways in which time bends, turns, recites, stitches together its own pasts, presents, and futures. Far from just an affective argument, through the semiotics of textile practices I hope the links between textile arts and their manufacturing, their utilitarian and aesthetic values, show that even those binaries reveal themselves to be merely broad ways to envision the texturing of time, through our social and political lives.

22 Anni Albers, "Tactile Sensibility," *On Weaving* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003), 47.

23 Albers, "Tactile Sensibility," 44–47.

24 Berlant. *On the Inconvenience of Other People,* 25.

25 Benjamin, Walter, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1969), 253–264.

26 Harris, "Textiles, Trade, and Global Culture," 1.

Gerard & Kelly
(Brennan Gerard and Ryan Kelly)

7. Performed
ris, 2023.

Since 2003, the artist duo Gerard & Kelly have collaborated across performance, video, and installation to explore issues such as memory, queer intimacy, and formations of subjectivity. Drawing on their academic backgrounds in ballet, visual art, literature, and gender studies, Gerard & Kelly deploy an idiosyncratic vocabulary that merges dance and conceptual strategies. In their work, they often take temporal structures or specific architectural spaces as starting points to investigate various choreographies of relationality. For instance, in the ongoing series *Modern Living* (2016–ongoing), they examine how the domestic spaces designed by modern architects prescribed certain forms of intimacy.

In *Timelining* (2014), two people involved in a close relationship—romantic, familial, or otherwise—explore their interwoven histories through writing, movement, and speech. In a reiteration of the performance in the context of *Clocking Out*, a mother and daughter move through space in a circular pattern, and take turns narrating moments of their personal chronologies from the present towards the past. When one of them stops speaking, the other starts reciting her own timeline from the moment where the first left off. The chronology of each performer is written in collaboration with the artists and includes memories that the performing pair has shared, moments in which their timelines intertwine. Like a recursive and, at times, interrupted spiraling into the past, the pair moves together, splits direction, or falls out of sync—only to rejoin, again. *Timelining* gives an image of how subjectivity is constantly rearticulated in relation to significant others.

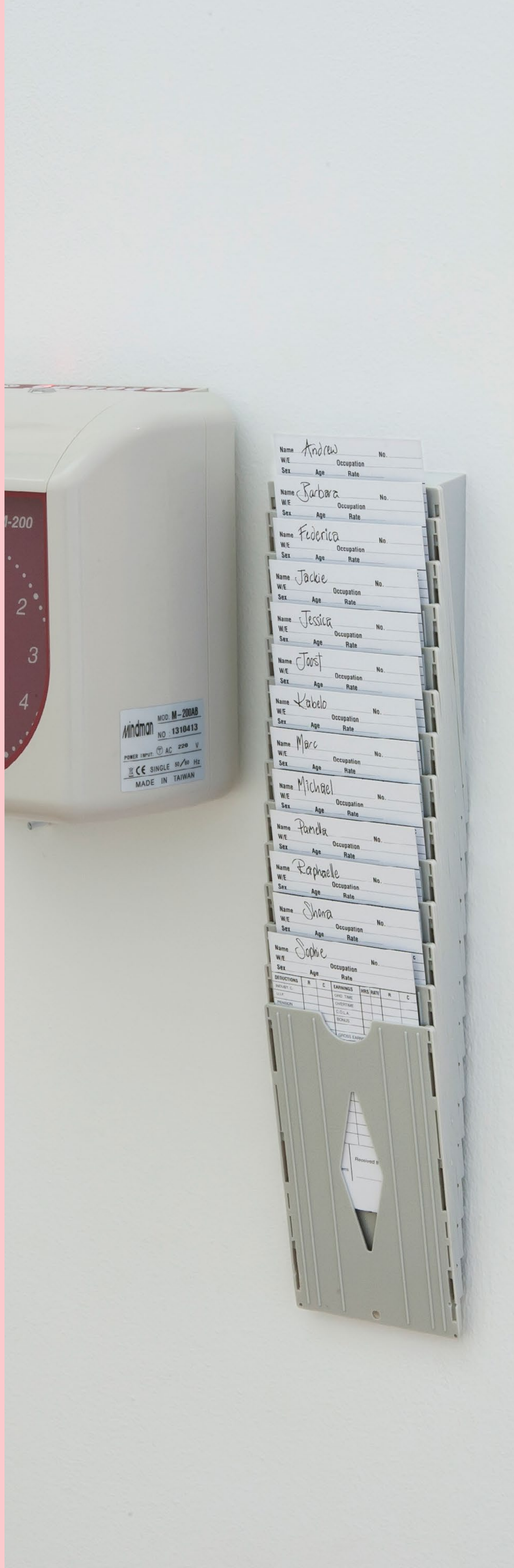
b. 1978 in Piqua, OH, USA. Lives and works in Paris, France.

b. 1979 in Drums, PA, USA. Lives and work in Paris, France.

Gerard & Kelly, performance view of *Timelining*, 2014. Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2017. Performed by Lou Forster and Matthieu Barbin. Photo by Thomas Scotto D'Abusco. © Adagp Paris, 2023.

Gerard & Kelly, performance view of *Timelining*, 2014.The Kitchen, New York, 2014. Performed by Todd McQuade and Ted Henigson. Photo by Elisabeth Bernstein. © Adagp Paris, 2023.

Simon Gush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Jackie
Jessica
Joost
Kabelo
Marc
Michael
Pamella
Raphaelle
Shona
Sophie
DEDUCTIONS R C EARNINGS HRS RATE R C
Received

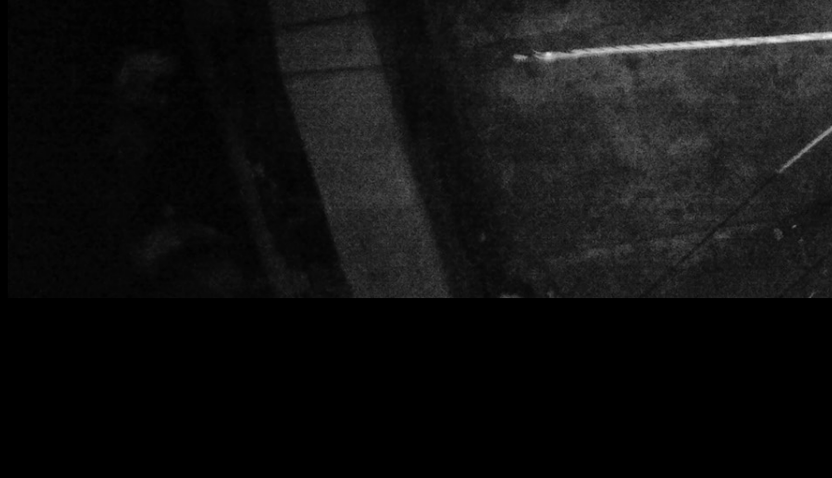
b. 1981 in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.
Lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Simon Gush's sculpture, *Clocking In* (2013), frames this exhibition. The ready-made is a warehouse-grade clocking-in instrument, outfitted with a tray of timecards and hung adjacent to the Artists Space office for the duration of the exhibition (including install and de-install). The art handlers and Artists Space staff have been asked to mark their comings and goings on their individualized timecards for this period to make concrete the often unseen labor of cultural workers. As a tool of managerial surveillance, the clock signifies a boundary between time for oneself and time "on the clock." Gush, not only an artist and filmmaker, is completing a Ph.D. in History at Rhodes University, South Africa, for which his focus is the temporality of different forms of work, particularly in locales of high unemployment.

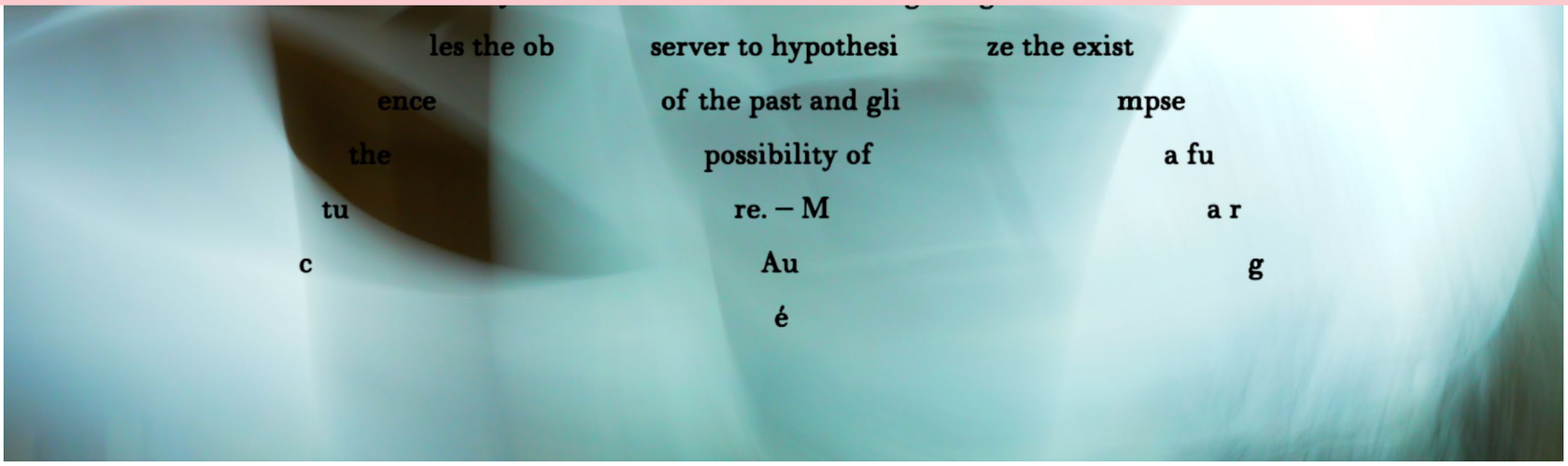
Sunday Light (2013) and *Without Light* (2016) bookend Gush's "Light" series (2013–16), in which he explores labor at the peripheries of normative time in Johannesburg—specifically, on Sundays in the Central Business District and during the evening after sunset. His slow, often static city shots are intercut with lines of prosaic text that reflect on Gush's own labor as an artist—as his work investigates a pace of labor that is at odds with a more traditional nine-to-five work schedule. The implications of work outside the bounds of normative working hours frames the progressive eight-hour day as an import of Western imperialism, one that predominantly benefits middle- to upper-class white South Africans.

Simon Gush, *Clocking In*, 2013. Photo by Mario Todeschini.

Simon Gush, stills from *Sunday Light*, 2013.



Simon Gush, stills from *Without Light*, 2016.



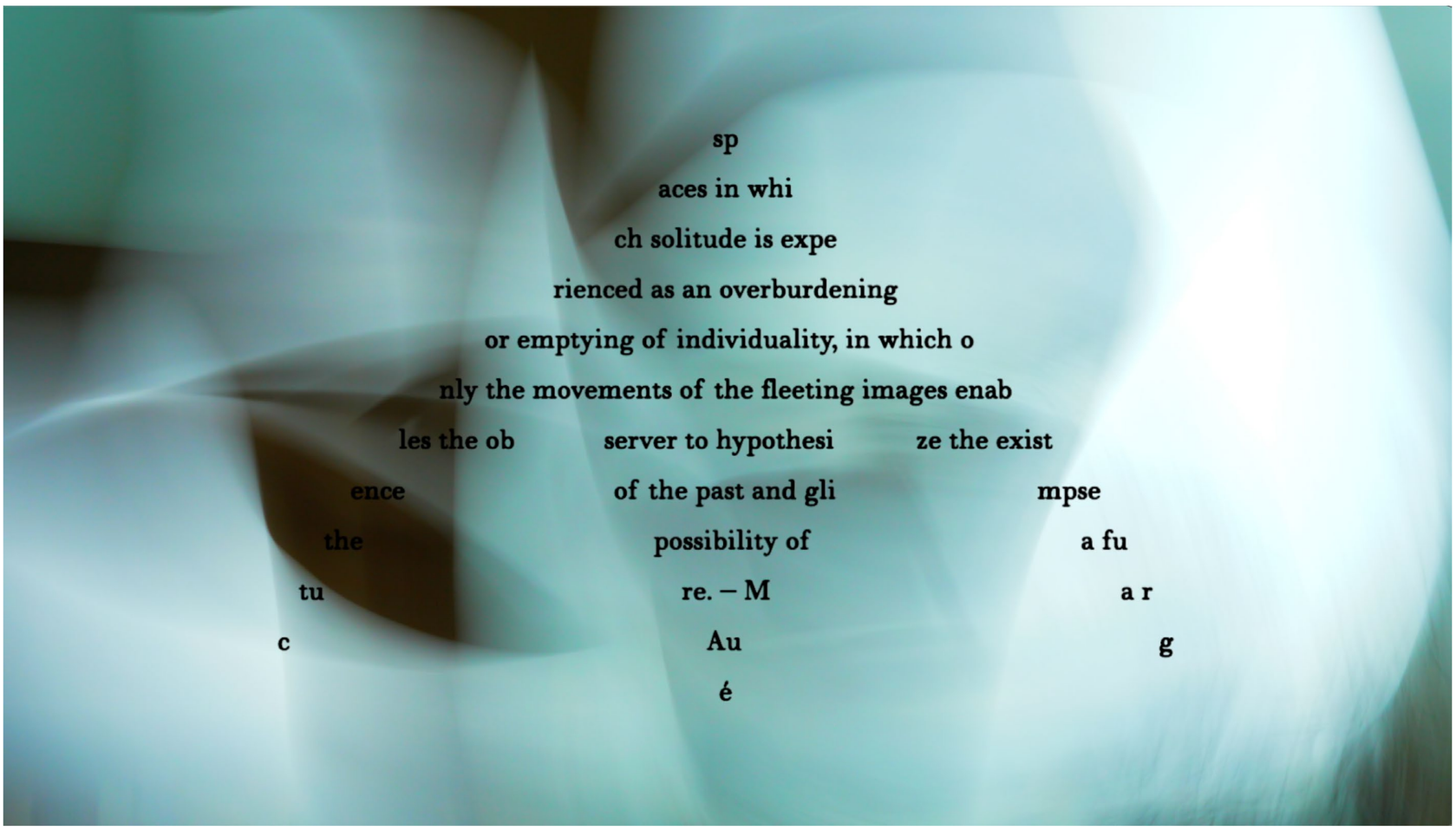
Sky Hopinka, still from *In Dreams and Autumn*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and BROADWAY Gallery.

Sky Hopinka's multimedia practice centers the contemporary realities and historical struggles of Indigenous Americans, especially those from northern Wisconsin, Southern California, and the Pacific Northwest. Working in an unmistakably lyrical, personal, and affective register, Hopinka's moving image installations develop innovative filmic forms to navigate complex themes of settler colonial violence, landscape, and language.

Overlaying imagery, sounds, and texts in ways that verge on abstraction, Hopinka's works invite viewers to witness alternative ways of seeing, experiencing time, and being in the world. As a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation and a descendant of the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, Hopinka's ethnopoetic approach mirrors, in cinematic terms, the artist's studying and teaching of Indigenous languages, such as chinuk wawa. Informed by the notion of language as a container of communal life-worlds, Hopinka's work does not merely represent Indigenous communities but more importantly incorporates their languages and corresponding worldviews into its very form. However, working against colonial impulses that require all languages be rendered transparent in meaning, Hopinka's works integrate varying levels of accessibility into their structures, at times placing viewers (non-Indigenous and Indigenous alike) in positions of not-knowing.

b. 1984 in Ferdale, WA, USA.

With *In Dreams and Autumn* (2021), Hopinka meditates on personal and collective feelings of loss, loneliness, and displacement wrought by the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous land. Across three screens, Hopinka orchestrates a dreamy, non-linear succession of vivid images, nostalgic sounds, and poetic texts. Throughout the work, Hopinka voices and transcribes three self-authored poems, which take on the form of a letter addressed to a sibling. The poems oscillate between melancholic unease and joyous hope, speaking of the endurance of present and past generations. By dwelling on sustained transmissions of memory across generations, Hopinka's work projects into potential futures, speculating on possible returns to Indigenous homelands.



Sky Hopinka, still from *In Dreams and Autumn*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and BROADWAY Gallery.

Sky Hopinka, stills from *In Dreams and Autumn*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and BROADWAY Gallery.

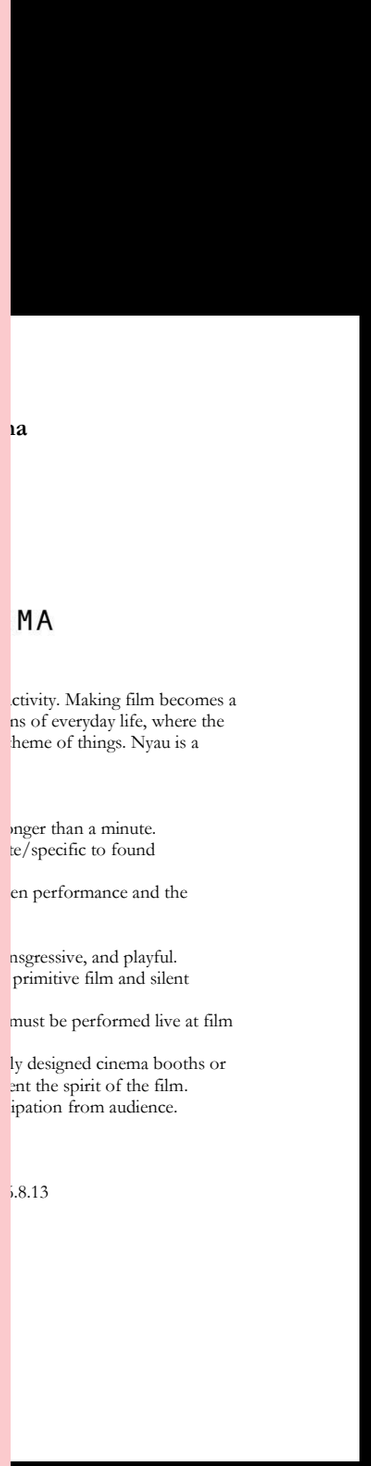
Clare Hu's woven works recall, mimic, and gesture to racialized and class-based migratory movements that are greatly influenced by private interests, gentrification, and the geopolitics around her hometown of Atlanta, Georgia. Working on a twelve-harness floor loom rigged with multiple warps, Hu paints and prints onto the large-scale fabrics as they are woven. Packed with the stress of the loom itself, and the drafting patterns selected, the fabrics warp and strain under the weight and tension of their very making.

Home-weavers have historically redrafted patterns, passing these iterative structures on to friends and family, serving as a type of citational practice and historic document. Many of Hu's recent works employ a camouflage from a pattern called "Lee's Surrender," in reference to Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender that brought an end to the American Civil War in 1865. As the weaving process proceeds, the pattern begins to stretch and fall apart, appearing clear at some lengths while dissolving in others. The fray, slippage, distortion, and structural breakdown of this cloth is both intentional and essential to Hu's practice. Once off the loom, Hu often cuts and re-sews parts together, patching holes and worn areas with small printed imagery taken from specific locations that she references in the artworks' titles, such as the Buford Highway of the Atlanta-Metro area. Rather than propose a narrative-based statement about the Chinese immigrant population of Atlanta, Hu preserves a slowly fading history of Asian-American lives and nods to the larger context of immigration by snagging threads of that history and pulling them back into the present in the work of art. Hu challenges the future-oriented project of gentrification by revealing a multiplicity of infrastructures and timelines woven through any given place.

b. 1996 in Atlanta, GA, USA.
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, USA.

Clare Hu, *Perimeter*, 2022. Photo by Nancy Parredes.

Clare Hu, *2300 Pleasant Hill*, 2022.



Remarking on the abrupt brevity of his films, which are characterized by spontaneity, playfulness, and a non-linear approach to time, the artist states, "the cuts you see in my films are the cuts of history." Kambalu elaborates on these ideas in his auto-theoretical Ph.D. dissertation, completed in 2016, wherein he distinguishes Nyau understandings of time (which he views as a "series of ruptures") from Western unilinear conceptions of time. Nyau, as a Chewa word for "excess," provides Kambalu with the conceptual tools to transfigure cinema into a gift-giving technology, one that generates surplus time between the artist and his audiences through mystifying performances and instantaneous visual encounters.

b. 1975 in Malawi.
Lives and works in Oxford, United Kingdom.

Samson Kambalu is an artist and writer whose works fuse seemingly disparate artistic, philosophical, and political traditions with a playful and provocative sensibility. Kambalu's multimedia practice, which includes site-specific installations, videos, performances and literary texts, is influenced by the Nyau gift-giving culture of the Chewa people, the anti-reification theories of the Situationist movement, and the Protestant tradition of inquiry, criticism and dissent. Over the last two decades, Kambalu has evolved a dynamic approach to art and life that is based on improvisation, mischief, and critical transgression.

Since 2013, Kambalu has developed a praxis around cinema that is shaped by ten defining rules, known as *Nyau Cinema*. Presented in specially designed booths and cinematic installations, these less-than-one-minute silent videos, typified by varying speeds and a grainy, sepia-tinged aesthetic, cross-reference early cinema with twentieth century European avant-garde editing techniques. Yet, Kambalu's approach is grounded in the conceptual and aesthetic insights of the Nyau—a secret society of the Chewa people, especially known for its ritual mask performances.

Nyau Cinema

NYAUKANEMA

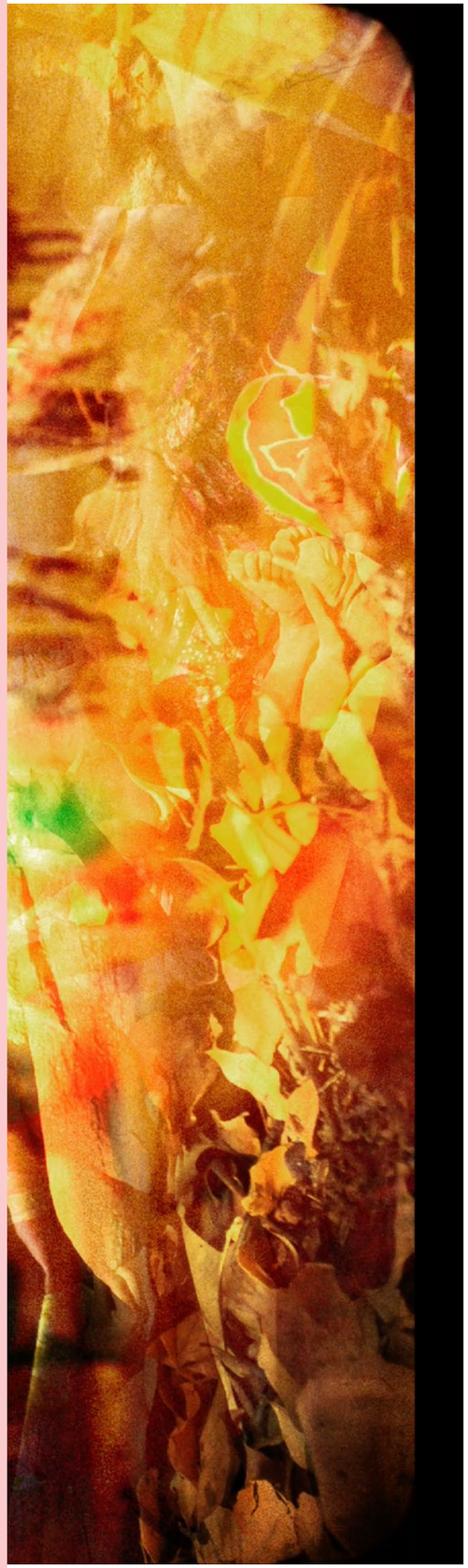
Nyau cinema approaches film as a sovereign activity. Making film becomes a way of escaping the limitations and conventions of everyday life, where the self is playfully re-conceived as part a larger scheme of things. Nyau is a Chewa word for 'excess'.

Nyau Cinema: The Rules
1. Nyau film must be conceived as a clip no longer than a minute.
2. Performance should be spontaneous and site/specific to found architecture, landscape, or object.
3. There must always be a conversation between performance and the medium of film.
5. Costume must be from everyday life.
6. Acting must be subtle but otherworldly, transgressive, and playful.
7. Editing must be limited to the aesthetics of primitive film and silent cinema.
8. Audio must be used sparingly, otherwise it must be performed live at film screenings.
9. Screening of a Nyau film must be in specially designed cinema booths or improvised cinema installations that compliment the spirit of the film.
10. Nyau cinema must encourage active participation from audience.

Samson Kambalu 26.8.13

Samson Kambalu, installation view of *Introduction to Nyau Cinema*, 2016.
Whitechapel Gallery, London, United Kingdom (August 23, 2016–January 8, 2017).
Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry Gallery.

Samson Kambalu, still from *Strip Lander*, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry, London.



Karrabing Film Collective, still from *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams*, 2016.

Karrabing Film Collective is an Indigenous media group, composed of over fifty members, based in Australia's Northern Territories. The collective uses filmmaking and installation as modes of grassroots resistance and self-organization against historical and contemporary settler colonial violence. Dissolving the boundaries between past and present, and history and fiction (what the collective terms, "improvised realism"), their films largely draw from their communities' everyday struggles and realities, articulating forms of quotidian sociality and collective agency that exceed the imposing logics of the nation-state and capital. Their films adopt non-linear narratives, winding through meditations on ancestral memory to tense encounters with modern state apparatuses, to think through the contemporary ramifications of colonial violence, especially with respect to the ongoing ecological catastrophe.

In *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* (2016), an extended Indigenous family argues over what caused their boat's motor to break down and leave them stranded in a remote, uninhabited area. Based on real events and shot on handheld phones, three varying accounts of the motor's breakdown are provided by the family's members through a series of flashbacks. Mechanical failure, appeals to the Christian faith, and the interference of disgruntled ancestral spirits are all voiced as either causes or solutions—an allusion to the coexistence of multiple, overlapping explanatory frameworks (and their associative temporalities) in the contemporary moment. The film is the Collective's most surreal and near-psychedelic production to date, dramatizing (in cinematic form) the necessity of unmaking notions of reality in order to account for ways of knowing and being that have been exteriorized by coloniality/modernity and its imaging technologies.

Karrabing Film Collective, still from *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams*, 2016.

Karrabing Film Collective, stills from *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams*, 2016.

Ciné-chronotones

Decolonial Temporal Critique in
Contemporary Moving Image Practice

In his widely referenced philosopho-historical text, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” Walter Benjamin bemoans the maddeningly disenchanted, mechanistic nature of modern (historical) temporality: “the concept of the historical progress of mankind cannot be sundered from the concept of its progression through a homogenous, empty time.”[1] For Benjamin, this “homogenous, empty time” enables a certain hegemonic historiographic disposition, what he calls “historicism,” which “contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history.”[2] In hindsight, it is unsurprising that Benjamin published this biting critique on the limits of historicism in 1940. This was precisely the moment when Europe was violently alerted to the cracks in its illusory notions of progress due to the rapid ascendency of multiple fascist regimes—a historical occurrence that, Aimé Césaire argues, was the result of carceral and disciplining technologies, long experimented with and perfected in the West’s peripheralized colonies, now returning like a “boomerang” to haunt the imperial center.[3] It would, therefore, seem that for modernity’s discontents—and I am referring here to Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples who, as I elaborate further, have and continue to be subjected to various modes of temporal discipline—the modern concept of time as empty, homogenous, measurable, progressive, and even linear, has long been viewed with suspicion and, more so, has been tirelessly resisted and refused over the last five centuries (modernity’s colonial *longue durée*).

1 Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken, 1969), 253–264.

2 Ibid.

3 Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 36.

This essay considers the determining logics and material conditions that make modern historical temporality thinkable, and examines the multiple ways cinematic practices disrupt the ontologization of "homogenous, empty time," as inaugurated in Euro-modern thought. Such hegemonic temporal logics, I argue, are the conditions of possibility for the production of racial and colonial difference, the accumulation of capital, and the operation of modern imaging technologies such as the cinematic apparatus. Through close readings of works by Kobby Adi, Samson Kambalu, Sky Hopinka, and Karrabing Film Collective, I theorize the ways these art practices generate distinct but altogether powerful decolonial temporal critiques by way of structurally incorporating various indigenous temporalities into their works' filmic fabrics.[4] Through this conceptually incorporative process, which by virtue of the principle of untranslatability is never complete, these works embody what I term "ciné-chronotones," in that they produce disruptive fissures, frictions, and bumps in the dominant, hegemonizing temporal grammars that cohere the cinematic field. In turn, they reveal the irreducibly heterogenous onto-epistemological grounds of human (and more-than-human) existence. Although these art practices arise from disparate geographic and (post)colonial contexts, their grouping alludes to the *global* architecture of modernity/coloniality and thus the shared conditions of neocolonial subjugation that connect racialized and Indigenous populations throughout the world, from Africa and Europe to the Pacific and the Americas.

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The naturalization of a mechanistic, homogenous time—of an autonomous, objective time that accounts for and subsumes all other times—came into being between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries in Western Europe. As Sylvia Wynter persuasively argues, the ascendency of this disenchanted temporal order was a function of the West's gradual "de-supernaturalization" in the early modern age.[5] According to Wynter, one can observe a notable shift during this period from a theocentric conception of the human, informed by a Judeo-Christian worldview, to an increasingly secularized conception of the human, as the rational subject of the political state.[6] This shift is materially linked to the rise of modern political cities and monarchical states in Latin-Christian Europe which, having amassed power and wealth from the profits of the enslavement of Africans and the dispossession of Indigenous American lands over three centuries, were now in a position to displace the hegemony of the Church and its clergy.[7] With the Judeo-Christian God no longer seen as "absolute and unbound," arbitrarily intervening in and producing physical reality, European scientists and philosophers devised a novel conception of God as a distant entity (the wise "clockmaker") who creates universally applicable (scientific) laws and thereafter sets the world into self-regulating motion.[8]

4 I predominantly use the term "indigenous" to refer to the plural, dynamic, and resilient onto-epistemologies (in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific) that have and continue to be subjugated by world-systemic processes of coloniality/modernity. One must therefore acknowledge, and not flatten, the irreducible differences between these plural ways of knowing/being. My former definition overlaps with, though ought to be differentiated from, my occasional use of "Indigenous," which refers to populations, world over, that have been subjected to settler colonial violence and displaced by modern statecraft. I return to the distinctions between these terms in the footnotes to the concluding sentences of this essay. Lastly, although I recognise "indigenous" to be a categorical construction of colonial orders of knowledge, one that has thus been deployed for purposes of racial Othering, I want to argue that what is actually signified by the term—what the term is supposed to, but ultimately cannot, contain—coheres and exceeds the enclosures of modernity/coloniality.

5 Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling The Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards The Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," *The New Centennial Review* 3, Issue 3 (Fall 2003): 263.

6 Ibid., 266. Wynter uses the term "descriptive statement" to refer to the ways all human groups, throughout history, have discursively conceived of themselves as a species. For Wynter, the racial/colonial descriptive statement of "Man" (a white European property-owning male, which then "overrepresents" itself as the human) is the hegemonic descriptive statement of modernity.

7 Ibid., 275.

8 Ibid., 277.

It is this paradigm shift that would lead to the development of the physical sciences (from Isaac Newton onwards) and its post-Enlightenment philosophical correlates (from René Descartes onwards)—both spheres of Euro-modern knowledge resting on the onto-epistemological pillars of mathematical necessity, natural causality, and formal abstraction. As Denise Ferreira da Silva points out, "the emergence of modern science can be described as a shift from a concern with nature…to an inquiry into the *efficient causes of changes in the things of nature*."[9]

We see the movement of this (always already racialized and colonial) temporal order from the natural sciences into philosophical thought with thinkers such as David Hume, Immanuel Kant, and eventually, G.W.F. Hegel. Kant, especially, offers a theoretical framework complementary to these emergent natural scientific rubrics in which the capacity to apprehend physical reality, cognize information, and make determining judgements is dependent upon the possession of pure intuitions of the mind and *a priori* categories of understanding. Such rational mental faculties (which Kant argues all humans possess) are not reliant on experience of the physical world (and thus on the varying spaces and times that may arise from the body's specific socio-cultural situatedness) but are instead derived from pure, transcendental, abstract forms and relations. For this newly constituted rational subject, all phenomena in the world can be reduced to their determining formal properties and relations, and can be seen to exist on a universal scale or grid.[10] Time, especially, is conceived as a discrete object (oddly spatialized, as Henri Bergson points out)[11] that can be measured and classified. The problem with Kant's onto-epistemological formulation—as Wynter, Ferreira da Silva, and numerous other decolonial scholars argue—is his universalization of a logic that is, in truth, specific to the socio-cultural position of the white, European, property-owning male. Kant's extrapolative conceptual move is further made possible by his theory's homogenizing scientific rationale.

The consequence of the Kantian program was the eventual consolidation of racial and cultural difference in the global modern imaginary, as segments of the world's human population believed not to possess these supposedly "universal" and "rational" mental faculties were thought to be sub-human, super-human or not human at all.[12] In the nineteenth century, Hegel's conceptualization of Universal History would extend Kant's (temporal) ontological claims into the sphere of the political, giving concrete form to Kant's hitherto abstract formulations of different human races.[13] For Hegel, (historical) time unfolded in a singular, progressive direction toward the realization of "human" freedom.[14] This unfolding, propelled by what he terms "Spirit," would eventually culminate in the form of a securitized, rights-guaranteeing state.[15] Unsurprisingly, given the racialized metaphysics that underwrite Hegel's framework, his description of humankind's apotheotic juridico-political form bears a striking resemblance to those found in

9 Denise Ferreira da Silva, "1 (life) ÷ 0 (blackness) = ∞ − ∞ or ∞ / ∞: On Matter Beyond the Equation of Value," *e-flux Journal*, Issue #79 (February 2017). https://www.e-flux.com/journal/79/94686/1-life-0-blackness-or-on-matter-beyond-the-equation-of-value/. (italics mine).

10 Ibid.

11 For a discussion of Bergson's critique of modern, mechanised time, see Bliss Cua Lim "Bergson and Postcolonial Critique," *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 43–95.

12 See Zakkiyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2020).

13 See Immanuel Kant, "Determination of the Concept of a Human Race (1785)," in *Anthropology, History, and Education* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Nahum Chandler elucidates the raciality of Kantian teleology in, "Paraontology: Or Notes on the Practical Theoretical Politics of Thought," a lecture presented at the Society for the Humanities, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, October 15, 2018. https://vimeo.com/297769615

14 Hegel writes, "[a]s the essence of Matter is Gravity, so, on the other hand, we may affirm that the substance, the essence of Spirit is Freedom" and "This Spirit of a People is a *determinate* and particular Spirit, and is, as just stated, further modified by the degree of its historical development." See G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, ed. J. Sibree (London, United Kingdom: George Bell & Sons, 1894), 18. See also Hegel's political philosophical treatise, originally published in 1820, *Hegel: Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen W. Wood (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

15 Ibid.

Western Europe at the time. As in the Kantian program, Hegel's dubious historical universalism becomes the metric through which all other human societies and ways of being/knowing are measured. Consequently, given Hegel's insistence on a linear, evolutionary route of historical development, from the primitive state of nature to the private-property-oriented armed state, any society that fails to bear the signs of (in truth, European) markers of civilization are seen to be backward, and so are either in need of further development (the justification for colonialism and imperialism) or are so outside the parameters of European recognizability that they are seen not to belong to history at all, as was the case with Hegel's assertions about Black Africa.

It is this kind of social evolutionary thinking—which is tied to post-Enlightenment temporal logics of natural causality—that crystallizes into Darwinian, biocentric understandings of humanity and, by extension, scientized racial difference in the nineteenth century. With this, to borrow Wynter's language, the white European middle classes were viewed as bio-evolutionarily "selected" and all other (in reality, socio-economically exploited and expropriated) racialized groups, especially Black Africans, were viewed as bio-evolutionarily "dysselected."[16] The legacies of such temporal bias are so deeply rooted in Western thought that it is no surprise why indigeneity today (whether in Africa, the Americas, or the Pacific) is more often than not relegated, in an anachronistic fashion, to an exotic, mythical past, unable to be seen, even by leftist radicals, as belonging to global contemporaneity.

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Besides providing the conceptual templates that made racial difference thinkable, "homogeneous, empty time" was instrumental in securing and reproducing the material subordination of global racialized populations from the late fifteenth century onwards. I am referring here to socially produced regimes of racialized and colonial underdevelopment[17] (or "negative accumulation" in Ferreira da Silva's terms)[18] that would then be rationalized later, using the very same temporal techno-scientific tools, as naturalized byproducts of hierarchical differences among biologically-determined races.

Now, permit me to rehearse a few technical Marxist formulations so as to elucidate the connection between capital and labor on the one hand, and (abstract) time on the other. According to Karl Marx (whose critique of capital draws on Hegel, albeit to different ends), the accumulation of capital arises from the extraction of surplus value in the process of commodity production. Surplus value is equivalent to the difference achieved between the wages paid to the laborer and the exchange value of the commodity that the laborer generates using their human labor power. Wages are determined by the exchange values of labor power, and like all other commodities, labor power's exchange value is determined by what Marx describes as "socially necessary

16 Wynter, "Unsettling The Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom": 310. For an in-depth explication of the indispensability of cinema and aesthetics to Wynter's decolonial intellectual project, see Sylvia Wynter, "Africa: the West and the Analogy of Culture: The Cinematic Text After Man," in *Symbolic Narratives/African Cinema: Audiences, Theories and The Moving Image*, ed. June Givanni (London, United Kingdom: BFI Publishing, 2000); and Sylvia Wynter, "Rethinking Aesthetics: Notes Towards a Deciphering Practice," in *Ex-iles: Essays on Caribbean Cinema*, ed. Mbaye Cham (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 1992).

17 I am directly invoking the historian Walter Rodney, who writes, "[a] second and even more indispensable component of modern underdevelopment is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation: namely, the exploitation of one country by another. All of the countries named as 'underdeveloped' in the world are exploited by others; and the underdevelopment with which the world is now pre-occupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation. African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers. When that happened, exploitation increased and the export of surplus ensued, depriving the societies of the benefit of their natural resources and labour. That is an integral part of underdevelopment in the contemporary sense." See *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (New York, NY: Verso, 2018), 16.

18 See Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Unpayable Debt* (London, United Kingdom: Sternberg Press, 2022), 241–242.

labor time," which, in turn, hinges on his concept of "abstract labor."[19] Socially necessary labor time, as the temporal correlate of abstract labor, establishes a commensurability, a universalizable measure, between the times of all laboring activities in order to arrive at the average time expended in the value-creating activity of the average laborer. According to Marx's account at least, the scientific, homogenization of time is a logical necessity for the theorization of abstract labor, and in turn, for the creation of surplus value and the accumulation of capital.

Following the vital work of decolonial Marxists who shift the locus of capital accumulation outside Europe to its originary scene in the exploitation and expropriation of land and labor in the so-called non-West, it would appear that the homogenization of time functioned as a pragmatic and ideological means of allowing Euro-colonial powers to coordinate a globally dispersed and multi-racialized labor force.[20] (This structure of violent temporal management is still very much at play in our neocolonial and neoliberal present.) Within this Euro-centric world-capitalist system, global racial hierarchies serve to establish a gradated scale of exchange values of labor power, through which greater amounts of surplus value can be extracted in proportion to one's symbolic distance from the "biocentric ethnoclass genre of the human," that is, "Man."[21]

All this is to say that when one speaks of "homogenous, empty time," one speaks of the time of capital. As Marx predicted in the nineteenth century, capitalism's inherent demand for rapacious accumulation leads it to continuously seek out new markets, all in an attempt (never entirely successful) to subsume the entire planet under its calculative domain of efficiency, productivity, and endless growth. Consonant with capital's imperial penetration into the so-called "far-flung" corners of the Earth would be its imposition of a universalizing, mechanistic clock time. Consider, for example, the worldwide adoption of twenty-four standard time zones, all calculated from the Greenwich Prime Meridian, at the International Meridian Conference in 1884.[22]

This abstract clock time relied, for its structural implementation, on the denigration, repression, and curtailment of indigenous temporalities, which colonial-capitalists encountered on their voyages into "undiscovered" territories. As Giordano Nanni writes, in *The Colonisation of Time*, "[m]aintaining an awareness of (clock) time allowed commercial depots, colonial outposts and Christian missions to assume and maintain their nodal position within the circuits of commerce, evangelism and communication which had begun to connect and sustain Britain's growing empire."[23] Nanni also argues that clock time, besides technologically facilitating colonial capitalist expansion, bestowed European colonizers with the psychic comforts of feeling connected to the time of their metropolitan homes as they journeyed through "savage" and "barbaric" lands.[24] Without clocks, white European colonizing populations felt phenomenologically disoriented, unable to locate themselves laterally and longitudinally. Their insistence

19 Different to concrete labor, which refers to the time and energy expended in completing a particular kind of activity for the satisfaction of one's immediate needs, abstract labor refers to the homogenization of all forms of labor for the purposes of commodity production in a modern bourgeois economy.

20 For some decolonial and anticolonial engagements with Marxist theory, see Anibal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America," *International Sociology* 15, Issue 2, (2000): 215-232; Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1989); Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1963); Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Morgan Ndlovu (ed.), *Marxism and Decolonization in the 21st Century: Living Theories and True Ideas* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2021).

21 Wynter, "Unsettling The Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom": 317. For instance, for enslaved Africans, who were symbolically rendered as the West's ultimate Other, the appropriation of surplus value was total given the absence of a wage contract. This is a process that, as Ferreira da Silva powerfully elucidates, structurally absents the ongoing necessity of colonial and racialized labor, which appear as "raw materials" in Marx's surplus value equation, from the process of capital accumulation. See Ferreira da Silva, *Unpayable Debt*, 235–242.

22 Lim, *Translating Time*, 45.

23 Giordano Nanni, *The Colonisation of Time: Ritual, Routine, and Resistance in the British Empire* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2012), 29.

24 Ibid., 26.

on clock time signified a deep-seated fear of their potential engrossment within an "uncivilized" (that is, non-capitalist) temporality.

But rather than simply counterpose plural, local, indigenous times against the homogenous, scientific, and abstract time of capital in a linear, sequential fashion, political theorist Massimiliano Tomba suggests that we instead view these distinct temporalities as layered upon and rubbing up against one other, akin to striated geological plates.[25] Inspired by Marx's engagements in his late life with Russian populists, Tomba explains that Marx rethought his teleological theorization of historical materialism, in which communism could only be achieved after passing through the capitalist stage of economic development. Marx, alternatively, proposed that as capitalism spreads throughout the world, it encounters various indigenous politico-economic structures and mixes with them to engender heterogeneous relations of production (and, thus temporalities).[26] The results of these inter-temporal frictions are entirely unpredictable and could serve as the generative bases of new, unforeseen historical trajectories, including alternative visions of communism.

Tomba's geological metaphor, which leads him to coin the term "chronotones" (*chronos* and *tonos* meaning time and tension in Greek, respectively), allows us to envision the global present as a palimpsestic time-scape comprising heterogeneous temporal layers, some of which, like indigenous temporalities, have been actively suppressed by the homogenizing temporal regimes of modernity/coloniality/capitalism, but which *still* exert agential, frictional pressures of resistance and refusal against these dominant temporal layers.[27] Just as one occasionally observes unexpected bursts of energy from the Earth's lower strata, one might similarly view indigenous temporalities as latent submerged strata that could (and indeed do) erupt at any given moment. Therefore, in this essay, I propose the term "ciné-chronotones" as a framework for theorizing cinema and the moving image as rich aesthetic arenas for the materialization of such decolonial temporal critiques and reconstructions.[28]

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The cinematic apparatus, as a media-imaging technology that came into being in the late nineteenth century, is coterminous with the racialized and colonial ontologization of modern, techno-scientific temporality. During the early twentieth century especially, cinema increasingly became distinguished by its ability to make images move with uncanny smoothness, mimicking the temporalized vision of the human eye. As Bliss Cua Lim argues, following Henri Bergson, analog cinematic imaging remains structurally wedded to a mechanized process through which time is narratively signified by, and ontologically reducible to, the sequencing of discrete framed units of celluloid film.[29] This logic of temporal uniformity and quantization is

25 Massimiliano Tomba, *Insurgent Universality: An Alternative Legacy of Modernity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 10.

26 Ibid., 6.

27 Ibid., 10.

28 My term is also inspired by Kodwo Eshun and Ros Gray's text, "The Militant Image: A Ciné-Geography," *Third Text* 25, Issue 1 (2011): 1–12. Their text discusses the histories, politics, and aesthetics of Third Cinema.

29 Lim, *Translating Time*, 58.

further exacerbated in the digital age wherein images are themselves encoded by and constituted through unique, computational sequences of binaric 0s and 1s.

It is no coincidence that cinema emerged during a period of rapid industrial growth in Europe and North America. Such historically unprecedented boosts to the West's economic productivity in the nineteenth century were fueled by the hyper-accumulation of racial capital, which was derived from the global trade of goods (and human beings) ruthlessly extracted from colonized territories in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Cinema, as a congealed material artifact of this era of racial accumulation, was unsurprisingly used to further the imperial project; for example, through the production of colonial ethnographic films. These ideologically laden films temporally disciplined colonized populations by purposively distancing them from the colonizer's present and freezing them in and as representations of an uncivilized past. Via patronizing voiceovers, intrusive, objectifying close-ups, and partially reconstructed scenes of "authentic" tribal activity, these films, and cinema more broadly, became indispensable devices to the aesthetic manufacture of racial and civilizational difference in the modern world.[30]

Given cinema's fraught material *and* representational relationship to the racialized Other, I propose this very medium as a ripe staging ground for decolonial de/re-compositions of modernity's hegemonic temporal orders. I further propose that we witness such temporal critiques in artworks by Kobby Adi, Samson Kambalu, Sky Hopinka, and Karrabing Film Collective. As "ciné-chronotones," I argue that these decolonial cinemas alert viewers to the heterogenous temporalities that subtend global contemporaneity.

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In Kobby Adi's *Palm Wine Developer For B/W Motion Picture Film* (2023) subtle, experimental adjustments to film's materiality morph into metaphysical meditations of a distinctly decolonial register. Since 2021, Adi has turned to DIY film development and home processing methods, extending his ongoing artistic explorations in sculpture into this lo-tech imaging arena. Adi's investment in film is less about image-making than about the physical processes (the series of bodily actions and/or photo-chemical reactions) that give rise to the resulting image. As is the case with his most recent film works—such as *Atlantic Sequence* (2022) and *hold* (2021) [fig. 2]—these images are often abstract, oblique, layered, and fail to adhere to a clearly defined narrative. Whenever bodies appear (and they're typically Black corporeal forms), one only ever sees them from behind or is given visual access to anonymized details, such as a fungus-infected foot or wet, wavy hair. In this way, Adi's film works enact strategies of representational refusal by trafficking in process-led techniques of 1960s

30 Ibid., 87. For an in-depth discussion on the histories, evolving methodologies, and political problematics of ethnographic film, see also Eliot Weinberger, "The Camera People," *Transition*, Issue 55 (1992): 24–54. Though it focuses more on photography (which is of course related to film as a modern lens-based media), see Ariella Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (New York, NY: Verso, 2019). Cinema's historical-material conditioning by processes of raciality and coloniality has been further interrogated by film-based artist, Onyeka Igwe, in *a so-called archive* (2020) and *Specialised Technique* (2018).

Fig. 1
Kobby Adi, *Whiskey*, 2022. Photo by Lola Pertsowsky.

Fig. 2
Kobby Adi, *hold*, 2021. Photo by Lola Pertsowsky.

structural film as well as Black feminist poetics of opacity to disaggregate the cinematic apparatus' overdetermining logics of racialized capture.[31]

In Adi's *Palm Wine Developer For B/W Motion Picture Film* (2023), such acts of refusal gain a "non-secular" inflection by troubling the disenchanted and industrialized temporal rubrics that organize the cinematic image. Presented as a bound document of instructions for homemade production, inconspicuous display, and wide distribution, Adi's work makes a subversive nod to the aesthetic sensibilities of first-generation Conceptual Art.[32] As the work's title suggests, these instructions walk readers through a fourteen step procedure for using palm wine as a developing chemical agent for reels of celluloid film (the foot length of which Adi includes in his film works' medium specifications, instead of their temporal duration).[33] In small, fragile sculptures

31 Adi himself acknowledges the influence of structural film on his work. For further discussions of structural film, see Peter Gidal, "Theory and Definition of Structural Material Film," originally published in 1976: https://www.luxonline.org.uk/articles/theory_and_definition(1).html. Adi's aesthetics of opacity echo the subversive representational strategies of Lorna Simpson's photo-conceptual works in the 1980s and 1990s, along with many other Black feminist practices, especially, the material-oriented work of Ima-Abasi Okon.

32 I am thinking here of Sol Lewitt's instructional drawings and the disseminative ethos of 1960s Mail Art. Akin to his interventions in the modern cinematic apparatus, Adi reorients the aesthetic strategies of various movements within the late twentieth century Euro-American contemporary art canon (including Conceptual Art, Structural Film, and Institutional Critique) towards decolonial ends.

33 For Adi, the resultant image is not the "work" itself but rather the film reel from which the image derives. This insistence on the film's objecthood both dramatizes cinema's (and by extension, modernity's) spatialization of time, and reflects back on the historical materiality of cinema rather than on the virtuality of the image.

such as *Whiskey* (2022) [fig. 1], Adi foregrounds the physical materiality of the recipe, and film more broadly, by placing a 35mm film negative processed with his homemade palm wine developer in an unassuming matchbox.

Adi's material incorporation of palm wine into the film development process bears a weighty critical significance. Palm wine is a charged substance in the West African symbolic economy, and is used in various contexts from casual, celebratory drinking to more formalized, ritualistic ceremonies. For instance, in Ghana (Adi is of the Akan-British diaspora), palm wine is sometimes used as a libation to call forth and feed ancestral spirits and deities from the otherworld. Such ritualistic acts function as quasi-obligatory memorial performances that index alternative conceptions of time. This is because they spiritually affirm the co-presence and interdependent communion of no-longer entities (spirit-ancestors from the "past") with the world of the living (the "present"). Given that modernity's secularization was itself made possible through a hierarchical delineation between the secular and the non-secular (the categories of the "rational" and the "enlightened" being opposed and superior to the categories of "superstitious" and the "primitive"), Adi's structural incorporation of palm wine into film (the modernist medium *par excellence*) exposes modernity's constitutive colonial operations. In alluding to the time of the spirit realm, which as some African philosophers have argued connotes a time "outside of time," Adi's simple artistic gestures materialize fugitive possibilities for exiting modernity's temporal disciplining grip.[34]

Whereas Adi's film-based temporal critique derives its force from ritualistic substances that are external to the disenchanted cinematic apparatus, Samson Kambalu works within the history of cinema itself, identifying filmic traditions immanent to the medium that most closely embody the Nyau philosophies of the Chewa people in Malawi, where the artist grew up. Since 2015, Kambalu has developed an ongoing body of work known as *Nyau Cinema* [fig. 3]. Akin to his manifesto-publishing artistic predecessors, from the Dadaists to the Situationists (avant-garde movements he consciously identifies with), Kambalu has devised a list of ten defining rules for *Nyau Cinema*. Kambalu writes, "Nyau film must be conceived as a clip no longer than a minute," "Acting must be subtle but otherworldly, transgressive, and playful," "Editing must be limited to the aesthetics of primitive film and silent cinema," and "Nyau cinema must encourage active participation from audience."[35] As I shall soon clarify, these specific rules allow Kambalu to *détourn* the cinematic apparatus towards decolonial ends by upturning the conventional modes of filmic production, distribution, and reception.

Kambalu's *Nyau Cinema* installations are often presented in the form of a row of projectors, placed at varying heights on minimal wooden supports, each projecting a respective Nyau film onto the wall on a continuous loop. In the scores of films that have been made to

34 Oludamini Ogunnaike, *Deep Knowledge: Ways of Knowing in Sufism and Ifa, Two West African Intellectual Traditions* (Pennsylvania, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020). The thematic of time in modern African philosophy has been extensively debated, beginning with John S. Mbiti's (in my view, inaccurate and generalized) claim that "traditional" Africans conceived of time as a two-dimensional phenomenon with a "long past, a present and virtually no future" as opposed to Western thought which conceives of an "indefinite past, present, and infinite future." See John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1969), 16–17. For further philosophical discussions on African conceptions of time, especially in response to Mbiti's arguments, see Kwasi Wiredu, "Time and African Thought," in *Time and Temporality in Intercultural Perspective*, ed. D. Tiemersma and H.A.F. Oosterling, (Atlanta, GA: Brill, 1996); and Fayemi Ademola Kazeem, "Time in Yoruba Culture," *Al-Hikmat*, Vol. 36 (2016): 27–41.

35 "Nyau Cinema Rules," *Frieze*, 2016: https://www.frieze.com/video/nyau-cinema-rules.

Fig 3
Samson Kambalu, installation view of *Introduction to Nyau Cinema*, 2016. Whitechapel Gallery, London, United Kingdom (23 August, 2016–8 January, 2017). Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry Gallery.

Fig. 4
Samson Kambalu, still from *Strip Lander,* 2019. Courtesy the artist and Kate MacGarry Gallery.

date, we see Kambalu perform a series of spontaneous actions in predominantly European urban and rural landscapes: running past a barn with his arms stretched out; circling around a stone monument as if mocking it; emptying a hat filled with heaps of dust; or trying on a boot in the snow only to then instantly disappear. [36] Many of these short films are purposely reminiscent of cinema of the early twentieth century both in terms of their distinct sepia tone and their deployment of older, less sophisticated editing techniques. Kambalu almost always plays with time in these films, often with the use of slow and

36 The artist left Malawi for Europe in 2000 and currently resides in the UK.

sped-up motion, reverse sequencing, or repetitious glitching. Further, Kambalu's instantaneous performances are usually recorded by strangers that he encounters in public space.

The works' references to early cinema as well as their playful conditions of production and experimental editing styles serve as critical means for materializing conceptual proximities to Chewa/Nyau temporalities. "Nyau" both refers to a secret society of the Chewa people as well as the cosmological schemes, thought systems, and masquerading traditions that undergird the society's ways of life. Nyau, Kambalu observes, is additionally "a Chewa word for 'excess' and a philosophy of excess." [37] Intriguingly, it is this quality of irreducible excess that allows Kambalu to identify Nyau with a theorization of the gift economy, which he argues regulates social relations among the Chewa people and structures their non-linear, abundant conceptions of time. Influenced by a series of studies on the notion of the gift, from Marcel Mauss' anthropological writings to Georges Bataille and Jacques Derrida's respective philosophical musings, Kambalu argues that gift economies are "primarily driven by the exchange and squandering of *surplus time* and resources" whereas, in contradistinction, capitalistic economies are motivated by wealth accumulation. [38] Gift-giving therefore engenders a luxuriant, excessive, non-linear conception of time, one that allows for endless play, as opposed to the mechanistic, disciplined time demanded by commodity production and the accumulation of capital. Given the frictions between these two temporal conceptions, it is little surprise that when the British colonized Malawi in the 1890s, Nyau masquerading traditions—such as the "Gule Wamkulu," which give aesthetic form to notions of gift-giving and play through moral transgression, political satire and cathartic corporeal movements—were viewed by Christian missionaries and colonial administrators as an exhibition of "obscenity, sensuality and cruelty," solely responsible for keeping the Chewa people "backwards." [39]

Kambalu refracts these Nyau concepts of "play," and thus excessive time, through the formal languages of cinema [fig. 4]. His works' pointed references to early cinema allude to a historical moment in cinema's nascent development (up until 1906) where linear narrative continuity had not been fully established as a temporal norm. The film historian, Tom Gunning, refers to cinema of this period as a "cinema of attractions" which was "dedicated to presenting discontinuous visual attractions, moments of spectacle rather than narrative." [40] Lim echoes Gunning, noting that the increasing consolidation of the narrative form in cinema after 1906 was due to "authorship and editorial control of films slip[ping] from the hands of exhibitors to those of production companies." [41] Interestingly, Kambalu grew up in a contemporary Malawian context in which these earlier conceptions of cinema were practiced and even perhaps extended by live projectionists who would slice together reels from Hollywood Westerns, film noir, Bruce Lee movies, and local propaganda newsreels for everyday Malawian

37 Samson Kambalu, "Nyau Philosophy: Contemporary Art and the Problem of the Gift – a Paneygric," (PhD thesis, University of the Arts London, 2016), 7.

38 Ibid., (italics mine). Although excess wastage occurs under capitalism, Kambalu argues this is not to be confused with the squandering of surplus resources in gift economies. Wastage under capitalism occurs for calculative reasons of economic efficiency, in other words, it is tied to the maximization of profit for businesses regardless of whether resources are used or distributed fairly or sustainably. In contrast, "wastage" in gift-giving contexts is the result of an impulse towards generosity, a desire to achieve a balance of energy and life-forces among material and immaterial entities (humans, more-than-humans, ancestral spirits, and so on).

39 Douglas Curran, "Nyau Masks and Ritual," *African Arts* 32, Issue 3 (1999): 68.

40 Gunning quoted in Kambalu, "Nyau Philosophy," 37.

41 Lim, *Translating Time*, 64.

audiences.[42] According to Kambalu, the projectionists, in playful Nyau fashion, would employ a range of editing techniques to break up the film's chronologies in order to produce a visceral and participatory cinematic experience for ordinary viewers. Kambalu synthesizes the sensibilities and approaches of these multiply situated "cinemas of attraction" to develop his instantaneous, action-oriented, non-narrative Nyau films.

As mentioned prior, Kambalu embeds notions of play in his films by requesting strangers to record him performing specific actions in various public spaces. Here, Kambalu looks to the Situationists' languid wanderings through, and subversive hijackings of, urban space, which he identifies with the playful, time-squandering rituals of the Nyau. In enacting humorous, spontaneous, place-responsive performances, which are intended to mystify his consenting participants, Kambalu views these works as a form of gift-giving, and by extension, a critique of capital and its reified, scarcity-assumptive temporalities. Nyau cinema can thus be conceived as a ciné-chronotone, given its frictional enfolding of Nyau conceptions of time into the temporal grammars of the modern cinematic apparatus. Just as chronotonic formations engender unpredictable historical trajectories, Nyau cinema indexes the disruptive creation of temporary otherwise relations, momentary revelations of surplus time, between the wandering artist and anonymous individuals.

In contrast to the constrained formal criteria of *Nyau Cinema*, Sky Hopinka's *In Dreams and Autumn* (2021) [figs. 5 and 6] lyrically employs an impressive breadth of filmic techniques to narrate a personal, elliptical tale of loneliness, intergenerational inheritance, ancestral memory, and future-dreaming. Structured as a three-channel video installation lasting just over ten minutes, the work incorporates animated poems, hushed voiceovers, ambient nostalgic music, vivid color filters, and slow-motion editing, in addition to wide shots of natural landscapes, highways, a sports stadium, and an ethnographic display of Indigenous American culture. A member of the Ho-Chunk Nation and a descendant of the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, Hopinka's non-didactic works generate affective ripples that unsettle and pierce through the cinematic apparatus' built-in racial capitalist temporalities.

The strength of *In Dreams and Autumn* lies in its non-linear scenic choreography; meanings of certain visuals and sounds are momentarily withheld but gradually revealed by Hopinka's winding poetry, which takes after a Ho-Chunk Dream Song in both cyclical formal structure and lyrical sensibility. The work begins with moving, abstract bands of colored light. Soon, one sees a lonely figure sitting on a bench staring out into an oceanic horizon. Shortly after, on the outermost screens, one observes point-of-view footage of a vehicle driving along a road, bordered on either side by towering red-rock formations, perhaps located somewhere in the American North-West, near the Ho-Chunk Nation. The rightmost screen, appearing first, moves forward along the road, while the leftmost screen temporally reverses the movement of the former. These simultaneous forward and backward movements play off each other to induce a phenomenological and temporal disorientation in the viewer. At this point, Hopinka begins to read out the lines of one of three self-authored poems, which are addressed as letters to a sibling. "We're the children of a great love, and a great violence. We're the grandchildren of a great love, and a great violence."[43] The poem is not only voiced but appears textually, moving in a straight line at mid-level from the right screen to the left, skipping the middle screen entirely.[44] Hopinka notably embeds a sensorial delay between what is heard and what is read, as the voiceover and the text are narrated at different paces. These formal aesthetic interventions into cinematic temporality within and across multiple screens (via simultaneity, disorientation, and delay) accrue greater socio-political weight when paired with the contents of Hopinka's poems, which convey embodied affects of loss, dread, and longing alongside those of nostalgia, beauty, and possibility.

Fig. 5
Sky Hopinka, still from *In Dreams and Autumn*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and BROADWAY Gallery.

Fig. 6
Sky Hopinka, installation view of *In Dreams and Autumn*, 2021. Courtesy the artist and BROADWAY Gallery.

42 Kambalu, "Nyau Philosophy," 36.

43 Sky Hopinka, *In Dreams and Autumn* (2021).

44 The two other poems bear the same visual appearance as the first but begin and move across different screens.

The first two lines of the poem immediately invoke the notion of "survivance"—the active, enduring presence of Indigenous American populations and the continuing intergenerational transmission of their ways of life under a violent settler colonial regime.[45] Hopinka's poems allegorize the unending terror of U.S. coloniality (enacted through systematic forms of erasure and land dispossession) via allusions to natural daily rhythms: "[o]ur hands shake in the early evenings as the nights get long and we can't see when they'll end."[46] The second poem offers the speculative promise of an "infinite morning," one that "haunts our dreams."[47] Hopinka admits to continually searching for this "morning," which he describes using the elements of air, water, and land. While these elemental symbols generously recur throughout the work in ways reminiscent of the landscape genres of painting and cinema, Hopinka critiques the settler colonial visualities embedded in these imaging histories (and their material implications in expropriative regimes of private property) through aesthetic tactics of defamiliarization and abstraction. For example, lush waterfalls and flora appear only to be made strange through the use of infrared filters, while sublime oceanic expanses are quickly rendered uncanny by reversing the vertical relationship between air and sky.

The work's third and last poem touches on the presence of the ancestors, first personalizing them as "our mothers and our fathers," and soon after describing them as "hues of light and recollections of feelings and emotion."[48] This phrasing recalls the opening animation of abstract bands of light. *In Dreams and Autumn* thus materializes a circular temporal structure, one that reverberates with the non-linear Ho-Chunk Dream Song that Hopinka incorporates both at the beginning and the ending of the work.[49] Hopinka's foregrounding of the poetic, specifically what he and others have referred to as the "ethno-poetic," ought not be misconstrued as a self-marginalizing identitarian discourse but rather as a refashioned indigenous aesthetics that is capable of intervening on a structural, and not merely iconographic, level into the colonial temporal structures that condition the cinematic field.[50] The "ethno" in ethno-poetics points to modernity's externalization of indigenous onto-epistemologies, these constitutive, exteriorized zones of knowing being the very condition of possibility for the decolonial modes of temporal disobedience, the "chronotonicity," that one feels in Hopinka's work.

Likewise, Karrabing Film Collective's *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* (2016) remains resolutely anchored to the contemporary conditions of Aboriginal survivance (specifically of the Emmiyangal people[51]) through and under the Australian settler colonial state, a regime of sustained juridical and economic dispossession beginning as far back as the eighteenth century [figs. 7 and 8]. The work's narrative unfolds in a decidedly non-linear fashion, and is loosely tied around an Indigenous family arguing over what caused their boat's motor to break down, which leaves them stranded in an area with no fresh water.

45 Gerald Vizenor (ed.), *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence*, (Lincoln, NE: University Nebraska Press, 2008).

46 Sky Hopinka, *In Dreams and Autumn* (2021).

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 The Ho-Chunk Dream Song reads as follows:
"Saith the ghost,
'Dream, oh, dream again,
And tell of me, Dream thou!'

Into solitude went I
And wisdom
was revealed to me.
[Saith the ghost,] 'Dream, oh,
dream again,
And tell of me, Dream thou!'

Let the whole world hear me,
Wise am I!
[Now saith the ghost.] 'Tell of me,
Dream thou!'

All was revealed to me; From the beginning
Know I all, hear me! All was revealed to me
[Now saith the ghost,] 'Tell of me,
Dream thou!'"

50 Sky Hopinka interviewed in *Many Lumens with Maōri Karmael Holmes*, June 2022: https://www.blackstarfest.org/manylumens/season-2/sky-hopinka/. Hopinka appears to have been influenced by Eliot Weinberger's writing on the ethnopoetic. Hopinka has cited Weinberger in the form of a wall-based, bird-shaped concrete poem, where Weinberger writes "... there are vast areas of human life to which scientific methodology is inapt; to which ethnographic description must give way to the ethnopoetic: a series of concrete and luminous images, arranged by intuition rather than prescription, and whose shifting configurations—like the points of and between the constellations—map out a piece of the world." See Eliot Weinberger, "The Camera People," *Transition*, Issue 55 (1992): 49.

51 The Emmiyangal people reside largely in rural communities in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Figs. 7 and 8
Karrabing Film Collective, stills from *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams*, 2016.

The work, based on real-life events, is broadly divided into three chapters, through which multiple explanations for the motor's breakdown are narrated. One family member argues that the motor broke down as a result of faulty wiring, while another family member (Linda) appeals to a Christian explanation, stating that "if you put your faith in the Lord, [the motor] will start."[52] One of the other family members (Trevor) insists that it is the spirit-ancestors, who inhabit the land and the surrounding waters, that are responsible for the unfortunate incident. Linda swiftly responds to Trevor, "You want to believe in old people things."[53] Through this pluri-subjective constellation of competing perspectives, the work complicates the status of contemporaneity itself by revealing the overlapping heterogenous temporal layers (the techno-scientific, the Judeo-Christian, and the indigenous) that subtend it, and modernity more broadly.

These temporal frictions are materialized through "near-psychedelic" visual and sonic effects.[54] For example, as Trevor recounts his explanation of ancestral interference, the transparency of the filmic surface becomes destabilized by way of spectral superimpositions and Aboriginal musical chants. Blurring documentary and fictional

52 Karrabing Film Collective, *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* (2016).

53 Ibid.

54 Karrabing Film Collective uses this phrase in the description of their work: https://karrabing.info/all-film-art-projects/wutharr-saltwater-dreams.

strategies, images of the land are layered upon ancestral figures. The ancestors, who are able to smell the sweat of their descendants, decide to punish them as they claim their descendants never visit them. (Recall the ritualistic function of palm wine libation in West Africa, which is supposed to appease the ancestors by acknowledging and feeding them.) At times collapsing into moments of abstraction, these scenes of visual disturbance dramatize the limits of cinema's representational capacities—its inability to figure (temporally distanced) entities that are always already structurally absented by the cinematic apparatus' disenchanted organizing rubrics.

As the stranded Indigenous family have little chance of finding their way back home (which could be interpreted literally and figuratively), they resort to using an emergency flare. However, because the family is not in possession of the required safety equipment, they are eventually fined by the state. The imposition of such racialized state control and its carceral grip on contemporary Indigenous life is signified at several moments in the film: in the beginning, with the sound and appearance of a police car; in the middle, when the stranded family encounters a white man on a boat who appears to be fishing on their reef without legal permission; and later on, when Linda is handed over a tome of bureaucratic forms that she must fill in relation to the offence. *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* thus infuses the colonial specters of the Church, the state, and capital into contemporary life, refusing the hegemony of presentist temporal frameworks. Simultaneously, the work foregrounds the equally spectral presence of the ancestors in the land and the water—a geo-filmic materialization of the suppressed, though active, indigenous temporalities that haunt modernity.

In the film's last chapter, Linda is mysteriously transported from the Church into an undefined space where she converses with her ancestors. Once again, aesthetic strategies of superimposition are used, which layer the land of the "present" onto older archival (and perhaps colonial, ethnographic) clips and images of Aboriginal peoples. Upon being questioned about the possession of a permit, Linda indignantly remarks, "It's 2015!" to which the suspecting Christian missionary responds "It's 1952 and you need a permit."[55] These temporal disputes continue in Linda's dialogue with her ancestors who similarly correct Linda that it is 1952 and additionally insist that they are not dead, but very much alive. Echoing Elizabeth Povinelli's theorization of the "ancestral present," the work's stubborn, non-linear narrative structure conveys the colonial continuum of the settler project with and against the ongoing survivance of the Emmiyangal Aboriginal people in the catastrophic present.[56] Just as *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams* cinematizes the resilient inhabitation of ancestral spirits in contemporary expropriated lands, we can similarly conceive of the global present as a layered, heterogenous time-scape that comprises, in addition to modernity's hegemonic racial capitalist temporality, a plurality of otherwise, indigenous temporalities.

55 Karrabing Film Collective, *Wutharr, Saltwater Dreams*, 2016.

56 Povinelli, an American critical theorist, filmmaker, and professor of anthropology at Columbia University, is the only non-Aboriginal member of the Karrabing Film Collective. See Elizabeth Povinelli, "The Ancestral Present of Oceanic Illusions: Connected and Differentiated in Late Toxic Liberalism," *e-flux Journal*, Issue 112, October 2020. https://www.e-flux.com/journal/112/352823/the-ancestral-present-of-oceanic-illusions-connected-and-differentiated-in-late-toxic-liberalism/.

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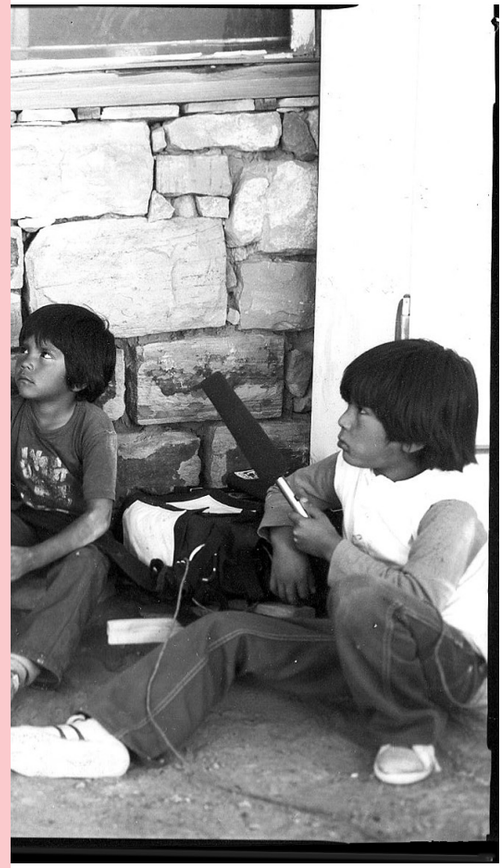
The works of Kobby Adi, Samson Kambalu, Sky Hopinka, and Karrabing Film Collective offer distinct but complementary models that simultaneously account for, reject, and propose alternatives to colonial modernity's hegemonic temporal logics. In doing so, the works function as "ciné-chronotones"—a framework that identifies the formal, conceptual and political stakes of the works' varied decolonial temporal critiques within the context of cinema and the moving image. These globally disparate works forego an overt militancy and instead employ aesthetic strategies of opacity, play, humor, lyricism, and surrealism. Therefore, the selection maintains some distance from the more legibly anti-colonial spirit of previous transnational film movements such as Third Cinema.[57] One could alternatively consider "Fourth Cinema," a term coined by Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay, which describes a cinema of, for, and by Indigenous peoples, and was an attempt to circumvent Third Cinema's (arguably) uncritical ideological embrace of the modern nation-state (and the necessary displacements and exclusions that come with it).[58]

Though I do not have the space here to fully address these film histories, I mention them briefly to acknowledge previous battles, emerging in the Global South, that have been waged in the cinematic arena. Taken together, the contemporary art practices discussed in this essay do not fall neatly into either Third or Fourth Cinema categories, despite the fact that the theoretical frameworks and animating sensibilities developed around such practices are clearly informed by these prior movements in one way or the other. As broadly defined *decolonial cinemas*, these practices incorporate the irreducible insights of plural indigenous thought systems to enact disruptive and reconstructive disturbances in the hegemonic temporal rubrics that organize the cinematic image.

57 Third Cinema arose in the wake of national liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s. Influenced by anti-colonial Marxist thought, it sought to weaponize cinema as an ideological tool for galvanising national consciousness and freeing the juridically and/or mentally colonized masses from neo-colonial domination. See Fernando Solanas and Octavia Getino "Towards a Third Cinema: Notes and Experiences for the Development of a Cinema of Liberation in the Third World," *Black Camera* 13, Issue 1 (Fall 2021): 378–401.

58 See Barry Barclays, "Celebrating Fourth Cinema," *Illusions Magazine*, 2003. Barclays critically distinguishes between the terms "indigenous" and "Indigenous." For Barclays, the latter term is a politicised category reserved for populations, world over, who have been subjected to settler colonial violence and displaced by modern statecraft. This definition would, for instance, distinguish Adi's and Kambalu's practices (who are citizens of or descended from Third World nation-states) from Hopinka's and Karrabing Film Collective's practices (who more closely embody Barclay's conception of the Fourth, Indigenous World). This essay is one attempt at thinking the Third and Fourth worlds together—the enactment of a "poetics of relation," if you will (à la Edouard Glissant). By no means are the various indigenous temporalities discussed in the essay supposed to be rendered as equivalent to one other. Rather, in thinking them together (along with their irreducible differences), I argue that we can better grasp the global dimensions of coloniality/modernity and its diminishment of the world's collective onto-epistemological density.



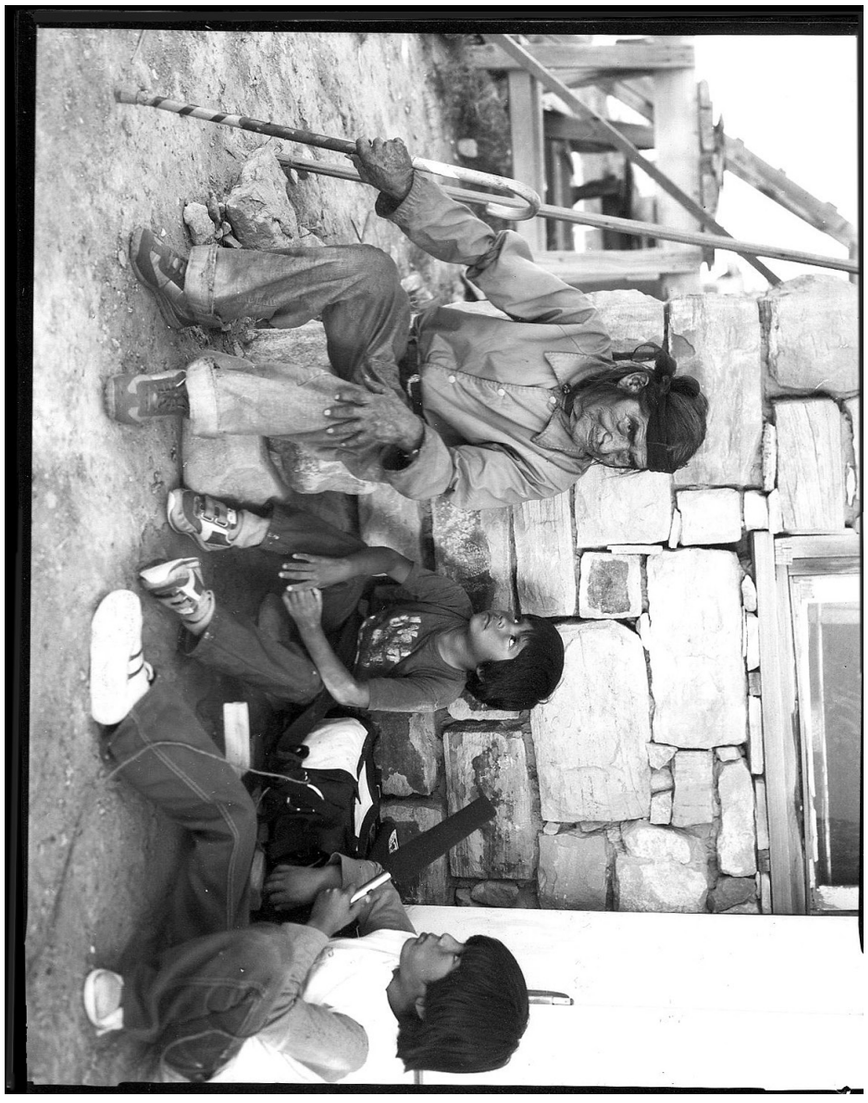
esy the Museum of Modern Art, New York

Duwawisioma, aka Victor Masayesva, Jr., is a filmmaker and artist of Hopi descent and among the first generation of digital-based Indigenous artists. *Itam Hakim, Hopiit* (1984) is Masayesva's second film, and his first made for a non-exclusively Hopi audience. Despite the production being funded by German television, Masayesva resisted a translated voiceover, opting instead for the film's visuals to be accompanied in Hopi without subtitles. English language versions appeared later—but out of fidelity to the artist's original format and intentions, *Clocking Out* presents Masayesva's original Hopi version.

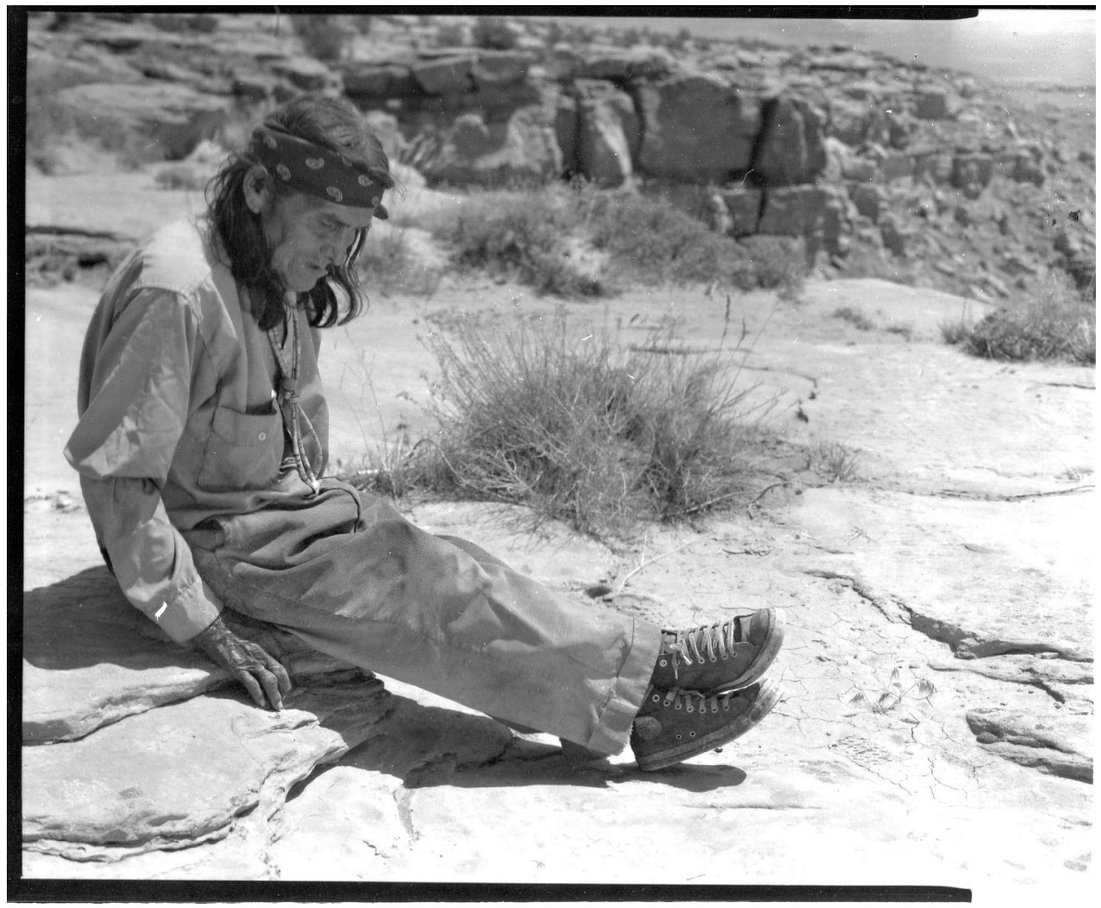
The Hopi language was (and remains) a site of contestation amongst Western linguists and anthropologists. Especially in the first half of the twentieth century, Western scholars claimed that because "time" in Hopi is not grammaticized in a way comparable to Western languages, the Hopi language must not contain any notion of time at all. This argument, known as the "Hopi Time Controversy," was laid to rest with the publication of an exhaustive study of the grammar of time in Hopi in 1983, just two years prior to the release of *Itam Hakim, Hopiit*.

b. 1951 in Hopi Reservation, Arizona, USA.
Lives and works in Hoatvela Village, Arizona, USA.

Masayesva's treatment of time in this documentary feature is subtle yet impactful, often using manipulation of the playback speed. The sped up and slowed down visuals indicate a sense in which events and phenomena are ordered in "hierarchical and dualistic terms," and tease the distance between the in-group and out-group audiences, further confounding the refusal of explanation. Masayesva has gone on to produce several more films which further explore the dynamics between the Western study of Indigenous populations through the medium of film and strategies of resistance from within Indigenous communities.



Duwawisioma, aka Victor Masayesva, Jr., still from *Itam Hakim, Hopiit*, 1984. Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art, New York



Duwawisioma, aka Victor Masayesva, Jr.,
stills from *Itam Hakim, Hopiit*, 1984.
Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art, New York

b. 1973 in Croydon, United Kingdom.
Lives and works in London, United Kingdom.

Rosalind Nashashibi is a Palestinian-English painter and filmmaker whose work centers family relationships in order to challenge the conventions within them, and to look at how space and time are shaped by those we love, care for, and to whom we are inescapably tied. Turning the intimate outwards, her films mix mundane everyday happenings with the mythical and magical, re-enchanting certain quotidian elements that feel noticed but are often subsumbed by larger conversations around politics and sovereignty. In so doing, she shifts the focus onto the structuring principles of those relationships, and calls the viewer's attention to instances when the social systems that have been designed to protect the family structure fail.

In *Denim Sky* (2022), a multi-generational and extended family is introduced to the viewer as they go about seemingly routine, tenderly rendered events: waking up, chatting about current events, taking a family trip, and going to the seaside. When the family is recruited by an outside government body to travel to outer space and come back to tell a story that is outside of time, the viewer witnesses miscommunications form between members, making them increasingly unable to bridge the previously non-existent gaps between themselves. The film asks, what happens when you dismantle received understandings of time? In what ways does this reveal certain failures already embedded within structures of daily life?

Rosalind Nashashibi, still from *Denim Sky*, 2022.


GAP

y

n, New York.

Katie Paterson is an artist engaged with deep time, or time beyond the scale of humanity. Fossils and trace remains are reoccurring media in her work, which often utilizes the materials of scientific inquiry in collaboration with researchers. Dealing with thousands, hundreds of thousands, or millions of years in scale, the projects she presents mark a shift in time that exceeds the average lifespan of one individual, and reaches across generations.

Clocking Out features two certificates of authenticity, presented recto and verso from Paterson's project, *Future Library*, which began in 2014 and will continue until 2114. The work operates by commissioning prominent living authors to contribute a work of literature every year of the project, which is to be sequestered away until the end of the project's duration. In the meantime, an old growth forest outside of Oslo, Norway, has been cleared to produce an archive where the unpublished manuscripts are to be housed, and a new forest has been planted in its place. The trees from this forest will be felled after one hundred years of growth and used to produce the paper for the one thousand editions of the one hundred works of literature. The beholder of a *Future Library (certificate)* will be entitled to the anthology once it is printed and published. Theorized as a gift to the next generation, the *Future Library* also problematizes what eco-literature means and how its material basis impacts the environment. While preaching hope, it seems to also question the sustainability of this model of knowledge distribution at its current industrialized scale.

b. 1981 in Glasgow, United Kingdom.
Lives and works in Fife, United Kingdom.

Katie Paterson, *Future Library (certificate)*, 2014. Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York.

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY

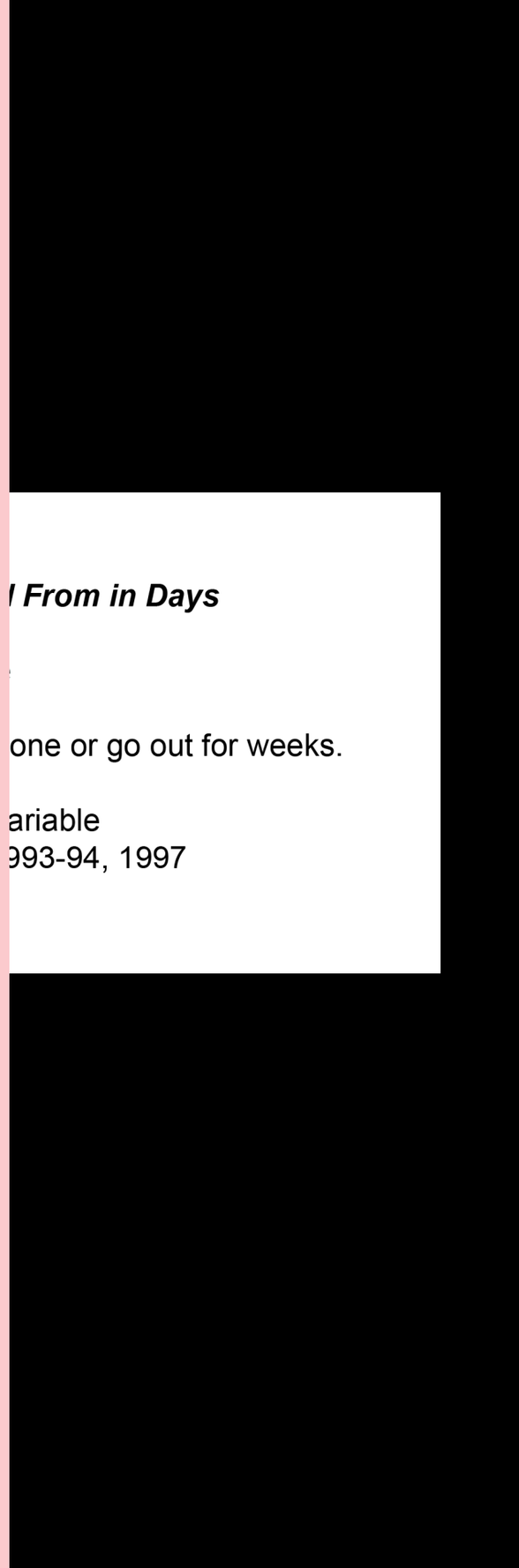
Katie Paterson
Future Library
2014–2114

1/1000

A forest in Norway is growing.
In 100 years from now it will become an anthology of books.

Every year a writer is contributing a text that will be held in trust, unpublished, until 2114. This certificate entitles the owner to one complete set of the texts printed on the paper made from the trees after they are fully grown and cut down in 2114.

Katie Paterson, *Future Library (certificate)*, 2014. Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York.



Dario Robleto

b. 1972 in San Antonio, Texas.
Lives and works in Houston, Texas, USA.

Dario Robleto's cross-disciplinary practice takes varied forms. Although the artist lives and works in Texas, he is often in residence with laboratories or universities to conduct research while writing and teaching. His work interweaves scientific and artistic practices to bridge affective and pragmatic aesthetics, revealing the boundaries between the two to be delicate, porous, and even constructed. Often, the artist will engineer visualizations by extrapolating data from scientific inquiry. In recent work, Robleto gives sculptural form to the earliest attempts to visualize the pulse and heartbeat in the now iconic language of the pulsewave, casting images of them in brass-plated steel. The artist's data engenders a certain social harmony between the engineers of scientific enterprises (many of which Robleto knows personally) and the viewer's own situated, culturally specific, and embodied knowledge, e.g. the beating of one's own heart.

Tucked away in the exhibition, the gentle intervention, *I Haven't Been Heard from In Days* (1997), nearly asks to be missed by those who pass it by. Taking the form of an artwork's wall label, the piece becomes enlivened through the performativity of its encounter. Periods of time (in this instance, more than two decades) subsume the original year of the artwork's creation, while the media description anticipates and anthropomorphizes this temporal conjugation—"sometimes I can't speak to anyone or go out for weeks." Recasting periods of silence as psychoanalytically meaningful corrects a misperception that certain social spaces are empty. In this way, this small confession exceeds ideas of a finite present.

I Haven't Been Heard From in Days

Silence

Sometimes I can't speak to anyone or go out for weeks.

Dimensions variable
1982, 1986-1991, 1993-94, 1997

Dario Robleto, *I Haven't Been Heard From in Days*, 1997

1. *Crip Time*, MMK, Frankfurt
rtist and MMK, Frankfurt.

Working across media as diverse as text-based drawing, alt-text, sculpture, and participatory installation, Finnegan Shannon addresses issues of accessibility in both institutional and public spaces. Emerging from the artist's experience of living with disabilities and suffering when standing or walking, their work speaks to a feeling of being out of sync with the pace of others in such environments by proposing site-specific interventions. In one instance, *The only thing I like about stairs is that they can be used as a place to sit in a pinch* (2021), the artist converted a museum staircase into a seating device, at once increasing the visibility of matters of accessibility and making the space more accommodating for people who cannot climb stairs. In doing so, the artist underscores various ableist assumptions embedded into the design of spaces intended for public audiences by bringing attention to the too often neglected needs of a disabled, aching, or tired body. By introducing functional objects that offer space and time to rest, Shannon focuses attention on the material and visual culture of disability.

b. 1989 in Berkeley, CA.
Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, USA.

In the exhibition space of *Clocking Out*, the visitor will find *Do you want us here or not* (2018). White text on a blue bench reads, "THIS EXHIBITION HAS ASKED ME TO STAND FOR TOO LONG. SIT IF YOU AGREE." Constative and imperative in its appeal to the viewer, Shannon's bench turns an inability to stand into an act of protest. Elsewhere installed in the exhibition is *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?* (2021)—a clock which marks a place to rest or linger. The clock's face demarcates the seven days of the week, and the clock's hand takes an entire week to move through a full rotation. Advancing so slowly that time seems to stand still, the clock proposes a slower pace that breaks with the temporal pressure and physical demands of so-called "everyday" speed.

Finnegan Shannon, installation view of *Have you ever fallen in love with a clock?*, 2021. *Crip Time*, MMK, Frankfurt (September 18, 2021–January 30, 2022). Photo by Diana Pfammatter. Courtesy the artist and MMK, Frankfurt.

Finnegan Shannon, installation view of *Do you want us here or not*, 2018. *Crip Time*, MMK, Frankfurt (September 18, 2021–January 30, 2022). Photo by Diana Pfammatter. Courtesy the artist and MMK, Frankfurt.

Finnegan Shannon, *Do you want us here or not*, 2018. Courtesy the artist.

Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor, still from *Omnia Communia Deserta*, 2020.

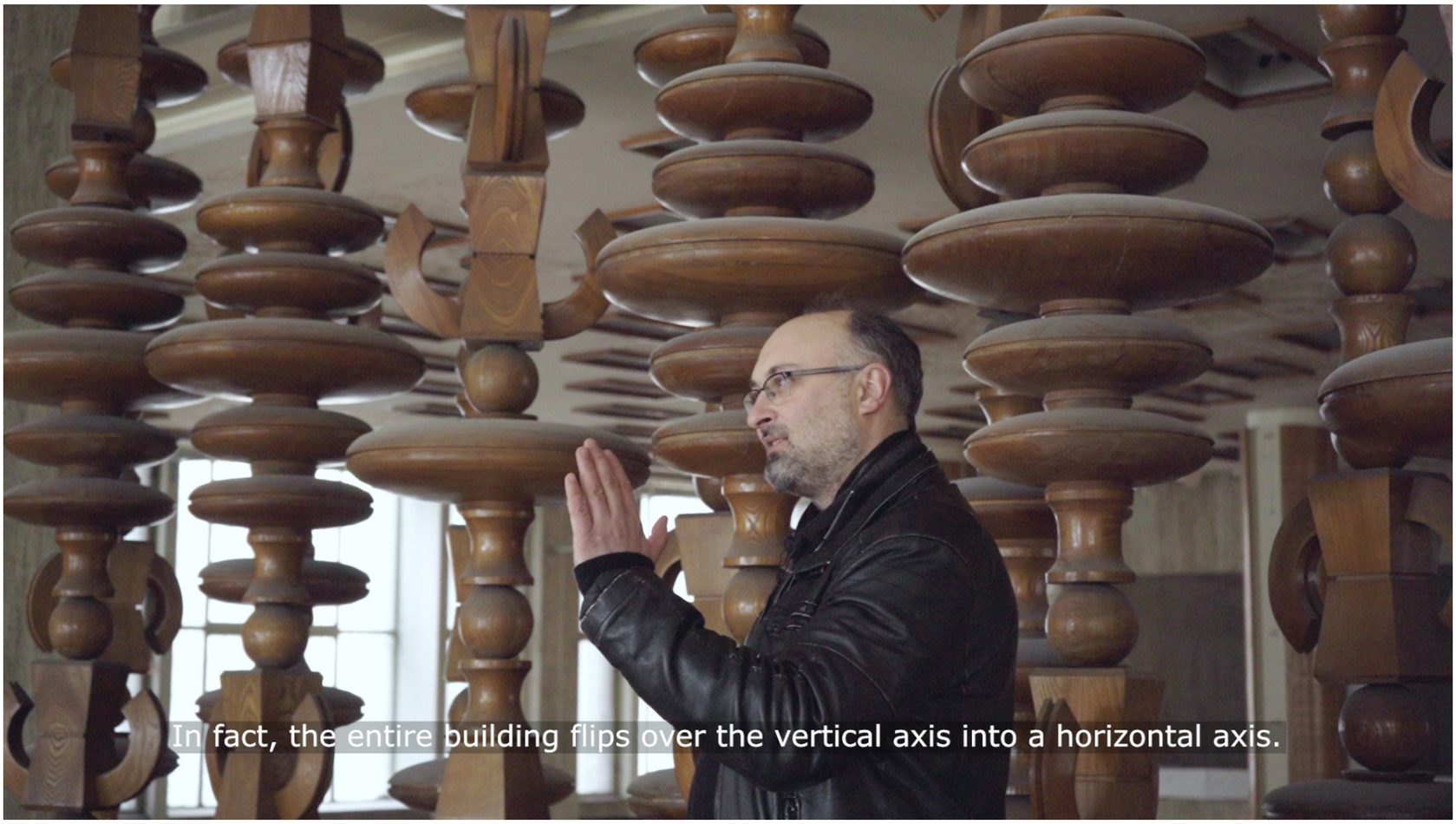
express utopian desires, to uncover the deep hypocrisies of the Romanian Communist Party and peer into a past that at one time gazed into the future. Thus, Omnia Hall is presented as a ruin of the socialist civilization of yesteryear—a bygone sign that signifies how utopian aspirations to achieve efficient modernity were eclipsed by an abuse of power. The localized history of Romanian socialism also serves as a metonym for the combative dynamic between the so-called "East" and "West" on the global stage, as well as the internal conflict and corruption that led to the failed communist state.

Working collaboratively since 2000, the artist duo Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor hone in on issues concerning collective consciousness, the conditions of post-communist Romania, as well as current and historic regimes of power. Their film, *Omnia Communia Deserta* (2020) reflects upon the architecture and social function of Omnia Hall, the Romanian senate and theater of power for Nicolae Ceaușescu (the last Communist leader of Romania, executed in 1989). As the film proceeds, the audience is guided through the building by cultural theorist, Ovidiu Tichindeleanu, whose commentary on the built architecture elucidates the details intended to mythicize Ceaușescu. It also foretells Omnia Hall's current state of dilapidation as symbolizing a larger failure of the commons.

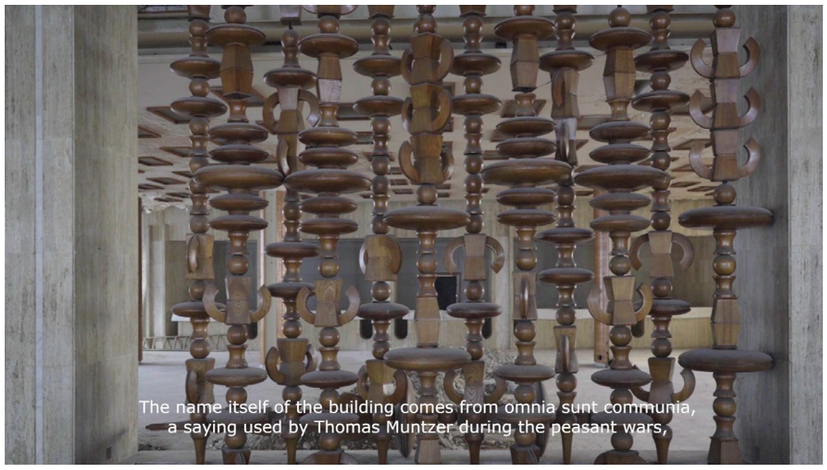
The building's title, and by extension the film's, was derived from a Latin proverb, "omnia sunt communia," meaning "all things in common." Vatamanu and Tudor's film appropriates and adapts the phrase, originally used to

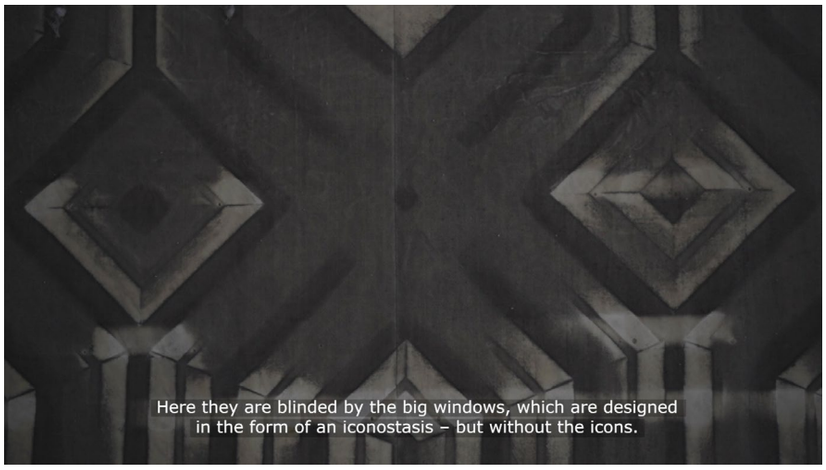
b. 1968 in Constanta, Romania.
Lives and works in Bucharest, Romania and Berlin, Germany.

b. 1974 in Geneva, Switzerland.
Lives and works in Bucharest, Romania and Berlin, Germany.



Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor, still from *Omnia Communia Deserta*, 2020.





Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor, stills from *Omnia Communia Deserta*, 2020.

onceived of a labor note currency to
ity in Ireland, but was not realized

Community – New Harmony, Indiana

ncinnati Time Store – Cincinnati, Ohio

uitable Labour Exchange – London, UK

Time banking refers to a system of bartering in which people exchange goods or other services for I.O.U. notes of labor time. In other words, it is an alternative economy where the unit of currency constitutes a promise of the execution of a given amount of labor in service to the note's beholder. The practice has a long history that predates the standardized use of paper money, and even predates the pegging of state-backed bank notes to a standard weight of gold, silver, or other metal. Time banking continues today, and has been employed towards multiple different political ends, but its origins are in the early development of capitalism amidst the Industrial Revolution.

Often heralded as a founder of the British Socialist movement, the Welsh textile industrialist, Robert Owen, was among the first of the bourgeois social reformers to adapt Ricardian socialist values (with a pinch of Enlightenment charitability and a dash of paternalism). Owen originally gained notoriety for spearheading improved factory working and living conditions by incorporating welfare programs and a cooperative community at the textile mill he owned in New Lanark, Scotland. By 1825, Owen set sail to America and purchased a plot of land in Indiana where he found New Harmony—a planned society where all money and private property was to be banned, and the citizens were to function on a loose credit-based economy and self-sufficient communalism. Owen left New Harmony only two years later in 1827, and the township was dissolved in 1829. Although often regarded as a failure, the experiment at New Harmony was enormously influential and remained in the hearts and minds of Owen's early American followers.

Josiah Warren was one of the members of the brief New Harmony community and became extremely influenced by Owen's 1820 never-realized idea for a labor note intended to alleviate the economic austerity then pervasive in Ireland. After the collapse of New Harmony, Warren settled in Cincinnati where he opened a retail store as a proof of his commitment to the practice of a labor-valued economy. The store was a resounding success, and he spent the rest of his life setting up similar stores and labor-for-labor settlements. Ultimately Warren relocated to New York and founded another socialist utopian community, Modern Times, for which he is best known.

Nonetheless, neither Owen's nor Warren's experiments constituted a time bank in the strictest sense. The first official organized time bank is said to have been invented by Teruka Mizushima in Japan in 1973. Her Volunteer Labour Bank (later renamed the Volunteer Labour Network, or VLN) provided aid to the elderly—an unpaid task that was often left to the women of a family. Time spent by volunteers accrues in an account which can be cashed in later for their own care or spent immediately for goods and services. In the absence of government programs, the VLN stepped up to distribute care within their community—a throughline for many time banking systems.

In the US, time banking as a social practice was led by the law professor and former Kennedy speechwriter, Edgar S. Cahn in the 1990s and early 2000s. As stated in the subtitle to his book, *Time Dollars* (1992), Cahn advocated for a social welfare system that enabled "Americans to turn their hidden resource—time—into personal security and community renewal." Citing a number of small incubators that had successfully integrated a community-driven time banking system, his idea would reward "service credits" to those who provided essential services for those who need them, mirroring the developments made by Mizushima.

Others saw time banking as an inspiration to develop local currencies to help support the economy when the US dollar was particularly weak. Paul Glover, the founder of the Ithaca HOURS, used the promise of labor as a backing device for his local currency in such a way that the HOURS became a kind of unofficial

onceived of a labor note currency to
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Community – New Harmony, Indiana

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uitable Labour Exchange – London, UK

fiat currency that seamlessly integrated into people's spending habits. The users' faith in the HOURS facilitated a stable trade so that the bills hardly represented any payment of labor time. Similar tactics have been attempted in Bitcoin and other crypto currencies, however none have had widespread uptake, probably in part to their lack of geographic specificity.

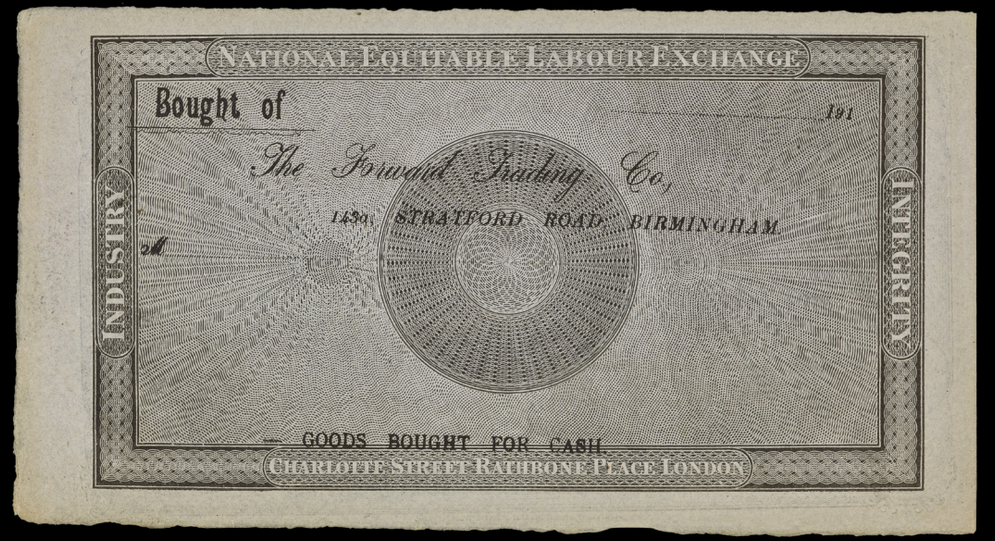
While standard time banks are still in practice all over the world, the concept of labor time currencies has piqued the interest of some in the art world. Julieta Aranda and Antoton Vidokle's 2009–13 project *Time/Bank* installed limited scale time banks in the various places where it was exhibited. More than just a community currency, however, *Time/Bank* insisted on demonstrating the possibility for contingent economies beyond capitalism. When one can see it in practice, it becomes more accessible to think about shifting the status-quo. While other time banks have been the stop-gap solution to a problem, *Time/Bank* focused on being an inspiration to address the cause rather than just the symptoms.

1820 Robert Owen first conceived of a labor note currency to relieve the austerity in Ireland, but was not realized

1825–1827 Owen's New Harmony Community – New Harmony, Indiana

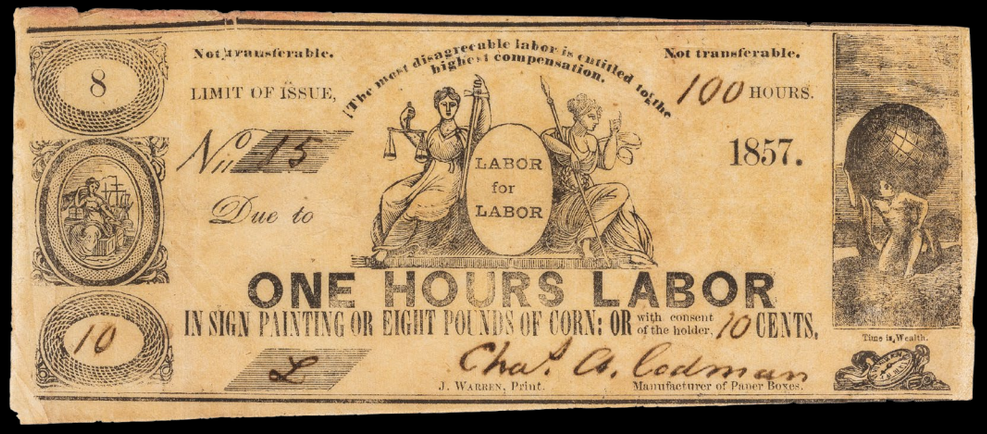
1827–1830 Josiah Warren's Cincinnati Time Store – Cincinnati, Ohio

1830–1832 Owen's National Equitable Labour Exchange – London, UK



"Ten Hour Labor Note," from Robert Owen's National Equitable Labour Exchange in London, 1832. Recto and verso. Courtesy the British Museum.

1840	*What is Property?* by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon
1849	Proudhon's "People's Bank" – Paris, France
1852	*Equitable Commerce: A New Development of Principles* by Warren
1851–1864	Warren's Modern Times Community – Brentwood, NY



"Labor Notes" from Josiah Warren's Modern Times Community, 1857. Denominations of One Hour, Two Hours, and Five Hours. Courtesy the American Antiquarian Society.

1858 Robert Owen dies in Newtown, Wales

1874 Josiah Warren dies in Boston, MA

1875 *Critique of the Gotha Programme* by Karl Marx, in which he considers the use of "Labor Certificates" (*Arbeitszertifikaten*)

1973 The first centralized timebank is organized by Teruko Mitzushima in Japan to take car of the eledery

1991–ongoing Neue Slowenische Kunst State in Time

Dear Zachary Bernard,

You have become a holder of an NSK passport and a participant in the formation of the first global state, the NSK state. In its fundamental articles, this state denies the principles of (limited) territory as well as the principle of national borders, and it advocates the Transnational Law.

The passport is a document of a subversive nature and unique value. A holder fills in data and collects in it stamps, signatures, etc. (at NSK events and similar campaigns).
In this sense, applicability of the passport is unlimited and subject to the responsibility of its holder. Your name and particulars are registered in the NSK citizens' directory.

Please, keep us informed of your activities and the fate of the passport, relate your observations and suggestions regarding the formal constitution of our common NSK state.
Each letter will be considered with care and published in our materials, with your permission.

Sincerely,

NSK Information Center

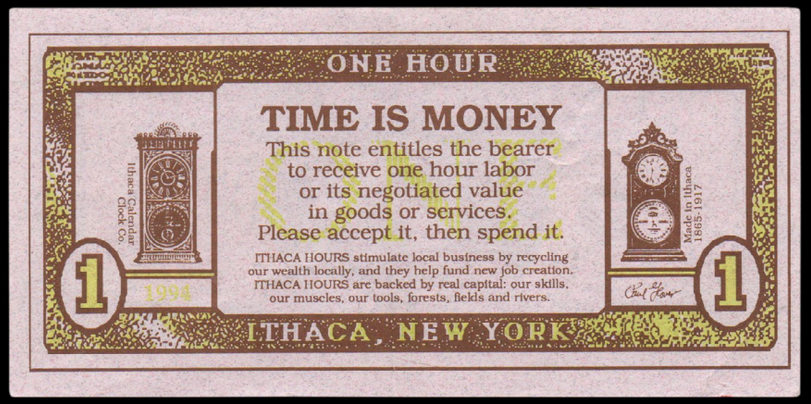
NSk

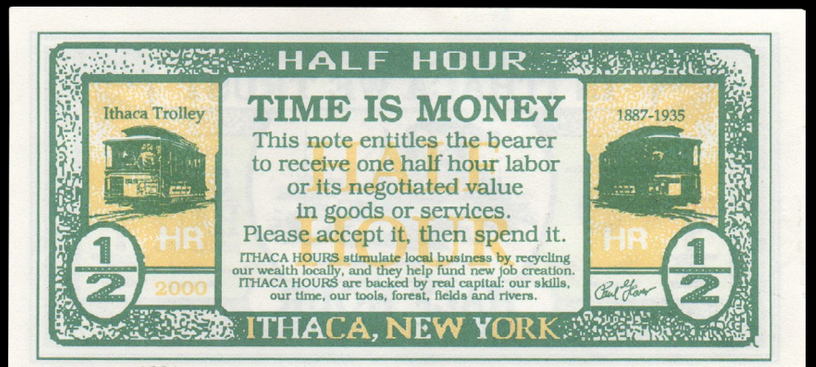
NSK Info center, P.P. 101, 1001 Ljubljana, Slovenia • passport.nsk.si

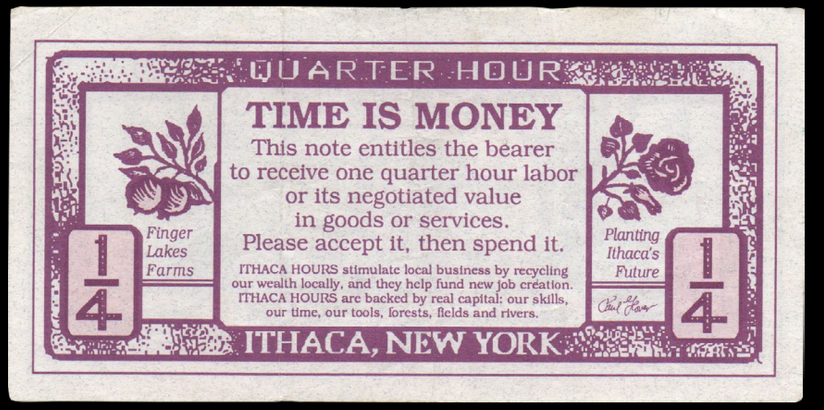
"Letter to Zachary Bernard" issued by the NSK Information Center, and received with the delivery of the author's NSK Passport, 2022.

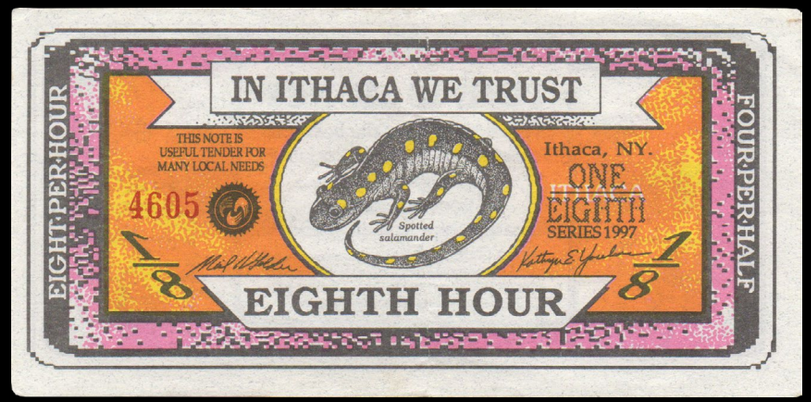
Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK), State in Time Passport, issued to the author, 2022.

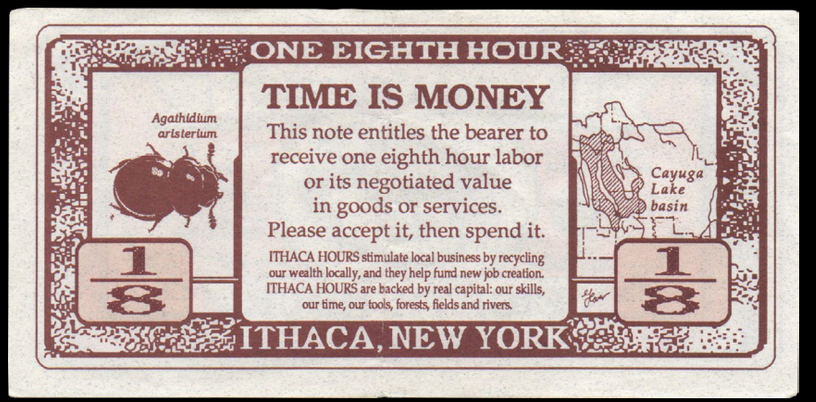
1991 Introduction of the Ithaca HOURS – Ithaca, NY











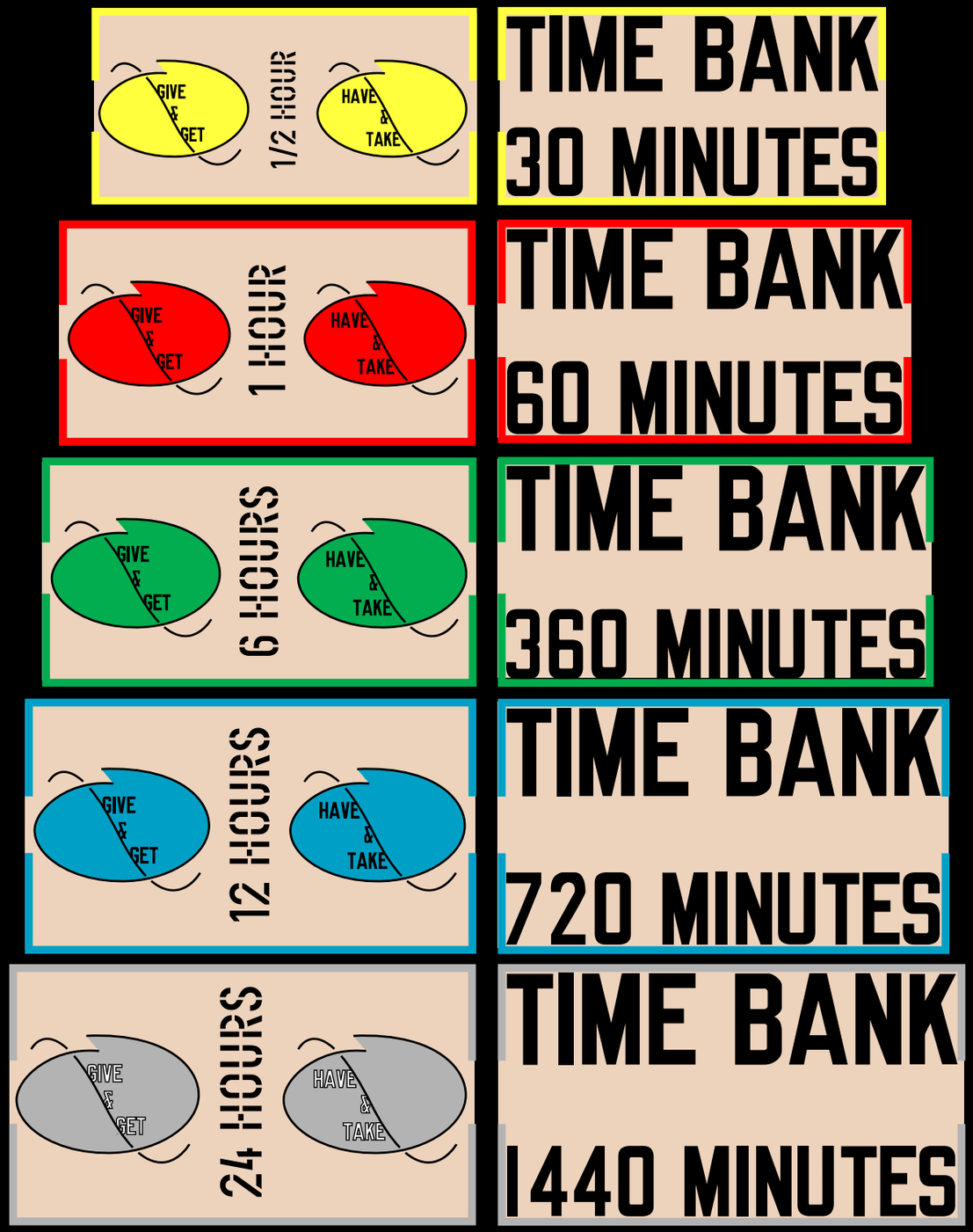
"Ithaca HOURS," from a project initiated by Paul Glover, 1991–2012. Denominations of One Hour, Half Hour, Quarter Hour, One-Eighth Hour. Recto and verso. Purchased with exhibition funds.

1992 *Time Dollars: The New Currency That Enables Americans to Turn Their Hidden Resource-Time-Into Personal Security & Community Renewal* by Edgar S. Cahn and Jonathan Rowe

2010 Ithaca HOURS fall out of favor

2012 HOURS are replaced by “Ithacash,” but it does not catch on

2009–2013 e-flux *Time/Bank*



"Labor Notes," from Julieta Aranda and Anton Vidokle, *Time/Bank*, 2009. Designed by Lawrence Weiner. Denominations of Half Hour, One Hour, Six Hours, Twelve Hours, and Twenty Four Hours. Recto and verso. Courtesy e-flux.