

SURREY ART GALLERY PRESENTS

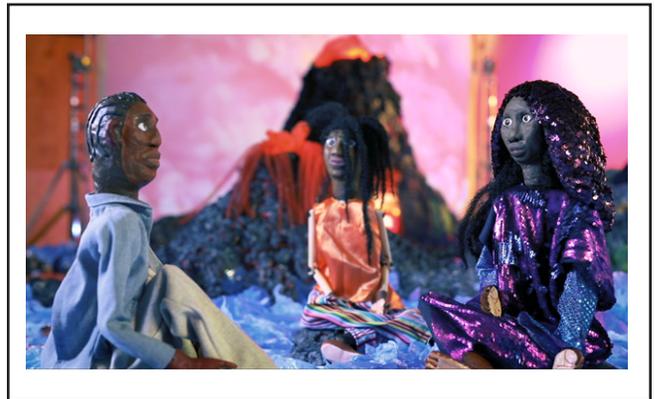
Triangle Trade

Camille Turner, Jérôme Havre, and Cauleen Smith in conversation with Yaniya Lee

YANIYA LEE

Biographies

**JÉRÔME HAVRE
CAMILLE TURNER
CAULEEN SMITH
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by Yaniya Lee

Cauleen Smith, Jérôme Havre, and Camille Turner collaborated on “Triangle Trade” for Gallery TPW, creating multiple imagined worlds by combining each artist’s respective practice: Jérôme sharing his puppetry, Cauleen her film, and Camille her performance. The resulting film follows Jérôme, Cauleen, and Camille’s puppets as they travel across three distinct landscapes, seeking new territory

Triangle Trade
2017

HD Video

14 minutes 31 seconds: sound

that could connect them. The Martinican thinker Édouard Glissant wrote of the outcome of our forced journey to new worlds: “though this experience made you, original victim floating toward the sea’s abysses, an exception, it became something shared and made us, the descendants, one people among others.”¹ Diverse Black diasporas have taken shape across the nation-states of the Americas—and, for that matter, globally. In this way, blackness is infinitely varied. From São Paulo to Port-au-Prince to Houston to Halifax, a multiplicity of histories have formed in response to local environments, even while being shaped by modernity’s foundational anti-blackness. “*TriangleTrade*” is an attempt to look elsewhere, to imagine other worlds in which we might exist. In order to articulate some of the processes and ideas that brought about this collaborative exhibition, the following text knits together a series of interviews conducted over e-mail with each artist.

PLACE

YL: Black people in the African diaspora, born of what Glissant calls the original abyss, have a troubled sense of belonging to land. Can you talk about your relationships to land and geography?

CM: As an American, I think about land in

relationship to genocide and slavery: the two sociocultural-economic projects that white settlers, and peoples dedicated to their colonial project, have used to occupy this giant middle band of the continent we call North America. Exploring the relationship to land and geography is, for me, at the core of this exhibition. I fundamentally celebrate the ways in which Black people have transformed a physiological designation used to mark them into a wrapper for the production of culture. This cultural production is virtually unstoppable throughout this diaspora that has us sprinkled in varying levels of concentration all over the world. Camille Turner: I am standing on Indigenous land and I am thankful for the welcome I have received. My own relationship to land is tempered by a feeling of loss. I am a displaced person. When I journey to the Motherland it is with the understanding that I am a displaced person there as well. My relationship is tenuous even though this land gave birth to my ancestors. I imagine all land as not my land. However, I had an experience when I went to Jamaica, the land where my Mother was born and her Mother before her. It was the only place where I felt a sense of belonging, and yet, it rightly belongs to someone else that I do not know, someone whose family line has been severed due to colonization. This deep questioning of land and

belonging leads back to the central question of what and where is home.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade* (production still featuring Cauleen's puppet), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade* (production stills), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.

JH: Je me rappelle d'un après-midi avant de m'installer au Canada avoir assisté à une conférence littéraire donné au ministère des DOM TOM en France. Une des écrivains présents, originaire des Antilles, parlait de son détachement au territoire français. En effet, elle disait que son omadisme (de salon) l'amenait à se sentir chez elle partout et que probablement c'était sa condition de femme déracinée qui poussait à cette sensation.

Je me souviens avoir pensé à ce que pouvait être de prendre racine dans un terreau non approprié. Ce qui me vient en premier lieu en reformulant la question dans ma langue maternelle c'est un idéal. On devrait penser the land, les territoires en termes d'échange et de partage; cependant ça n'est pas le cas. Je comprends l'espace de mon voisin en fonction des principes qui régissent mon lieu de résidence, aussi cette question en fait naître une autre. Comment appartient-on à un peuple Noir qui ne possède pas d'unité géographique? Nous sommes géographiquement dispersés. Je reconnais une filiation entre moi et une autre personne Noire au Niger, au Brésil, aux États Unis et au Canada. Nous sommes distincts dans nos langues, souvent nos références, parfois nos approches et pourtant.

Before I moved to Canada, I remember attending a literary conference given at the Ministry of Overseas Departments and Territories in France. One of the participating writers was from the Caribbean and she was talking about her detachment from the French territory. In effect, she was saying that her nomadism brought her to feel at home everywhere and that this was her condition as an uprooted woman. I remember wondering what it might mean to take root

in unappropriated loam. When I think of it in French, these questions of how Black people might differently imagine our relationships to land and geography seem somewhat of an ideal. We should think of land—these territories—in terms of exchange and sharing, yet this is not the case. I understand my neighbour's space in relation to principles that govern my place of residence. Also, this question begets another: how do we seem to Black people who don't possess any geographic unity? We are geographically dispersed. I recognize a filiation—or affinity—between myself and another Black person in Nigeria, in Brazil, in the United States, and in Canada. We have distinct languages and references, and even approaches, yet still...

CS: The writer Christina Sharpe has ruminated on “the wake.” I’m still thinking about that wake and the ways in which that is my geography, the psychic space that defines me. The desire for a home, the desire for a rooted life—to be from a place, of a land—seems like an ancient human impulse that I have no way of indulging. My home, my parlour, is in the hull of a cargo ship. My ceremonial garb is lava shards and coral reefs and life vests and shark teeth sewn together with the scars of bullwhips. It sounds

awful, and yet the floating - place, this non-space, makes sense and nonsense simultaneously. It is fertile and rich; it is the substrate of life. From this place, I can see the future and the past and I can make culture in the present. Everywhere I stand on this continent is land soaked with blood. But I stand here because I have nowhere else to stand. This condition keeps me thinking about hospitality. If I were the host, how would I enact hospitality? Or would I deny it in the hope that uninvited guests would leave? Would I invite them into my house? Or would I cast them away, tell them to build their own house, and then tell them they built it on land that is not theirs? Is hospitality harder on the host or on the guest? Hard to say.

COLLABORATION

YL: This type of collaboration is unusual for each of you. What led you to work together to explore questions of diaspora and how did that process unfold?

CS: I was intrigued with how our respective skillsets could complement or challenge each other. Camille was born in Jamaica and then landed—quite like an alien, she says—in Canada as a young girl. Jérôme was raised in Paris, quite a different place than the rest of France, and then immigrated to Canada

because he was interested in existing beyond the confines of nationalism and participating in conversations that explicitly explored blackness. I grew up in an agricultural town in Northern California. From these three positions we are able to offer insight into the experience of becoming Black. **CT:** Our first meeting was over dinner at my place. We explored the idea of forming a kinship group or clan. We riffed on exploring Maasai shukas. We were fascinated that the shuka fabric was a postcolonial adaptation and we wanted to explore it as a symbol for the resilience of global Black cultures that expertly take what they encounter and adapt it to their own needs, using their own sense of style. Through several Skype conversations we came up with the idea of using puppets as avatars to perform ourselves.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade* (production still featuring Jérôme's puppet), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.

The three of us engaged in many conversations to try to get to the bottom of what we hoped to achieve together. We agreed that we were exploring the Black diaspora from our three very different locations. We wanted to articulate our own identities and experiences and see how or if we are connected to each other.

JH: Il ne s'agit pas tant d'une collaboration, que d'une coopération. Ou du moins c'est le postulat de départ. En effet, nous n'avons pas travaillé pour développer la production de l'un de nous, mais faire oeuvre commune. Je connaissais un peu le travail de Camille avant de la rencontrer et j'avais découvert celui de Cauleen lors d'un festival de cinéma indépendant de Toronto. Nous avons chacun une pratique artistique différente. Notre rencontre présageait une stimulante réunion. Nous nous sommes rencontrés ponctuellement. En offrant nos compétences au projet. J'ai l'habitude de travailler seul. J'essaye de combler la connaissance qu'il me manque en apprenant par mes propres moyens. Avec d'autres, les aptitudes sont contrebalancées.

C'était intéressant de remarquer les différentes manières dont chacun s'impliquait, moi y compris, et d'observer à certains moments les dynamiques de comportement en lien avec le développement du travail.

Je n'ai pas le souvenir d'hésitation de l'un de nous à l'idée de travailler ensemble, avec des marionnettes ou du moins pas une qui se soit exprimée à haute voix. Dans mon cas, j'étais enthousiaste. Les séances de travail étaient informelles. J'écoutais attentivement, souvent muet, essayant de suivre le contenu des discussions. C'était comme prendre un train en marche et ne jamais apercevoir les noms des stations sur les panneaux. Les clients accoutumés ne se posent pas de questions. Ils connaissent le trajet, notamment les paysages, les nuances de lumières, le son du vol des insectes, les kilomètres avalés. En ce qui me concerne, à certains moments, j'étais démuni. Aujourd'hui je suis dans le wagon, qui me mène vers une destination que je ne fais que pressentir.

It hasn't been so much a collaboration as a cooperation. Or at least that was the idea we started with. We haven't been working to develop our own individual projects, but to make a collective work. I knew a little of Camille's work before I met her, and I discovered Cauleen's in an independent film festival in Toronto. We all have different artistic practices. Our first meeting promised to be stimulating. We each offered our skills to the project.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade*(production still), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.

I normally work alone. I try to fill in the lack in my knowledge through my own means. Working together, our aptitudes could balance each other. It was interesting to see the different ways that we engaged ourselves, myself included, and at certain moments to watch the dynamics of our behaviour in relation to the work's development.

I don't remember any of us having hesitations around the idea of working together, with the marionettes, or at least none that were spoken out loud. I know that I was enthusiastic. Our work sessions were informal. I listened attentively, and often silently, trying to follow the contents of the discussions. It was like getting on a moving train, never seeing the signs that give the names of the stations. Frequent passengers don't ask questions.

They know the route, the landscapes, the nuances of light, the sounds of the flying insects, the kilometres that speed by. In my case, at a certain point, I was helpless. Today I am in the train car, which is carrying me toward a destination I can only guess at.

MARIONNETTES

YL: Could you describe your relationship to puppets?

JH: La marionnette m'a intéressé parce qu'elle oblitère le manipulateur alors qu'il est toujours visible. Elle retient les regards. On la connaît manichéenne lorsqu'elle s'adresse aux plus jeunes, nuancée face aux adultes. Elle s'expose en communiquant les idées de son auteur, et fait appel à une croyance primitive, qui veut qu'elle soit une extension de soi. Elle fait se rencontrer l'incarnation et le besoin d'ailleurs. Elle réussit à atteindre les émotions probablement parce que l'illusion est envoutante et en même temps imparfaite puisqu'elle révèle ses ficelles.

La marionnette apparaît de manière progressive dans mon oeuvre, tout d’abord sous forme de sculpture en textile récupéré, à taille humaine, ensuite réduite et articulée avec des armatures de métal, et enfin en bois, composée de plusieurs parties, actionnée par des marionnettistes visibles par l’audience.

Ce processus est simple il est lié à la volonté de m’introduire dans le spectacle vivant et de conter des histoires à travers un objet intermédiaire, auquel j’apprends à donner vie, de m’impliquer dans le développement de la production, qui va de la création des formes, à l’écriture d’un scénario, à la fabrication de marionnettes, à leur maîtrise, du décor et de mise en scène. Cet ensemble de choses m’est inspirée par des films, des artistes visuels, des scénographes qui ont employés la marionnette ou des formes similaires : le bunraku - dans le théâtre japonais, Oskar Schlemmer et le « Triadic Ballet », Gisèle Vienne et « la convention des ventriloques », la série télévisée britannique des années 60 « Thunderbirds » de Gerry et Sylvia Anderson, le royal de luxe et son géant, la statuette Bété, l’excellent Alexander Mergold, Wael Shawky et son film « Crusades Cabaret », le réalisateur Paul Wegener et « le Golem » ou bien encore le Pinocchio de Carlo Collodi, pour ne citer que ceux-là.

I became interested in puppets because they eclipse the puppeteer even while he is still visible. All eyes are turned toward the puppet. We know it to be Manichaeian [distinctly separating puppet and puppeteer] when it addresses children and more nuanced before adults. The puppet appears, communicating the ideas of its maker, and calls on a primitive belief that wants it to be an extension of the self. Moreover, it brings about the meeting of incarnation and need. The puppet manages to reach our emotions, most likely because the illusion is mesmerizing and simultaneously imperfect; its strings are showing. Puppets have appeared in my own work progressively: first, in the form of human-size sculptures made of found textiles; then they were scaled down and given moving joints; and later still made with metal or wood frames and composed of several movable parts to be operated by puppeteers.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade*(production still), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.

This process is simple. It is linked to my desire to introduce myself into performance and tell stories through an intermediary object—to which I learn to give life and with which I could develop new forms of making. These include script writing, puppet production and manipulation, and set design.

*This set of interests is inspired by films, visual artists, and production designers who have used puppets or similar forms: bunraku, a seventeenth-century form of Japanese puppet theatre; Bauhaus artist Oskar Schlemmer and the Triadic Ballet (1922); Gisèle Vienne’s production *The Ventriloquists’ Convention* (2015); *Thunderbirds*, the 1960s British television series by Gerry and Sylvia Anderson; the street theatre company *Royale de Luxe’s* *Giants* spectacular; *Bété* statuettes from the Ivory Coast; the excellent marionette sculptor Alexander Mergold; artist Wael Shawky’s film trilogy *Cabaret Crusades* (2010–15); director Paul Wegener’s silent horror film *The Golem* (1915); or even Carlo Collodi’s novel *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1883), to name a few.*



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade*(production still), 2017. Image courtesy of Jérôme Havre.

NEW WORLDS

YL: What was the process of creating the landscapes for the film? Was each one a different topography?

CT: We came together for ten days of studio production time. We created sets and filmed our puppets performing in our worlds. I created an ethereal world that was collectively dreamt into being by the African diaspora. My world was an icy planet. Cauleen asked me one day if I realized I had created Canada. For some reason, I hadn't thought of that. I was just obsessed with the need to build something magical and ethereal. The landscape is serene, haunting, and dreamlike. Jérôme's world was an island upon which he was isolated and from which he wanted to explore the world. Cauleen's was a powerful and volatile volcano that threatened to destroy the world. Through that destruction, it created more land that brought us together.

CS: The idea of building three different topographies excited me for its potential to be a metaphor for our specific and individual conditions as artists, as citizens, as migrants and/or travelers. Many of the neighboring planets in our solar system, and surely beyond, feature active volcanoes just as our planet does, but the volcano in this film is a decidedly earthbound topography, however speculative. People have lived beside volcanoes for centuries and have

deep ties to them; indeed they may feel that the volcano and all she makes is theirs, and that's cool. I just playfully suggest that those of us who have no (place to) land might imagine the glassy-hard, freshly cooled lava of the volcano as an uncolonized autonomous zone. And then, of course, what happens to volcanoes as they cool down? They become, to quote poet Dionne Brand, land to light on. First for birds and aquatic species, and then eventually for the rest of us. But birds are crucial because their guano becomes the soil that nourishes. And then my friends Luis and Chris pointed out the rather hilarious subconscious metaphorical links between volcanoes and my national identity: all-consuming, highly lethal, destructive, powerful forces that can surround and smother smaller entities... kinda like the good ole USA. And I would be obfuscating if I did not admit that the most hilarious part about choosing the volcano as my topography is the spontaneous and expressive "blowing of one's top" which I am not unknown for doing from time to time.

Making the film helped me further push, understand, and define my own awareness of the possibilities of - in film. Usually when we think of improvising in cinema, we think of actors riffing off one another and their environment. But lately I've been thinking about improvisational filmmaking as having the possibility of allowing all players (actors, crew, writers, directors) the ways and means of creating contemporaneously. I was not trying to apply this hare-brained notion (which I've been cultivating for awhile) onto this project, but it just seemed to be what happened! In this project, we invented the narrative thread as we built the sets and shot. That's very late in the process in traditional filmmaking and the risks are high. Some challenges, like narrative climax, we solved easily. Other challenges less so. I'm so grateful for the experience. It's a gift to have a job that continually teaches. I change what I make based on what learn as well as what I already think I know... that's exhilarating. I guess the downside of this is that mastery is an impossibility.

TORONTO

YL: Was there anything special about making this work in Toronto?

CS: Visiting Toronto repeatedly has been like living

in a sci-fi novel. Each time I cross the border, I enter a parallel universe so very similar to my own and yet profoundly different. My goodness, how amusing and befuddling it is to visit a country and feel just like I feel in my own country: simultaneously very much at home and profoundly alien. The city of Toronto, as best I can tell, is a bit of a conundrum within its own country. To be from Toronto, it strikes me, means that one must understand oneself within the tides and tribulations of many world histories that bring people to this city generation after generation; dislocation helps generate the dynamism of this city.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade* (production still featuring Camille's puppet), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.

JH: A Toronto ce que j'ai pu constater sont que les artistes de couleurs avancent dans leurs pratiques avec leurs pairs. Ils retrouvent des personnes de couleur à toutes les strates de la chaîne culturelle ou presque. Du coup un « Noir artiste » à Toronto trouve une communauté confortable, mobile et articulée. C'est une visibilité et un regroupement indispensable dans le développement du travail d'un artiste.

In Toronto I saw artists of colour developing their practices with their peers. They could find POC in all strata of cultural work, or almost. So, then, a "Black artist" in Toronto encounters a comfortable community that's actualized, mobile, and vibrant. This organization and this visibility is indispensable to the development of the work of an artist.

BLACK LIFE

YL: Can you talk about some of the ways in which racialization has affected your movement through the world? Has it influenced your work in any way?

CT: My work exploring home came out of my personal experiences. Even as a small child in Jamaica in the 1960s I was acutely aware of colour codes embedded in the social fabric of the newly developing country. For instance, despite the nation's motto—"out of many, one people"—contestants of the Miss Jamaica beauty pageants on TV were categorized by

gradations of melanin. It was clear that Miss Sandalwood or Miss Rosewood would always win, even though Miss Ebony— whose skin tones matched the majority of Jamaicans— was the most popular contestant. My encounters with the subject of history in Canadian classrooms was another kind of discomfort. Canada was presented as a nation in which a few Indigenous folks, who lived in an irretrievable past, were replaced by white pioneers who built and owned the country. Whenever slavery was mentioned, all eyes turned to the only Black student in the class. Me. This degradation was presented as the definitive origin of my ancestors. There was no context for what happened. Shame engulfed me.

JH: Par racialisation tu parles de donner un caractère racial. J'ai pris conscience que j'étais racisé lorsque je me suis retrouvé jeune adulte noir, seul, hors de France. Je prenais conscience pour la première fois qu'on distinguait ma peau de ma nationalité. Dans mes années de lycée la transmission de l'histoire coloniale était minorée et s'effaçait devant une histoire qui prétendait être plus globale. C'est de manière distante, isolée et par volonté d'incorporation que j'ai assimilé l'histoire qui m'était transmise et c'est aussi sans confrontation directe ayant pour sujet ma couleur de peau ou le questionnement de

mon identité nationale. Je n'avais pas été amené à interroger et à interpréter les réalités sociales dans une perspective historique et critique. Cette première longue expérience en dehors de mes frontières a définitivement et profondément modifié et aiguisé mon regard. Je dirais que j'ai vécu avant ce déplacement dans un environnement qui me racise et auquel je ne répondais pas dans mon quotidien parce que j'étais atteint de cécité et quand il y a eu des incursions racistes dans ma sphère je n'avais pas le vocabulaire pour les décrire. Le sentiment demeurait en termes de doute.

C'est à partir de ce voyage que j'ai soudainement développé une création éloignée de l'enseignement artistique dispensé. J'avais à tâtons sans visualiser une cible précise. Je me suis mis à désapprendre et à reformuler, ainsi qu'à réparer ce qui pouvait être. Pour qui connaît mon travail de cette période, cela fait du sens.

I became aware that I was racialized when I found myself as a Black adult, alone, outside of France. For the first time I became conscious of the fact that my skin was being noted separately from my nationality. During my high-school years, there was minimal teaching of the history of colonization, and it paled in comparison to the history that purported to be more "global." It's in

this distant way—in isolation and trying to integrate—that I assimilated the history that was taught to me, without any direct confrontation regarding my skin colour or questioning of my national identity. I wasn't brought to question and interpret social realities from a critical historical perspective. My first experience outside my national borders profoundly modified and sharpened my perspective. Before this move, I still lived in an environment that racialized me, yet I did not respond to this in my everyday life because I was blind to it. When there were racist incursions into my world, I didn't have the vocabulary to describe them. This feeling stayed with me as a form of self-doubt. After that trip, I suddenly started to develop a practice that was distanced from the artistic methods that were being taught to me. I was groping forward with no precise goal. I began to unlearn and reformulate, and to repair what could be.

CS: In the US, anti-blackness is used as a tool to unite and galvanize immigrant populations into their new identities as Americans. Immigrants are encouraged to imagine themselves in solidarity with the white supremacist doctrines that describe our social structures. In my country, the "American Dream" tells us that people build themselves up from nothing

and that those who fail to do so are bad people. Ironically of the people who celebrate their success in America by declaring that they came here with “nothing” have enjoyed considerably more wealth, privilege, and social support than Black people can expect to this very day, while also enjoying the basic human rights and privileges that African-Americans fought to legislate. When I think about “nothingness,” I think about bodies at the bottom of the ocean: three hundred years ago in the Atlantic, forty years ago off the coast of Florida and right now, today, off the coast of Italy.



Jérôme Havre, Cauleen Smith, and Camille Turner, *Triangle Trade* (production still), 2017. Documentation: Alyssa Bistonath.

JH: Est-ce que ce mécanisme de négation qui se joue contre nous conduit à une identification raciale?

Nous sommes à la fois niés et pourtant nous servons d’appui et de soutien. Ne pas reconnaître en nous, femmes et hommes noirs, une égalité fondamentale à tout autre, c’est volontairement pérenniser l’altérité. Et quand cette distinction nous fait perdre notre compassion nous n’avons d’autres choix que répondre par la violence. Nous sommes prisonniers, comme Noir, de la structure racaliste dans laquelle nous sommes.

Un des moyens d’en sortir c’est de démonter cette même structure, à partir duquel on va réinventer nos espaces de vies. Il s’agit d’en reprendre possession et d’avoir conscience en tant qu’individu racisé des différences de traitements subis et de parvenir à les sublimer, en réimaginant le futur. À commencer par des actes simples d’échanges, d’écoute et de répartition équitable. La guérison passe par imaginer et positiver des valeurs qui nous correspondent et pas d’endosser au berceau celles qu’on nous attribue.

Does the mechanism of negation that works against us lead to racial identification? We are prisoners, as Black people, of the racial structure in which we exist. We are denied our existence and yet we serve as support and brace.

To not recognize in us—Black women and Black men—a fundamental equality is to ensure the continued existence of otherness. And when this distinction makes us lose our compassion, we don't have any other choice than to respond with violence. One way to escape this is to dismantle the structure and reinvent our life spaces. This means, as racialized individuals, having consciousness of the different treatments we have suffered, retaking possession of them, and sublimating them in order to reimagine the future. Start with simple acts of exchange, listening, and equitable distribution. Healing comes through imagining and positing values that correspond to us, and not taking on the ones attributed to us.

CT: Through my PhD research I'm grappling with how art can be used as a tool to recover Black subjectivities from an era when, in Canada, Black lives were legally considered white property.

My curiosity was sparked when I moved into the Grange neighbourhood in downtown Toronto ten years ago. I knew from both a friend who had lived there in the 1940s and my father, who was here in the '60s, that this area had been home to a vibrant Black community. However, walking through the neighbourhood at that time, there was little that

marked the story on the land. I decided to create a walking tour that would present these histories. I named the piece Miss Canadiana's Heritage and Culture Walking Tour. Afua Cooper was the historian/researcher on the project and to my surprise, she introduced me not just to Black histories from the '40s to '60s but stories from as far back as 1793, when the town was founded. Through Afua, I learned that some of these early Black settlers had arrived on these shores as the property of white settlers. Recovering the stories of these early Black settlers became a passion and I decided to undertake a Masters Degree, working with postcolonial theatre scholar Honor Ford-Smith to deepen my engagement with the topic and to explore performance as a means of research. After my Masters I found myself on the other side of the Atlantic, exploring Afrofuturism in Senegal, but instead of pondering the future, I came face-to-face with physical and spectral traces of the past.

CS: I'm like most artists: making stuff was the only thing that ever felt right. So whenever I wanted to feel right I made stuff, and then I learned you could get away with getting a degree in making stuff, so I did that. And then I realized that I was such a maladjusted individual that I was pretty much useless to the world unless I figured out how to continue

to make stuff. And then I discovered that I could make stuff that generated conversations about things that I cared about and that other people who saw the stuff maybe cared about too. That is a way of making community. Community is the base module for survival. And so, for me, making stuff describes the ways and means of my survival.

Interviews conducted and compiled by **Yaniya Lee**.
1 Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997): 8.

Contributor Biographies

Jérôme Havre

Jérôme Havre's art practice focuses on issues of identity, community, and territory, investigating the political and sociological processes of contemporary life as they relate to nationalism in France and Canada. Havre adopts a multidisciplinary approach in his exploration of these themes and their attending questions; he uses myriad tools and methods to make tangible the conditions of identity within situations of social transformation. Havre completed his studies at l'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts (Paris). Since 2001, he has exhibited in Europe, Africa, and North America. Recent shows include *Talking Back*, Otherwise, Jackman Humanities Institute, University of Toronto; *Paradis: La fabrique de l'image*, espace d'art contemporain 14°N 61°W, Martinique; *Land Marks*, Art Gallery of Peterborough, Ontario; *Liminal* (Necessity and accident), The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, ON; *Reiteration*, Art Gallery of

Ontario, Toronto; and *Poetry of Geopolitics*, Koffler Gallery, Toronto. He is currently based in Toronto.

Camille Turner

Camille Turner is an explorer of race, space, home and belonging. Straddling media, social practice, installation and performance art, her work has been presented throughout Canada and internationally. *Wanted*, a collaboration with Camal Pirbhai, was presented most recently by the Art Gallery of Ontario and uses the trope of fashion to transform 18th century newspaper posts by Canadian slave owners into contemporary fashion ads. *Freedom Tours*, created collaboratively with Cree-Metis artist Cheryl L'Hirondelle is a national commission for LandMarks 2017/Repères 2017 that consists of participatory, site-specific events that re-imagine and reanimate land and water from African Diasporic and Indigenous perspectives. The Afronautic Research Lab is a futuristic reading room in which participants encounter silenced evidence of slavery and racial violence in Canada. *The Landscape of Forgetting*, a walk created collaboratively with Alana Bartol and sonic walks *HUSH HARBOUR* and *The Resistance of Peggy Pompadour* evoke sites of Black memory that reimagine the Canadian landscape. *Miss Canadiana*, one of her earliest projects, challenges perceptions of Canadianness and troubles the unspoken binary of "real Canadian" and "diverse other". Camille is the founder of Outerregion, an Afrofuturist performance group. She has lectured at various institutions such as University of Toronto, Algoma University and Toronto School of Art and is a graduate of Ontario College of Art and Design and York University's Masters in Environmental Studies program where she is currently a PhD candidate.

Cauleen Smith

Cauleen Smith (born Riverside, California, 1967) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work reflects upon the everyday possibilities of the imagination. Operating in multiple materials and arenas, Smith roots her work firmly within the discourse of mid-twentieth-century experimental film. Drawing from structuralism, third world cinema, and science fiction, she makes things that deploy the tactics of these disciplines while offering a phenomenological experience for spectators and participants. Her films, objects, and installations have been featured in group exhibitions. Studio Museum of Harlem, Houston Contemporary Art Museum; Yerba Buena Center for Art, and the New Museum, New York, D21 Leipzig and Decad, Berlin. She has had solo shows for her films and installations at The Kitchen, MCA Chicago, Threewalls, Chicago. She shows her drawings and 2D work with Corbett vs. Dempsey. Smith is the recipient of several grants and awards including the Rockefeller Media Arts Award, Creative Capital Film /Video, Chicago 3Arts Grant, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Chicago Expo Artadia Award, and Rauschenberg Residency. Smith was born in Riverside, California and grew up in Sacramento. She earned a BA in Creative Arts from San Francisco State University and an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles School of Theater Film and Television. Smith is based in the great city of Chicago and serves as faculty for the Vermont College of Fine Arts low-residency MFA program.

Yaniya Lee

Yaniya Lee is a Toronto-based writer and editor whose interdisciplinary research questions critical-reading practices and the ethics of aesthetics. Lee looks to the work of black artists and black studies thinkers to reconsider Canadian art histories. Her writing has appeared in *Flash*, *FADER*, *Vulture*, *Canadian Art*, *C Magazine*, *Vice* and *Magenta*, and in 2017-2018 she was writer-in-residence at Gallery 44. She is a founding collective member of *MICE Magazine* and was previously a member of the editorial advisory committees for *FUSE Magazine* and *C Magazine*. She is now a member of the EMILIA-AMALIA working group. Currently, Lee works as associate editor at *Canadian Art* magazine and teaches Art Criticism at the University of Toronto.

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