

THAÍS DOS SANTOS SILVA

**INHABITING PLACES,
CREATING THIRD
SPACES:
SITE-SPECIFIC
PRACTICES TO
CHALLENGE
COLONIALITY**

**HOME OF
PERFORMANCE
PRACTICES**

GRAPHY
RFORMANCE ART
CES
ODY
RFORMANCE
OGRAPHY
T PERFORMANCE ART
ATRE PRACTICES
SCIPLINED BODY
OGRAPHY
CE ART
PRACTICES
ODY
ICE
HY
RFORMANCE ART

INHABITING PLACES,
CREATING THIRD SPACES:
SITE-SPECIFIC PRACTICES
TO CHALLENGE
COLONIALITY

THAÍS DOS SANTOS SILVA
MA PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

A Thesis presented by Thaís dos Santos Silva to Master Performance Practices
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts in
Performance Practices.

HOME OF
PERFORMANCE
PRACTICES

2025

SYNOPSIS

This thesis investigates how a body from the Global South can challenge coloniality by inhabiting European sites of colonial heritage through site-specific performance. Acknowledging that both body and space perform coloniality, through power structures, epistemologies, and normative behaviours, I employed embodied practices to activate radical sensing, account for spatial effects, create alternative meanings, and engage audiences in questioning the univocal historical narratives shaped by colonial bias. Methods such as psychogeography, inhabiting, mapping, scoring, performing, documenting, and archiving were interwoven to develop performances that confronted colonial legacies at the Maritime Museums of Amsterdam and Barcelona, the Columbus Monument, the West India Company building, and the ArtEZ building, in Arnhem.

Aiming to expose concealed historical memories and underlying power dynamics, while critically recognising the continuities of the past within present structures, the research encountered the disruption of spatially-organised normative behaviours through performative action, and the possibilities of confronting coloniality. These actions engaged with identity-related discussions that valued heritage and

acknowledged the ongoing processes of hybridisation the body experiences in relation to space and context. Both pathways converged in the claim for the creation of a “third space”, in which encounters with the public could generate alternative perspectives for understanding apparent realities.

Ultimately, this research asserts the political potential of embodied performance to disrupt the spatial legacy of colonialism and activate counter-narratives grounded in lived experience, memory, and interaction. It denounces the violence of historical silencing and challenges the continuity of colonial structures in the present. As I was called into action, I also recognised the need for collective engagement and co-presence in shaping a more equitable shared society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We do not walk through this world alone. And thankfully so!

Throughout this master’s journey, I was accompanied by people located 9,829 km, 1,211 km, 1,876 km, and within a 1 km radius from where I now write, each of whom encouraged me to fully immerse myself in research and embodied artistic investigation.

I thank my mother, Luciane, and my father, Walter, for a lifetime of love and for the many forms of care I’ve received along the way. If I walk my own paths today, it’s because they held my hand from my very first steps.

I thank my grandmother Ivone for her words of wisdom and affection, and for always knowing exactly how to comfort me. I also thank my other grandparents for the ancestry I carry in my body and for the legacy of knowledge passed down through generations.

I thank my sisters, Natalia and Bruna, for their constant companionship and solidarity. I feel confident knowing we are moving forward together.

I thank Christian for his love, for walking beside me, and for encouraging this journey every day, believing, as I do, that art can contribute to transforming society.

I am grateful for all the support, patience, and encouragement from friends in Barcelona and Lisbon, especially Vivian Campos, Edgar Campos, and Ana Leitão, for the precious conversations about art, academia, and society.

I must also thank my fellow master's companions: Diamanto Hadjizacharia, Eleni Vasilonikolou, Joana Cunha Pinto, Kasia Zarzycka, and zoe antypa. This adventure was only possible thanks to your artistic, technical, and emotional support! I feel inspired by you!

I also appreciate the artistic exchanges with Gabriela Branco, Cora Lazlo, Angelica Topfstedt, Valentina Gaia Lops, Carmen Estevez, and Ana Leitão during this last period, as well as all colleagues from the cohorts before and after mine.

I thank the invigilators who ensured both my safety and the documentation of the performances in this research: Kasia Zarzycka, Joana Cunha Pinto, Vivian Campos, Mane Kirakosyan, Viola Galassi, Chetna Mehrotra, and Amina Riccetti. And Kristi-Leigh Gresse for the attentive and caring revision of this thesis.

I thank my tutor, Verena Stenke, for the artistic exchanges, for trusting the process, and for all the inspiration in art and life. I thank my supervisor, Dr. Anja Foerschner, for her attentive eye on my many words throughout the writing of this thesis and the research process.

Finally, I thank ArtEZ and its structure—but above all, the people—who make artistic research possible. I thank all the staffs for facilitating learning and creation and all my professors for all the knowledge shared in this journey: Andrea Pages, Dr. Anja Foerschner, Astarti Athanasiadou, Fenia Kotsopoulou, Irina Baldini, Dr. João da Silva, Lucie Strecker, Maria Mavridou, Maria Pisiou, Dr. Mariella Grei, Dr. Pavlos Kountouriotis, Steef Kersbergen, Verena Stenke.

DECLARATION

I, Thaís dos Santos Silva, hereby certify that I had personally carried out the work depicted in the thesis entitled, 'Inhabiting Places, Creating Third Space: site-specific practices to challenge coloniality'. No part of the thesis has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma prior to this date.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Synopsis</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Declaration</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>List of figures</i>	<i>vi</i>
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT OF STUDY	7
Space in motion	8
<i>Site-Specific</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Plural Space</i>	<i>11</i>
Identity in Motion	14
<i>Hybridization</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Coloniality</i>	<i>18</i>
CHAPTER 2: METHODS AND FINDINGS	23
Psychogeography: From Space to Body	23
Inhabiting: From Body to Space	27
Affective Cartography and Scoring	32
Performance as an Ongoing Process	37
Documenting and Archiving	40
CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSIONS	43
Where Identity Dwells	43
<i>Performing Identity</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Body as an archive</i>	<i>47</i>
Situated Politics	50
<i>Am I using the colonizer's tool?</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Normative Spaces</i>	<i>51</i>

CHAPTER 4: CONTRIBUTIONS	57
CONCLUSION	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY	63
APPENDICES	65
A - Performances	65
A-1 - <i>Waiting</i>	65
A-2 - <i>Melting Down - Hybrid Body</i>	66
A-3 - <i>Positioning</i>	67
A-4 - <i>Lo que se olvida bajo Colón?</i>	68
A-5 - <i>Pamphleting</i>	69
A-6 - <i>(dis)cover(up)</i>	71

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: <i>Waiting - Personal archive</i>	65
FIGURE 2: <i>Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Gallery in Maritime Museum of Amsterdam). Photo: Kasia Zarzycka</i>	66
FIGURE 3: <i>Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Gallery in Maritime Museum of Barcelona). Photo: Vivian Campos</i>	66
FIGURE 4: <i>Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Front of Maritime Museum of Barcelona). Photo: Vivian Campos</i>	66
FIGURE 5: <i>Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Courtyard of Maritime Museum of Amsterdam). Photo: Kasia Zarzycka</i>	66
FIGURE 6: <i>Positioning. Photo: Christian Gamero Paz</i>	67
FIGURE 7: <i>¿Lo que se olvida bajo Colón? Photo: Mane Kirakosyan</i>	68
FIGURE 8: <i>Pamphleting. Photo: Joana Cunha</i>	69
FIGURE 9, 10: <i>Catalogue of Pamphleting</i>	70
FIGURE 11: <i>(dis)cover(up) - Archive. Photo: Steef Kersbergen</i>	71
FIGURE 12: <i>(dis)cover(up) - Skylight. Photo: Steef Kersbergen</i>	72

INTRODUCTION

The body exists in space, and space exists in the body. In this existential correlation, life takes shape. The movement researcher and somatic practitioner Neide Neves affirms that “dance is not separate from life; the body that dances is the body that lives” (2010, p.34)¹. By moving through space, I traversed different grounds, and encountered new flavours, architectures, people, and cultures. The urgency of this artistic research emerged from the migratory movements that shaped my own life: How do I relate to new spaces? How am I perceived? Coming from Brazil and residing in Spain and the Netherlands led me to recognise the embedded colonial foundations within architecture, historical narratives, behaviours, and perceptions of the body. Through experiences of discrimination and stereotyping, I became aware of a deeply unequal society, both personally and globally, that sustains an oppressive system built upon the structures of the past. Being in these places became an act of resistance and a deliberate assertion of presence.

Aiming to expose and dismantle such structures, the central question of this research emerged: How can a hybrid body, inhabiting spaces of colonial heritage, challenge coloniality?

¹ Translated by the author.

Through the lenses of site-specific practices, in dialogue with critical colonial studies, this research aimed to investigate how performance can expose power relations present in colonial institutional spaces, having the objective of unveil histories hidden by dominant narratives, identify the remnants of the past within the present, and foster the resignification of such spaces through performance practices.

Engaging with sites marked by colonial history through site-specific practices presents opportunities to generate visibility and provoke critical discussions on the lasting consequences of colonialism in contemporary contexts. I selected the Maritime Museums of Barcelona and Amsterdam as sites for further research. The initial intention was to access the institutional archives and utilise their physical spaces as platforms for performative investigation. After extensive dialogue and waiting, the Maritime Museum of Barcelona explicitly declined any interest in engaging in the colonial discussion, and the lack of a response from the Maritime Museum of Amsterdam established an inhospitable relationship.

Although the Maritime Museum of Amsterdam includes colonialism as part of its official agenda, its persistent silence and indecision may reflect an internal awareness of its superficial engagement with the subject, as well as

the institution's sovereign control over what is discussed, displayed, or rendered visible. In contrast, the explicit refusal from the Maritime Museum of Barcelona may reveal that the glorification of its historical narrative, seen as a political act of self-affirmation tied to Catalonia's national identity, actively erases its broader responsibilities within a geopolitical and social context that transcends nationalism.

This led me to question: Which bodies are allowed to access colonial heritage institutions to develop and present knowledge? This question precedes even the critique posed by postcolonial literary theorist Gayatri Spivak in *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988), which argues that subaltern speech is only recognised when mediated through hierarchical structures that maintain power. When specific bodies are denied access, the ability to act, the right to speak, is this not a clear sign of the preservation of coloniality and the ongoing invisibilisation of subaltern bodies?

The denial established the boundaries for engagement with the interaction. As institutional access was not granted and the archival research could not uncover the hidden histories embedded within, the body became the primary medium for evoking and articulating the relational dynamics of these places and for symbolically engaging with the colonial legacy inscribed in their architecture and memory.

This context gave rise to the performances *Waiting* and *Melting Down - Hybrid Body*, presented as guerrilla performances inside the museums. Followed by the public space interventions *¿Lo que se olvida bajo Colón?*, held at the Columbus Monument in Barcelona, and *Pamphleting*, in front of the building of the Dutch West India Company (WIC) in Amsterdam. Along with an exposition of the artistic research *(dis)cover(up)*, realised at the ArtEZ building, in Arnhem. These creative processes of the performances, through the proposed methods of practice-as-research, grounded the development of this investigation by mutually informing one another through the findings, and maintaining a dynamic dialogue with theoretical research in site-specific performance and critical colonial theory.

The first chapter presents literature review, defining the research field through key concepts such as place and space, site-specific practices, hybridisation, and coloniality. The second chapter describes the methodological framework based on practice-as-research, incorporating psychogeography and inhabiting to explore body-space relations; mapping and scoring as compositional tools; performing as embodied knowledge; and documenting and archiving as a critical tool connecting past and present. The third chapter merges theory and practice by examining findings on cultural identity and body-as-archive, while

questioning spatial normativity. The fourth chapter outlines the study's main contributions and, in conclusion, points to future developments, advocating for the disruption of colonial silences and the collective creation of alternative forms of memory, coexistence, and justice.

CHAPTER 1: CONTEXT OF STUDY

This research articulates site-specific performative practices with critical theories of coloniality, aiming to interrogate dominant colonial spatial discourses and reposition the body as an epistemic agent. Drawing on theoretical frameworks from site-specific performance studies, as well as postcolonial and decolonial thought, the investigation seeks to disrupt Eurocentric narratives of space and history, proposing embodied and site-specific practices.

Postcoloniality, as Spivak asserts, “persistently critiques a structure that one cannot not (wish to) inhabit” (1993, p.320). Acknowledging that both body and space are immersed in structures of coloniality, I consider identity and cultural discourses as integral to the production of knowledge within the performative arts, merging the personal with the political. While decolonial theorists often critique postcolonial studies for their lack of confrontation with colonial power structures, I intentionally draw from both fields. I value the decolonial emphasis on subjugated epistemologies and non-Eurocentric worldviews, which challenge the colonial inscriptions upon my own body and expose the systemic colonial power. At the same time, through postcolonial perspectives, I recognise the hegemonic dimensions of my own culture and the transformative processes that emerge as I navigate social

contexts distant from my place of origin. These processes lead me to experience the body as continuously hybridised. Through this lens, I approach performance as an artistic, political, and situated act, where the lived body serves as both the agent and receptor of affects.

SPACE IN MOTION

Site-Specific

Site-specific is a category of artistic production in which both the creative process and its aesthetic outcome emerge from a relationship with space and “articulate itself through properties, qualities, or meanings produced in a specific relationship between an ‘object’ or ‘event’ and the position it occupies” (Kaye, 2000, p.1). Site-specific theorists Miwon Kwon (2002) and Nick Kaye (2000) argue that its origins can be traced back to the minimalist sculptures of the 1960s that critiqued the artistic object as self-sufficient with the intention of politically situating the artwork within its geography, claiming the context in which it was inserted and generating a phenomenological and experiential engagement with the audience (Kwon, 2002, p.12).

By approaching body-based arts, this sensory relationship with space was emphasised by modern dance in the early

20th century. Rejecting ballet’s formality, Isadora Duncan drew on classical art and nature to develop her own technique and expand performance beyond the theatre stage. In subsequent decades, the concepts of nature and well-being led to the development of various dance techniques, with figures such as Laban, Dalcroze, Mary Wigman, Germaine Acogny (Hunter, 2015, p.5). In the 1960s, the development of postmodern dance revisited the experimental use of space, breaking the boundaries of the stage and seeking to bring dance closer to aspects of everyday life.

This phenomenological investigation moment was followed by a site-specific perspective that encompassed social, political, and institutional contexts, addressing racism, feminism, immigration, and class. During the 1970s, site-specific works included both intimate performances and performances in public and institutional spaces. Examples are “Rape Scene” by Ana Mendieta, which addressed domestic violence against women by recreating in her apartment the rape and murder that had occurred at her university, and Mierle Laderman Ukeles’ “Maintenance Art Tasks series”, in which she performed cleaning tasks in museums, questioning the different social and labour values attributed to institutional art spaces versus domestic and maintenance work. By situating their feminist performances in specific locations, both artists challenge patriarchal structures in daily life and provide references for utilising site-specific performance to

critique dominant social frameworks, an approach echoed in this research.

Kwon critically affirms contemporary site-specific proposals are being generated within the realm of discourse, where the site is understood as the field of knowledge around which a work will be produced, shifting away from the idea of space as a “precondition for the creation” (Kwon, 2002, p.26), thus claiming a site as a specific thematic agenda or the artist’s body. This aligns with Nick Kaye’s analysis that the site is not necessarily the final location of its exhibition, allowing works to be transferred from one site to another (Kwon, 2002, p.38), classifying them as site-generic (Fiona Wilkie) or site-adaptive (Stephan Koplowitz) (Hunter, 2015, p.16). Although the performance *Melting down - Hybrid Body* was presented in both Maritime Museums and could be considered site-adaptive, it was the specific circumstantial relation with the institutions that generated the urge for the parallel performances. Distant from Kwon’s arguments on site-adaptive as a neoliberal form of site-specific, the performances established a critique of the systemic recurrence of non-access.

Despite the various classifications of site-based artworks, I consider that site-specific does not have a fixed form of conception or execution. As a dynamic field, it encompasses diverse relationships with natural, institutional and public

spaces, drawing from multiple fields of study. Nevertheless, this research aligns with the critical and political approach that engages with both the physical and social characteristics of a given place, understanding the unique relationships and affects between body and space.

Plural Space

A place, according to historian Michel de Certeau, is an “ordering system” in which elements are arranged in a stable organisation that orients movements and actions, existing in “a relationship of coexistence” (Certeau, 1984 *apud* Kaye, p.4). A space, for the author, is the place in action, which consists of the practices that take place within this “ordering system.” It “occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalise it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs” (Certeau, 1994, cited in Kaye, 2000, p.5). When experiencing the museum, architecture provides the first layer of information about the place. It establishes a route and delimits the visit, which is activated by the body as it follows the suggested trajectory, shaping the gaze, framing interactions, and influencing the overall experience of the visit. Thus, space acquires meaning through the experience and interaction that bodies establish with it, activating it in a singular way with each interaction.

One space is embedded within another, forming networks and constellations of meanings that accumulate in the identification of a given space. There are public and private spaces, spaces of passage, functional and playful spaces. Some spaces have borders that impose limits on who has access, who must remain apart, and who holds power. There are spaces in which different individuals coexist in distinct ways. All these spaces overlap, generating layers of meaning that constitute the characteristics of a given space. Regardless of the space occupied within the city, the multiple layers make the existence of a “non-place” (Marc Augé, 1995) or an “empty space” (Peter Brook, 1968) impossible.

For the anthropologist Marc Augé, “non-places” are an allusion to a negative quality of place or the absence of place itself, being locations where people do not create bonds, histories, or meaningful identities with the space, such as transportation hubs, shopping malls, and commercial areas. Meanwhile, as discussed by Thiong’o (1997, p.20), for theatre director Peter Brook, the performance space becomes an empty space due to its ability to transform into various environments depending on the relationship between the actor, the audience, and the space. The fictionality of both concepts lies in their failure to consider places as part of a web of relationships, tensions, and powers—elements that are constantly in motion, plural, and activated by the bodies that inhabit them.

Colonial spaces carry both their past and their ongoing re-signification. They are inhabited by visitors, locals, students, and workers. Colonial historical places by proposing a univocal and fixed idea of place becomes a potential tool of power for the dominant classes, which, by homogenising the identity of a place, also homogenise its history around the narrative they propagate, erasing traces of oppression, resistance, and coexistence, controlling the collective memory and history. In Amsterdam, the museum addresses colonialism critically, engaging in a pedagogical discussion with visitors, whereas in Barcelona, the dominant narrative is reinforced through the glorification of maritime expansion, perpetuating the version of the oppressor, as seen in the Columbus monument and the WIC building.

Such homogenisation is increasingly prevalent in neoliberalism, as noted by Kwon (2002), affecting the market of site-specific art. Instead of focusing on location specificity, the field shifts toward the reproduction of works for entirely different contexts, with patronage systems prioritising the valorisation of institutions rather than the artistic work, leading to the commodification of site-specific art. The author advocates for the uniqueness of place as a means of maintaining the ideological foundations of site-specific art against neoliberalism.

Even though I acknowledge other modes of site-based creation, I understand that reclaiming specificity is a crucial strategy for recovering experiences, epistemologies, and memories that have been suppressed by the homogenising structures of power. I also argue that the notion of local singularity does not imply fixity or univocality but rather the necessity of deepening the layers of meaning that constitute it, which can lead to the emergence of simultaneous narratives. The local is singular and specific, not only due to its material and formal aspects but also because of its network of relationships and meanings. What other layers could a performing body introduce or expose into a space with a fixed story?

IDENTITY IN MOTION

Hybridization

My practice proposes the perception of the influences between body and space, through the activation of the senses to elucidate imperceptibly process. The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead elaborates that a body "is relational becoming and hence the world a performative web of processes of relating" (Schlehaider, n.d., p.5), whether with living or non-living beings. Body and space are ongoing

transformations of one another, creating an interconnectedness that extends from the physical realm to the socio-political sphere, and from personal and local to relationships within the globalised world. After immigrating, I realised that the place I inhabit shapes distinct social experiences, marked by varying degrees of inclusion, discrimination, and privilege. Such frictions are investigated by deliberately placing my body in colonial spaces to understand the responses that the encounter occasions.

This approach stems from the understanding that bodies are formed through constant interaction with the environment, others, and social dynamics. As Christine Greiner (2006, p.131) states, the body continually integrates new information with existing knowledge, often unconsciously. This fluid perception of interactions as fundamental to the formation of bodies challenges an essentialist or reductionist view of the body, understanding it as a continuous process of hybridisation with its plural surroundings.

Anthropologist Néstor Canclini argues that "hybridisation [is] a sociocultural process in which discrete structures or practices, previously existing in a separate form, are combined to generate new structures, objects, and practices" (Canclini, 2015, XXV)². Thus, in Canclini's theory, discrete practices

² Translated by the author.

emerge from previous hybridisations that, over time, become homogenised, eventually stabilising as distinct entities and initiating new hybridisation processes. However, I argue that the hybridisation is an ongoing process that does not follow a linear or structured path but unfolds through simultaneous practices that may never reach stabilisation or discreteness. Rather than a fixed fusion of two structures, practices, or conditions, hybridisation involves acknowledging a plurality of influences that are continuously and simultaneously incorporated, remaining in constant transformation and conflict through interactions.

In the performance *The Burial*, Anguezome Bikoro, born in Gabon and based in Germany, inhabits Chihuahua, in northern Mexico, assembling stories of the Rarámuri ethnicity and positioning herself in relation to the specificity of the lived reality of the desert. In this piece, Bikoro merges her naked body with the landscape in a burial ritual, where participants entirely cover her with stones, establishing an intimate relationship with both human and non-human bodies. In this state of vulnerability, the embodiment of memories of colonial violence inscribed in space, community and her body, becomes entangled to address the legacies of slavery and Indigenous genocide as consequences of colonialism. While Bikoro proposes a hybrid perspective by entangling her body with another marginalised culture, my

practice highlights the tensions of a Latin American migrant body navigating colonial spaces in Europe, where belonging, conflict, and hybridity intersect within the contradictions of exposure, inequality, and complicity. In this context, identity and culture become sites of friction, shaped by processes of hybridisation that reveal both resistance and entanglement with colonial continuities.

By recognising cultural relationships and identity manifestations through hybridisation, I consider the body in performance to be both an agent of cultural construction and a receiver of its effects, with both undergoing continuous transformation. The body also reproduces normative identity patterns that are perceived as foundational and essential, sustaining power structures in society. This creation of homogenised identity categories, reinforced through reiteration, loses awareness of its origin and comes to be considered foundational. According to feminist philosopher Judith Butler, identity is performed; it is constituted through behavioural and discursive actions that are repeated and altered through their repetition, a process known as iterability, which opens space for the re-creation of previously defined identity categories (BUTLER, 2003, p.200). In this way, even the performance of stagnant identities manifests as an ongoing re-making, imbued with the various forms of information present in the environment and is always

engaged in a fluid process of subjectivation. This potential for breaking or transforming norms becomes a powerful means of reconstructing identity and, consequently, cultural aspects, generating a hybridisation process influenced by the different references that affect the body in each iteration. As the body not only reflects pre-existing identities and cultures but also actively participates in the creation of new hybrid forms of existence, the body in performance brings forward the friction of hybridisation within colonial structures.

Coloniality

All bodies are hybrid. As well as the space, there is no homogeneity and no pure, untouched form with a single origin. To challenge coloniality and propose hybridisation by inhabiting colonial heritage spaces with site-specific performances, it is fundamental to comprehend what this means.

The Brazilian indigenous philosopher Ailton Krenak argues that homogenisation results in a singular, hegemonic view of what it means to be human, based on a supremacist approach from the dominant culture, which categorises non-European cosmovision as a primitive other (Krenak, 2019, p.12). In colonial processes, the appropriation of land and

the extermination of peoples rely on the systematic erasure of their cultures, territories, and knowledge, accompanied by the imposition of ethnocentric ways of life, justified by the presumed inferiority of the colonised body. According to sociologist Maria Lugones, this dichotomous conception of humanity originated from the idea that “Europe, the capitalist centre of the world that colonised the rest of the globe, came to be seen as preexisting the world capitalist power structure, and thus stood at the most advanced point of the continuous, unidirectional, and linear temporality of the species.” (Lugones, 2008, p.11)³. This categorisation reinforces colonial structures of exclusion, denying marginalised groups equal access to the rights associated with the homogeneous notion of humanity, thereby perpetuating power asymmetries today, as the racialised division of labour (Quijano, 2005).

Such political-economic systems established during the colonial period, which remain after independence, are termed by sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2005) as the coloniality of power. Walter Mignolo (2011) deepens the term by discussing the coloniality of knowledge, which highlights the domination of Eurocentric epistemologies and the erasure of other knowledge productions that are dismissed or marginalised. In turn, Maldonado-Torres (2007)

³ Translated by the author.

argues that colonial processes also impact the development of the subjectivity of colonised individuals, leading to both alienation from oneself and the maintenance of the belief in inferiority, as well as subalternity.

This research explores the confrontation with the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being throughout the methods of psychogeography and inhabiting for developing performance from situated knowledge and the reaffirmation of agency in the inhabitation of the space, by subverting the collective historical memory as a mode of hybridisation for both artist and audience. Also, utilising alternative modes of documentation challenges colonial frameworks and epistemologies, generating new forms of embodied knowledge.

Coloniality sustains power by enforcing static notions of identity, framing traits, culture, and values as fixed to uphold homogenisation and privilege. However, I understand coloniality as part of the hybridization process between colonisers and colonised people. For critical theorist Homi Bhabha, the encounter between colonised and coloniser cultures produces identities that are not mere mixtures of the originals, but a “third space” of hybridity. Colonised bodies were subjected to a process of mimicry, wherein the enforced replication of the coloniser’s culture served to reinforce colonial authority, sustain hierarchical power

relations, and facilitate the dissemination of the coloniser’s socio-political and cultural systems (Bhabha, 1994, p.38). However, the resilience of numerous cultures that, despite systemic oppression and attempts at erasure, made possible the preservation and transformation of customs and belief systems, being hybridisation not a neutral or painless process, but often marked by the tensions and violence inherent in asymmetrical power relations, reflecting both resistance and the legacies of colonial subjugation.

I understand that part of the development of a third space arises from the performativity of identity and behavioural patterns of the different cultures that came into contact. These interactions generate processes of subjectivation that, as Judith Butler’s suggests, can also engender dissidence through the introduction of difference. Such interaction makes the third space a transformative in-between realm that challenge fixed identities.

By inhabiting colonial spaces with my body and history, an exchange of information is activated, which moderates identity and meaning. This creates a third space where diverse cultural perspectives, in a continuous process of (re) composition from within, find the possibility of restructuration that subverts dominant discourses aiming to homogenise and destabilise the hierarchies and sovereignty of one culture over another.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS AND FINDINGS

By working with site-specific approaches and deepening the relationship between body and space, methods were developed and applied across the explored sites, demonstrating their adaptability to different contexts of artistic creation and situational circumstances. These methods stem from an awareness of the entanglement between body and space, as well as their generative and creative potential. Drawing on the performances carried out during the research process as practical examples, the following methods are presented: *psychogeography*, *inhabiting*, *mapping* and *scoring*, *performing*, and *documenting and archiving*. Each performance integrated all these methods, with selected examples used to illustrate their application.

PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY: FROM SPACE TO BODY

For this research, psychogeography was used as a method to understand how my body is affected by spaces marked by colonial heritage. The Marxist thinker Guy Debord, along with the Situationist International group in the 1950s, defined psychogeography as “the study of the precise laws and

specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals" (Debord, 1955, p.8). By employing methods such as urban drifting (*dérive*) and sensorial exploration, the group investigated how urban space influenced perception and behaviour, positioning the human senses in contrast to the alienating routines of capitalist life, seeking to bridge contemporary art with everyday practices.

Diverging from the original practice, this research redefines the *dérive* as a visit to predefined colonial historical sites, focusing on how these spaces engage the body. By walking, pausing, sitting, observing, and following the body's rhythm and choices in the colonial heritage spaces, the focus was on the narratives embedded in these sites, the activation of imagination, the emergence of both personal and historical memories, and bodily sensations. Sensing is not a passive process, but rather an active one in which perception generates awareness of emergent interactions. It involves recognising the other's presence within oneself, acknowledging that "what is usually referred to as 'the self' does not concern only the interior of a body, but the connections between the interior and the exterior" (Greiner, 2006, p.42)⁴. This encompasses both "internal aspects—organic, emotional,

⁴ Translated by the author.

cognitive, psychological—and the external environment—physical, social, and cultural—making the body a constantly shifting outcome of these relationships" (Neves, 2019, p.23)⁵. The body is porous to the world, engaging in diverse exchanges through every situated experience. To challenge coloniality, it is essential to feel what has been anesthetised by the hegemonic social structures we inhabit.

The use of psychogeography enabled me to develop a self-recognition of my existence in a context different from my own, and which now affects my way of being, registering the space in my own body. Challenging coloniality involved not only understanding space itself but also perceiving how my identity moved through layered histories and symbolisms, requiring confronting myself with the senses of inadequacy, fascination, incredulity. This implied a political stance on how I receive and respond to physical and social affects in and through my body.

Documentation through writing, drawing, photography, and mapping of senses and memories revealed an interest in locations that exposed historical silences through a Western-centred lens. Among other colonial historical sites where psychogeography was employed, the Maritime Museums

⁵ Translated by the author.

of Barcelona and Amsterdam were selected as case studies for site-specific performance investigations. Both preserve archives of the maritime past that sustained colonial processes and had colonial uses in their history: the Amsterdam Museum was a former naval storehouse, and the Barcelona one was a building dedicated to naval construction. In both cases, the intriguing architecture that activated the desire to interact also seemed to mask the striking absence in the exhibitions, which mobilised the urgency in my body: in Amsterdam, the lack of critical engagement with the Dutch colonisation of South America; in Barcelona, the complete omission of such a discussion.

By obstructing the research, the institution reinforced Eurocentric structures that marginalise narratives and individuals, sustaining local discrimination and global hierarchies, generating an awareness that inner and outer dimensions, local and global structures, are entangled. Psychogeography enables me, as an individual, to awaken my senses to these interconnections, situating me in the spatiality I inhabit and relating personal and political perspectives.

Regarding my own body, the feelings of impatience stemming from unanswered communications and disbelief at the institutions' conscious choices led me to inhabit the uncertainty of the relationship and reaffirm colonialism as a deeply embedded structure within both bodies and

institutions, constantly feeding and reinforcing one another. The subsequent walks in the galleries featuring the colonial exhibition in Amsterdam evoked a sense of incoherence, altering my perception of the place. The ensuing visits to the museums were shaped by the internal restlessness and the discrete external control, as discussed in the following subchapter. In contrast, the denial of a South body in the place may potentially affirm its capacity to challenge the coloniality of the site.

INHABITING: FROM BODY TO SPACE

Just as psychogeography focuses on the effects of space on the body, I propose inhabiting as the study of the effects of the body on space. I locate this perspective rooted in the relational approaches of the post-Anthropocene thought, which emerges in response to the colonial structures that enabled the rise of capitalism and acknowledges the consequences of human actions on the environment and society. It is proposed here, both creatively and ontologically, envisioning what ancestral people have long communicated: we are nature, we are the environment, in coexistence with many other beings (Krenak, 2019, p.17). Thus, just as the body affected by space opens to the other, the body affecting space reclaims responsibility for the consequences it generates.

The body, imbued with agency, can observe spaces shaped by pre-established imaginaries and either activate or disrupt them through its actions. Post-humanist theorists Annouchka Bayley and JJ Chan assert that “occupation and inhabitation can therefore be methodologies of settling in that disrupt settling-downs” (2023, p.269). Acting consciously in a place activates space in ways that can either reveal its dominant structures or resist its ordering mechanisms. For this research, inhabitation was idealised as the process of transforming the space through movement investigations, material exploration and scene creation as a response to the psychogeographical activations of the body.

After experiencing non-hospitality in colonial institutional spaces, the urgency was to respond through action. Unlike what I had initially planned, my inhabiting these spaces took the format of guerrilla performances. Since I could not investigate the site previously, the performance and my artistic-political interventions had to occur suddenly. Even though it changed, I considered the performance as the practice of inhabiting, by its nature of affecting space bodily, and thereby enlarging the scope of the terminology previously created.

Considering the psychogeographical sensations of internal agitation and the external constrictions of the body previously

described, two different performances were realised as inhabitation modes in the museums, using the operation of recontextualization of two existing works. *Waiting*⁶, by Faith Wilding, allowed me to express the repetition of waiting. Her feminist statement was recontextualised by addressing indigenous and black communities of my country, using spoken word to question narrative control regarding time by those in power and their perception of the other’s passivity. With *Melting Down*⁷, by Felipe Teixeira and Mariana Molinos, I followed the procedure of transitioning from a standing to a lying position in 30 minutes. Unlike the original focus on capitalist velocity, I positioned myself as a hybrid body artefact, slowly dissolving under the weight of time and anticipation, being externally still, yet internally in continuous resistance to not falling. Being my first guerrilla performance interaction, this recontextualisation of other performances as a site-specific practice was intended to validate unauthorised actions within institutional space, which could protect me by being connected to recognised artistic lineages.

Inhabiting space by positioning myself in the guerrilla performances opened possibilities for direct communication with the public, without institutional mediation, and allowed

6 See Appendix A-1 for additional information about *Waiting*, performed in the Maritime Museum of Amsterdam.

7 See Appendix A-2 for additional information about *Melting Down - Hybrid Body*, performed in the Maritime Museums of Amsterdam and Barcelona.

for the subversion of power relations imposed by the space. The event itself became a strategy for presence and for exposing the inaccessibility of these spaces, which was exacerbated by the interruption of the performance *Melting Down* in Amsterdam by the institution. On a smaller scale, I understand this action of the museum policies as part of the larger rise of far-right ideologies worldwide, which erupt in extreme measures against marginalised groups, such as the mass deportation of Latinx immigrants and the targeting of pro-Palestinian supporters during Donald Trump's administration in the U.S., the strict asylum and immigration policies proposed by Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, or even the hostile actions against tourists and migrant populations in Barcelona in the past year. Macro and micropolitics intertwine in the perpetuation of inequalities, exposing the hierarchical structures between beings and the indiscriminate use of power. Guerrilla performances became a means of contesting the sovereignty of one body over another and creating space for the history of bodies whose visibility challenges the structures that seek to erase them—by considering the bodily norms of a given space and acting toward their deconstruction, encompassed both the situationists' interest in approaching everyday life and the local specificities of site-specific practices with politically embodied statements.

Unlike the Guerrilla Girls, a group of women who conducted artistic critiques and tactical interventions in public spaces while remaining anonymous, the exposure of my face made it impossible to continue actions within museum spaces. This circumstance led me to revisit psychogeography in colonial heritage to select other sites for research. Avoiding further relationships with institutions but still moved by the personal affects of the spaces, I chose two public spaces: the Columbus Monument and the former headquarters of the WIC, which retains its name to this day.

These spaces allowed to use inhabiting practices prior to the actual performances, configuring a creative process of performing dissonant actions in the urban landscape: lying down, walking backward, cleaning, singing, dancing, climbing and descending stairs, and testing combinations of actions that could potentially unfold into scenes. "The performance space is never empty. Bare, yes, open, yes, but never empty. It is always the site of physical, social, and psychic forces in society" (Thiong'o, 1997, p.19), and the body, in its investigations, coexist with these various forces that also stimulate artistic investigation during interaction, generating other actions and highlighting the plurality of spaces present in the place.

By inhabiting the space through these actions, the body already disrupts the city's everyday flow, making inhabitation a visible practice for others. To avoid a vulnerable position in the public space and not inhibit a subsequent performance, the number of interferences were limited. The inhabitation of public space led me to develop a sense of presence, which is "guided by the senses, a sensory awakening that will amplify the kinaesthetic sense, resulting in presence: being here and now"⁸ (MILLER, 2007, p.59). The activation of the body in relation to space triggered this sensory awakening, making me aware of the multiple layers embedded in the space as I engaged in my own interactions.

AFFECTIVE CARTOGRAPHY AND SCORING

Throughout the research process, the development of mappings remained consistent, both as a means of recording spatiality and trajectories and of registering perceptions, sensations, movements, and thoughts.

Maps, in their most widely recognised form, are understood as tools for representing space, purporting to convey objectivity and neutrality and aiming to deliver an illusion

⁸ Translated by the author.

of accurate reality. However, every parameter used in the construction of a map—such as lines, colours, shapes, what is included and what is omitted—reflects contextual decisions, rendering the map a circumstantial document tied to a specific sociohistorical moment (Pinder, 2003). Its production often reveals underlying hierarchies and biases linked to the socioeconomic position of the cartographer (Kelly, Bosse, 2022), and "cartography remains a teleological discourse, reifying power" (Harley, 2001, *cited in* PINDER, 2003, p.179), also designing the trajectories and perspectives of bodies that follows it.

As a decolonial practice of recording and representation, I employed affective cartography to value situated knowledge, grounded in sensations and observations about the space. This practice of drawing and writing generated overlapping layers of translucent paper, displacing the notion of a singular perception of place and attempting to reveal the plurality it contains, thereby transforming the fixity of maps into an ongoing process of layering. The affective maps in a subjective visual production document what is not visible in space: hidden histories and the body's relational sensoriality. By proposing an understanding of multiplicities, these mappings led me to represent the investigated spaces in opposition to the hegemonic cartography. This recreation of the perception of space reaffirmed the subjectivity in space composition.

As a way of embodying this geographic re-creation, I created, with the photographer Christian Gamero Paz, the photo performances *Positioning*⁹, aiming to merge my family and personal trajectories with the boundaries of surrounding cartographies, challenging colonial constraints of access and representation by dissolving these boundaries onto the surface of my skin. Experimenting with the practice, I resonated with Miwon Kwon's emphasis on contextual specificity in site-specific practices, considering this bodily situated practice as a non-site-specific performance. Nevertheless, this experimentation rendered visible the overlapping trajectories inscribed on the body and its hybrid entanglement with the space it inhabits, reaching the specificity of one's relational singularity and confronting narratives of cultural identity as foundational. Acting in a non-site-specific, yet site-oriented way, it was possible to deepen my personal awareness of hybridism between European spaces and my own heritage.

The affective maps created also informed the development of the performance scores, together with the practice of inhabiting, as they contained records of trajectories, sensations, and memories activated during the periods of psychogeography and inhabiting, as well as observations of the flows and characteristics of the places investigated.

⁹ See Appendix A-3 for additional information about the photo performance *Positioning*.

Perceiving the space's dynamics, with its complex layering of meanings, was crucial to understanding what kind of action could disrupt the normative patterns operating there. For instance, the Columbus Monument had a high flow of tourists who passed by quickly. A durational performance or one involving repetition introduced another layer of meaning to space, capturing the attention of passersby. The detailed scores allowed me to reflect on and organise a sequence of actions to be performed in the public space. Scores enabled me to structure the actions before performance, since it was not feasible to rehearse the entire piece in these environments.

Exemplifying a scoring process, in my mappings related to the inhabiting the Columbus monument¹⁰, a memory surfaced connected to an oral tradition: people from the actual Republic of Benin, when enslaved and forced to go to the Americas, were made to walk three times around the "Tree of Forgetting" so they would abandon their former ways of life and adapt to a new existence in captivity (Silva, 2022, p.214). In a reversed process of recovering the historical memory erased by the sculptural narrative of the monument, I performed three counterclockwise circles to reawaken this silenced memory, transforming mapped memories into a

¹⁰ See Appendix A-4 for additional information about *¿Lo que se olvida bajo Colón?*, performed in the Columbus Monument.

score. Each of the three rounds employed a distinct approach to challenge the colonality of the space: expanded dance, ritualistic spoken and written words, and participation while walking backwards.

I believe that the lack of accountability for violent historical processes and the erasure of their consequences in the lives of others, alongside the glorification of male figures who represent a legacy of oppression, sustain colonial structures of white superiority over other bodies and cultures to this day. Exposing this memory in the insolent historical monument reflects a desire for knowledge and self-reflection to generate spaces that go beyond empathy and toward solidarity with the other.

By mapping spaces based on what they reveal, remapping them with what is hidden or erased, and mapping new actions that may transform them, I elaborated the affective cartography into a score of action, which were the processes through which I structured performances in public space within a decolonial framework.

PERFORMANCE AS AN ONGOING PROCESS

In my practice, creation usually unfolds through a prolonged, reflective process before public presentation. However, this research reconfigured performance as a knowledge dispositive that encompasses and produces embodied cognition in an ongoing process, where forms of inhabitation emerged as guerrilla strategies of resistance, and the audience was witness to the process. Each intervention informed the next, generating embodied inhabitation in a web of experimentations, evaluations and findings.

Performances held in museums were a response to institutional silencing and denial, exposing the mechanisms of epistemic authority and questioning who holds the power to validate or exclude knowledge, artworks, and bodies, as well as who remains subjected within such structures. The performances, marked by introspection and restraint, often elicited audience responses of indifference or avoidance, which, together with a shift to public space, shaped subsequent performances. By engaging with spatial-symbolic regimes through a more outward-facing approach with the audience, it activated counter-narratives to colonial history and fostered broader public participation. Insights from performative processes were synthesised in the exhibition of the artistic research, titled

*(dis)cover(up)*¹¹, presented at ArtEZ, which encompassed an archive and a performance in a skylight, allowing for a critical articulation of conceptual reflections with previously employed methodologies. Unlike the guerrilla format, this intervention followed a set schedule, deliberately inhabiting space through movement and material engagement. It utilised architecture as a discursive framework to address colonial entanglements from earlier performances, thereby deepening a discussion I found lacking within the institution. Even at ArtEZ, a staff member questioned the skylight use just hours before the performance, despite prior talks with technicians. Although the reiteration of the restrictions in my performances, this approach revealed how I disrupted the space's norms and how this contrasts with the apparent freedom for exploring the site.

Through the ongoing interplay between performance and reflection on how to engage a European audience, my approach became more direct. While moving, I used language to bridge distance and employed repetition with variation to reinforce key messages. In the *Pamphleting*¹² performance at the WIC, I distributed a catalogue styled like a popular market flyer, listing Dutch products priced at 24 euros—the amount the Dutch allegedly paid for Manhattan—

alongside a political reflection on colonisation. I emphasised this land sale to highlight its political weight, adjusting tone and length based on each passerby's response. Below the Columbus statue, I repeated the question "What is forgotten beneath Columbus?" with 24 answers referencing slavery, indigenous genocide, and immigration in Barcelona, each evoking facets of colonial history. And in *(dis)cover(up)*, a voice-over vocalised the main reflections of the research process.

Spoken language became accessible to make myself heard and to assume my voice in these contexts, reaffirming my position and confronting spaces of vulnerability to encounter my agency in space. However, I also recognise that embodiment, present in all the performances, carries subtle yet dense forms of communication, which appeal to the exchange between bodies without the mediation of language or concepts, constituting a form of expression that communicates through the senses, being highlighted in future site-specific artworks.

11 See Appendix A-6 for additional information about *(dis)cover(up)*.

12 See Appendix A-5 for additional information about the performance *Pamphleting*.

DOCUMENTING AND ARCHIVING

The informal documentation of thoughts, creative processes, performances, and post-performance reflections was a constant throughout the artistic research. The mediums used were diverse, ranging from writing to the construction of affective maps, mind maps, photography, video recordings, storage of props, costumes, and performance descriptions. Through these documents, I was able to develop my creative processes, trace the trajectory of the work, and reflect on my own practice regarding the relationship between body and space, audience reception, comparisons between experiences across countries, and between institutional and public environments. This allowed for the interweaving of theory and practice as an integral part of creating and analysing, especially through the lens of critical colonial discourses.

The invigilators played a crucial role by supporting and safeguarding the performances, mediating between the institution and me, assisting with documentation, and responding to questions about reception, space, and personal perceptions. Their involvement was especially significant in *(dis)cover(up)*, where they actively mediated between the exhibition and the public. I consider that acknowledging a solo work is never truly solitary, but rather

shaped by collective presence and participation, is part of a feminist and decolonial ethic.

The archive developed during the research became a constituent part of the performance *(dis)cover(up)*, which was exhibited in a darkened studio. There, the audience, working in collaborative groups with flashlights, had to explore the shared materials themselves. "Body and performance art expose, precisely, the contingency of the body/self not only on the other of the communicative exchange (the audience, the art historian) but on the very mode of its own (re)presentation." (Jones, 2017, p.17) Opening my process by sharing my archive reactivates the memories of the performances and the experiences lived during the research, presenting the body in its material absence: representing my denied access to the museum, but also the living existence of the past of the research in the present. It was an act of embracing vulnerability, subverting the museological logic encountered throughout the investigation while simultaneously searching for a practical application of what it could mean to decolonise an archive.

The strategy found was the exhibition of personal materials contextualising the research process, instead of social valued artefacts, revealing the intimacy of the research and its phenomenological aspect, inviting the recognition of the

subject in the exhibition, and the embodiment of the research by the audience, situating themselves in the effort to access institutions, activating other agencies in the space. The information about the research is present, but as an audience member, one must bring an intention to engage with it (touch it, listen to it), to position oneself in relation to the personal nature of the research as well as its political-ideological stance. One must acknowledge the interdependence with others and the relationality with space, also challenging the predominant individualist behaviour in a museum. The knowledge shared in the exposition of my archive was constructed through the entanglement of the research documentation and the embodied sensorial experience presented to the audience.

By exposing my archive, the body becomes present through its absence, through the traces of its past, making the story behind the performance an inseparable part of its very existence. This action, ultimately, radically challenges the historical erasures and reformulations promoted by museums and monuments, which operate as devices of power that, by shaping the past, sustain privileges and define which narratives will be preserved and told. Continuing to build a personal archive remains a strategy to reclaim one's narrative and affirm singularities against colonial homogenization.

CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSIONS

WHERE IDENTITY DWELLS

Performing Identity

Hannah Arendt affirms that the “space of appearance” arises whenever people come together to act and speak in the presence of one another, thus constituting themselves as political beings (Arendt, 1958, p.199). Informed by this concept and considering the inequalities in accessing this space of appearance, conform the position in society, as discussed by Butler (2016, p.14), my performative interventions in public space seek to activate a political dimension of visibility and co-presence, while revealing hidden layers of the colonial space and exposing the coloniality in bodies and spaces.

Disrupting the architectural discourse designed to reinforce colonial memory became a form of political presence through the reaffirmation of identity in movement and hybridisation in the performative act that confronted both my own and spatial heritage in the present moment of encounter. By subverting the power and speech relations established by these spaces, I recognise that the surface of my body carries information, often stereotyped and limiting, about my identity. Audre Lorde's (1979) assertion that, regardless

of one's identity, it must be possible to engage with content beyond identity-based agendas also reveals the constraints imposed on dissident or socially subjugated bodies. Within the scope of the discussion of my artworks, taking agency over the representation of my own body became relevant to the artistic research, especially after feeling dismissed by the gazes present during the museum performances.

Dialoguing with artist Andrea Pagnes, in "to perform in such contexts [states of emergence] and express dissent constructively and identity accurately is a constant dilemma" (Pagnes, 2023, p.185), my answer is to be honest with myself in the process of creating and performing, not representing, but being present in the moment, with the fluidity of an identity in constant transformation, merging ancestry and present within the third space generated by interaction.

In *(dis)cover(up)*, above the skylight at ArtEZ, this fluidity was expressed through the sympoiesis of the body with the space and materials, recognising the hybridisation of the historical-cultural body in interaction with the present. The investigation of the movement was informed by skylight-related works: *Claraboia* by Morena Nascimento and *Port de bras*, performed by Mourad Bouayad and directed by Benjamin Seroussi. The transparent openness to the Other in witnessing identity-in-motion through the interaction between body and space was

interwoven with a shift in perspective over my body, achieved through audience changes in spatiality, aiming to challenge the Western gaze, one that delimits a singular, limiting, objectifying, and univocal perspective over the body, still based on notions of primitivism and the sexualisation of the Latin body (Lugones, 2008, p.11-28). By proposing multiple viewpoints on my body, I sought to embrace both the plurality of identity and the impossibility of fully capturing or unveiling the Other in their entirety. The dissolution of illusion created by the inverted frame, through inviting the audience to approach me in the outdoor environment with materials, invigilators, and dirt, aims for a close-up perspective of the bodily experience within real space. From different perspectives, it is possible to expand the understanding of a plural reality. The third space created in *(dis)cover(up)* involved the audience as witnesses, allowing an external gaze upon the embodiment.

It was also a challenge to define what I wanted to expose. Assuming my Brazilian heritage during the creative process and celebrating this living culture within my body, I also questioned the coloniality of my own body, challenging my sense of inadequacy through positioning myself in this process of discovering the alive interactions of the moment, thereby enhancing my confidence in confronting oppressive structures with my presence.

The inhabitation of the Columbus monument led me to perceive that, although being present with my body already produces statements, the construction of a dramaturgy deepens the communication proposed, helping to address specific content regarding the relationship between the body and space. There is a clear distinction between a Latin body that disrupts the normative use of space because it has nowhere to sleep, and a Latin body that performs dissidence to question the inequalities inherited from forgotten historical times. Although both bodies may bring layers of meaning addressing the same content in the same place, the privileges of the performance being a space of appearance allow the voice of dissident bodies to emerge. This does not deny the performance's entanglement with existing power structures, evident in museum security interventions and the ArtEZ incident, but suggests that its recognisable format can offer a degree of protection for counter-discourses to emerge.

Intertwining my agency over the modes of representation of my body and the desire to establish connections, I noticed the emergence of a recurring aesthetic based on care and vulnerability that informs the dramaturgy construction. In accordance with Butler, vulnerability is not the opposition of resistance but is "a deliberated exposure to power, is part of the very meaning of political resistance as an embodied enactment" (Butler, 2016, p.21), partaking in positionality

and exposing my own being and ideas to generate critical thinking.

Although I recognise the critical potential of performances such as those by La Pocha Nostra, which may provoke the audience by exaggerating stereotypes, pushing them into the realm of caricature and even non-sense, the aesthetic I seek values an ethics of dialogue through the genuine connection I can establish as myself. Political positioning often stood out in my performances, but seeking to create a space of critical and empathetic solidarity, I reflect that my attitude must be the first to propose openness to pursue a third space with the audience, one that is produced through symbiotic poetics.

Body as an archive

An archive is a dispositive of power, stemming from its processes of selection, categorisation, preservation, and exhibition to the institutions or individuals who pursue it and those authorised to access and contextualise it. By disregarding embodied forms of knowledge conveyed through oral traditions, gestures, movements, and rituals; by separating knowledge from its subject; and by privileging written discourse, colonial powers not only retained but also re-inscribed history (Taylor, 2003, p.19), thereby shaping

epistemological frameworks that framed the world as an evolutionary trajectory culminating in Europe as its most 'advanced' point.

Becoming aware of how power operates within the archive destabilises the perception of a singular, discrete narrative based on the superiority of some over others. It serves as a critical tool for interrogating both the past and the present. Archiving is not inherently a colonial practice; however, recognising its political underpinnings and ideologies reveals that behind every archive lies a multitude of practices rooted in bodies and knowledge that were historically silenced, objectified, and subjugated.

By proposing alternative formulations for exhibiting my own archive in *(dis)cover(up)*, the decision to mark my absence as a researcher in the museological space on the exhibition of my archive, giving voice instead to the historical layers of artistic investigation, brought the awareness of the body in the present as an archive of embodied knowledge and lived experiences. Diana Taylor (2003, p. 18) distinguishes between the archive and the repertoire, describing the latter as bodily knowledge transmitted orally and communally through lived experience, gesture, and ritual. These bodily forms of knowing, delegitimised by the Western archive, become modes of resistance and expression.

Rather than constructing a binary division between archive and repertoire, Taylor highlights the historical context in which these concepts have been used across the Americas. As a hybrid archive, I do not regard it as a linear historiography or a cumulative container of experiences, but rather as a constant process of hybridisation. Suppose the archive reveals the past of the body in research. In that case, the body, embedded with living memories, also exposes past experiences and, in the present, embodies a confluence of affects that remain in continued motion in the performative gesture.

Understanding the body as a hybrid archive helps to soothe the uncertainty surrounding my cultural identity: an uncertainty rooted in the plurality of my country, where multiple cultures and diverse manifestations coexist within the same geographical territory, and in the personal history of displacement that my own body carries. By recognising that the third space "constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity" (Bhabha, 1994, p.37), I investigated the living archive of my body as a hybrid site of transformation. In doing so, I reclaimed memory not as a fixed past but as an active practice of becoming, challenging also the coloniality embedded in my own body through the acknowledgement of other ways of relating to space.

SITUATED POLITICS

Am I using the colonizer's tool?

The reading of Audre Lorde's *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* made me reflect on whether, by inhabiting spaces that were denied my access, I was using the same strategy of colonial settlers that impose their presence, culture and worldview on other societies. My memories brought me back the artwork *Whip it good* by Jeannette Ehlers (2013), a Danish-Trinidadian artist based in Denmark who addresses racism and coloniality in her own context. In this performance, Ehlers covers a whip with charcoal and performs a punishment realised against enslaved black people on a white canvas. Following, she invites the audience to take her place and continue the canvas production.

By enacting the same violent movement from colonisers, by literally using the master's tool, the whip, what emerges is the opposite perspective: a body that carries the enslaved ancestry and through pain and anger makes visible this past recurrently found in the inequalities of the present. By sharing the experience with the audience, giving them the whip, the positionality in the society of the body who decides to act became visible: it is a different interpretation when you have a black woman and a white man performing this action.

By performing this act, Ehlers confronts the coloniality and structural racism present in society, precisely because of its own dramaturgical operations. If the actions against enslaved people were embodied, wouldn't the need for an anti-racist practice become urgent?

In the performative realm, using coloniser's strategies is not to occupy the master's place (Bhabha, 1994, p.44), but to make a statement to revendicate what is being denied in the society, social justice, by exhibiting the oppressive structures that founded Western civilisation. This made me consider that by inhabiting unauthorised colonial heritage spaces, I was not suppressing diversity and narratives as colonial ideologies but rather urging it by exposing an erased past and embodying narratives through the performativity of my own body.

Normative Spaces

Socially, there is no space for the body to exist in alternative ways. Even though the movement during the performance at the museum was almost a pause—eyes closed, vulnerable, and slow—it was perceived by some people around as a threat or a source of shame. The institutional space functions as an ordering system that regulates the behaviours and interactions

of those who frequent it, generating a homogeneous attitude. In the museum, the activated shared space presupposes the performativity of a controlled individuality, focused on objects, separated from interaction with other human beings, and restricted in terms of movement and voice.

Foucault affirms that institutional spaces operate as a disciplinary dispositive that, through surveillance and the gaze of others, acts upon docile bodies to maintain control over their subjectivity (Foucault, 1987, p. 165). Within the museum, a hegemonic way of being exists that aligns with a colonial discourse that founded such institutions and continues to glorify a maritime past, marked by an apparent immutability and discreteness. This disciplinary docility is reinforced through the performativity of normative standards that sustain the hierarchical structures of power in society. These standards privilege certain bodies while inhibiting other possibilities of behaviour and existence, thereby perpetuating the social structures initiated during colonial processes.

However, Butler argues that “if the subject is constituted by power, that power does not cease at the moment that subject is constituted, [...] That subject is neither a ground nor a product, but the permanent possibility of a certain resignifying process” (Butler, 1992, p.13). The potential for

transformation arises through the iteration of performativity by repeating structures with difference, and through constant hybridisations with the environment. These processes open the possibility for subtle shifts and fissures within normative patterns, even when they occur unconsciously.

For Victoria Hunter, “(...) the fixed identity of a site building or location becomes disrupted and problematised through the introduction of performance work that might celebrate, contest or contradict the habitual function of a site” (Hunter, 2015, p.1). By choosing to perform another corporeality in contrast to the reproduction of an established pattern observed, ruptures are created that can destabilise the fixed power structures of the space by revealing other realities and behaviours to the audience present, offering the possibility of re-signification and attention to layers of space that are not commonly observed, disrupting an anesthetised performance with the pathways of the city. When performing with my own identity, other behaviours, I confront my own patterns and limitations, encouraging myself to expose and unveil my urgency.

Direct intervention amidst people’s everyday activities, as opposed to a theatrical stage or gallery space, expands the scope of the discussion to uninformed audiences, thereby fostering the reception of a discourse that challenges

imposed social boundaries, creativity, presence and existence. Performing in public space inherently engages a multiplicity of bodies, with the inclusion and respect for personal agency being a foundational element of a performance ethics committed to pluralism. Such ethics must remain a space of continuous reflection, attentive to the responses and embodied knowledge of historically marginalised or silenced presences.

When the audience encounters spatial disruption within my dramaturgical components, the intention is to provoke the senses and encourage critical reflection, with the disturbance of their planned experience being an integral part of the performance. Maldonado-Torres affirms that “in decolonial artistic creation, the embodied subject emerges as someone who can not only reflect about but also mould, shape, and reshape subjectivity, space, and time” (n.d., p.27). Inviting the audience to inhabit the space differently, as laying down or walking backsteps, engaging with my methods or dramaturgical operations, the aim is to foster a sense of communal inhabitation, that through embodied experience,

can re-signify the shared terrain of everyday life and persist in the layering interactions of other bodies with the space, reshaping narratives and perspectives. By engaging with their senses, the audience can perceive layers of meaning, produce alternative subjectivities that embrace diversity, create third spaces through interaction, and generate the possibility of being part of the person’s lived archive.

CHAPTER 4: CONTRIBUTIONS

This research, through the realisation of site-specific performances in spaces marked by colonial heritage, enabled an embodied artistic practice within the field of critical colonial studies. It exposed the colonial structure upheld through restricted access to research and knowledge in European institutions and developed an embodied aesthetic approach to coloniality through performance-making.

Within the field of site-specific performance, this investigation proposes specific political practices to corporeally address the social oppressions entangled with coloniality in symbolic colonial spaces. Such interventions have enabled the emergence of alternative perspectives that challenge the historically dominant narratives inscribed in those sites. The methodologies employed emphasised the reciprocal interaction between space and body, fostering both sensitive and critical perception, while simultaneously producing temporary layers of meaning within those spaces.

Through these reflections, and after having inhabited colonial spaces, I asked myself: Can I truly challenge coloniality, such a deeply entrenched hegemonic culture?

The characteristics and functions of the spaces remain largely unchanged: museums continue to operate within their established frameworks, Columbus still stands atop his monument, gazing over Barcelona, and the WIC maintains both its name and its elitist restaurant. However, from an ethical standpoint, the answer is yes. Culture is an ongoing process of hybridisation, and even if ephemeral or small, it produces effects on the broader landscape, especially when in confluence with others.

Regarding the colonality of power, there was the finding of guerrilla performance as a strategic mode of political intervention in spaces unauthorised for artistic site-specific or research-based practices. While such practices have previously been explored mainly by activists and collectives, in the context of this research, guerrilla performance emerged as a response to spaces that opt for distancing rather than encounter, and that preserve colonial structures of exclusion rather than inviting critical reflection. Through the performances, the voice could be heard and the body could be seen, advancing the discussion about non-homogeneity, the implications of colonality in the body, and the exposition of hidden stories.

Acknowledging that space regulates behaviour, another key finding is that challenging spatial norms requires first

recognising their embedded patterns and then purposefully acting in divergence. While deviation alone can produce varied effects, artistic presence, through dramaturgical operations aimed at expressing specific narratives, enhances the potential for engagement of the audience, due to societal allowance.

The narratives shared in these spaces also counter the colonality of knowledge by revealing perspectives that are purposely overlooked by those who hold power. Perceiving other points of view, the homogeneity of a single story or a single use of space settles place for the diversity, for the multiplicity, for the encounter with the other. Challenging colonality operates as an ongoing disruption of our sensory engagement with space, shaping modes of interaction, solidarity, and the valuation of difference, with the situated knowledge of the body as a political vector.

Activating the senses could be a way to counterpoint the hegemonic anaesthetic, challenging the colonality of being by opening to feelings as a means of breaking free from the restrictive patterns of colonality.

"A decolonial way of sensing or decolonial aesthesis is a key aspect of the decolonization of being [...] Since aesthetics is so closely connected to embodied subjectivity and this subjectivity is at the crux of the colonality of knowledge, power, and being, decolonial aesthetics very directly challenges, not only each basic coordinate of modernity/coloniality, but its most visceral foundations and overall scope." (Maldonado-Torres, n.d., p.26)

Experienced by the body in performance, this openness to the senses is also a shared experience with the audience, despite the inherently ephemeral nature of performance. The reverberations in the bodies that encountered mine while constructing their layer of meaning on space transform the performance into an embodied archive, being a sensitive-political encounter capable of acting upon subjectivity. These reverberations hold the potential for a new perception of the colonial narratives embedded in the spaces where the encounter occurred, offering new interpretative frameworks to approach the same object, subject, or reality. Thus, performance enables the formation of a third space between artist and audience, in which interactions generate hybridity, functioning as living archives. Personally, by rearticulating agency in the production of subjectivity, moving from insecurity to the recovery of a collective memory of history by inhabiting the multiplicity of space, it counters the coloniality of being.

Finally, I consider it fundamental to open possibilities for subjectivation that value diversity and critical reflection on the patterns of coloniality, enabling individuals to increasingly recognise themselves as part of a plural community, because only through collective action can the symbolic structures of colonial spaces be truly altered or dismantled.

CONCLUSION

This thesis discusses site-specific performance as means to challenge coloniality in colonial heritage spaces, through the ongoing process of performance-making. The political potential of the arts to open relational spaces fosters embodied, situated knowledge and affirms the senses as decolonial aesthetics shaping identity. Disrupting normative behaviours in body and space confronts coloniality through the dramaturgy of performance, challenging dominant narratives and enabling hybrid perspectives. These processes show how performance resists colonial structures by generating embodied, relational encounters that inscribe new, living meanings into space, forming a living hybrid archive. Through these exchanges, third spaces emerge as alternative subjectivities and epistemologies that challenge Western dominance and resist the erasure of marginalised histories.

I intend to continue engaging critically and sensitively with performances that dismantle coloniality, as the methods developed are replicable in other specific contexts. While grounded in my own perspective, this inquiry aspires to incorporate multiple narratives as a future development. I aim to articulate community-based strategies for both implementing these methodologies and fostering dialogue

on coloniality, amplifying marginalised voices and reinforcing, through collective processes, the urgency of decolonial critique. This collective creation moves beyond addressing a silenced past to imagining alternative futures rooted in present-day social justice. The encounter with material and embodied archives marks the beginning of a practice I intend to deepen as part of an ongoing decolonial approach.

This research is not a closure, but a motivator to continue inhabiting these places and challenging dominant narratives, creating layers of meaning and third spaces that can disrupt what was once deemed immutable, in favour of a more diverse and equitable society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arendt, Hanna (1958). *The human condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Augé, Marc. (1995) *Non-places: introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*. London, New York: Verso.

Bayley, Annouchka; Chan, JJ. (ed.) (2023) *Diffraction New Materialisms: Emerging Methods in Artistic Research and Higher Education*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.

Braidotti, R.; Hlavajova, M. (edit) (2018) Introduction. In: *Posthuman Glossary*, London: Bloomsbury. pp 1-14.

Butler, Judith (1992). *Contingent foundations: Feminism and the question of "postmodernism"*. In: J. Butler, & J. Scott (Eds.), *Feminists theorize the political* (pp.3-21). New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith. (2003) *Problemas de gênero: feminismo e subversão da identidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira.

Butler, Judith (2016) *Rethinking vulnerability and resistance*. In: Butler, Judith; Gambetti, Zeynep; Sabsay, Leticia. (ed.) *Vulnerability in Resistance*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Canclini, N. G. (2015). *Culturas Híbridas: estratégias para entrar e sair da modernidade*. São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo.

Debord, Guy. (1955) *Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography*. In: Knab Ken (ed.) (2006) *Situationist International Anthology: revised and expanded edition*. Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets.

Foucault, Michel. (1987) *Vigiar e punir: nascimento da prisão*. 27 ed. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Greiner, Christine; Katz, Helena. (2006) *O corpo: pistas para estudos indisciplinados*. 2 ed. São Paulo: Annablume.

Hunter, Victoria (ed.). (2015) *Moving Sites: investigating site-specific dance performance*. New York: Routledge.

Jones, A. (2017) *Presence in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation*. Art Journal, 56(4), 11-18. Available from https://www.academia.edu/3336410/Presence_in_absentia_Experiencing_Performance_as_Documentation Accessed 17 June 2024.

Schneider, R. (2011) *Performance Remains*. Performance Research, 6(2).

Kaye, Nick. (2000) *Site-specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation*. London: Routledge.

Kelly, M.; Bosse, A. (2022) *Pressing Pause, "Doing" Feminist Mapping*. In: ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies. pp.399-415.

Krenak, Ailton. (2019) *Ideias para adiar o fim do mundo*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.

Kwon, Miwon. (2002) *One place after another: site-specific art and locational identity*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Lorde, Audre (1979) *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House*. In: Anzaldúa, Gloria; Moraga, Cherie (ed.) *This bridge called my back: writings by radical women of color*. Watertown, Mass: Persephone Press.

Lugones, Maria. (2008) *Colonialidade e gênero*. In: Hollanda, H. B. (ed) *Pensamento Feminista hoje: perspectivas decoloniais*. Available in: <https://cpdel.ifcs.ufrj.br/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Maria-Lugones-Colonialidade-e-genero.pdf>. Accessed in: 05/03/2025.

Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. (2007) *On the coloniality of being: Contributions to the development of a concept*. London: Routledge.

Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. (n.d.) *Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality*. Available in: https://caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/docs/Maldonado-Torres_Outline_Ten_Theses-10.23.16.pdf Accessed in: 27/05/2025.

Mignolo, W. (2011) *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*. North Carolina: Duke Press.

Miller, Jussara. (2007) *A escuta do corpo: sistematização da Técnica Klauss Vianna*. São Paulo: Summus.

Neves, Neide. (2019) *Técnica Klauss Vianna: processos evolutivos*. In: Revista TKV, v.1, n.4.

Pagnes, A. (2023). *Bodies in dissent between the political, the private and the technological*. Repertório 1 (39). pp.175-202.

Pinder, D. (2003). *Mapping world: cartography and the politics of representation*. In: *Cultural Geography in Practice*. London: Hodder Education. pp.172-187.

Quijano, A. (2005) *Colonialidad del poder, eurocentrismo y América Latina*. In: Lander, E (eds.) *A colonialidade do saber: eurocentrismo e ciências sociais. Perspectivas latino-americanas*. Buenos Aires: Clacso. pp.117-142.

Schlehaider, I. (s/d) *Committed to Making a Difference: A. N. Whitehead's Critical Posthumanist Notion of Metaphysics, Truth and Theory*. Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Institute for Art Theory and Cultural Studies.

Silva, Renato Araújo (2022) *Era uma vez a lembrança de uma árvore chamada "do esquecimento"*. In: *Cadernos do Lepaaq*. v. XIX, n. 37, p.211-229.

Spivak, Gayatri (1988) *Can the subaltern speak?* Available in: <https://voidnetwork.gr/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Can-the-subaltern-speak-by-Gayatri-Spivak.pdf> (Acessed in: 25 May 2025)

Taylor, Diana (2003). *The archive and the repertoire: performing cultural memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Thiong'o, N. (1997) *Enactments of Power: the politics of performance space*. In: *TDR*, Vol. 41, n. 3, Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology. pp.11-30.

APPENDICES

A - PERFORMANCES

A-1 - Waiting

Duration: 10 minutes (in repetition)

Where: Maritime Museum of Amsterdam

When: January 2025

Inspiration: Faith Wilding

Description: Recontextualization of the performance *Waiting*, by Faith Wilding. The body, seated on a bench in a public space, performs a repeated gesture of bending and returning the torso, while vocalizing a text in which each statement begins with the word *Waiting*. In this recontextualization, each *waiting* is followed by a phrase addressing the ongoing oppression and discrimination faced by Indigenous and Black peoples, from the colonial period to the present day. At the end, the body rises and question the notions of activity and passivity as constructed by those who have the power to write history.



Figure 1: Waiting - Personal archive

A-2 - Melting Down - Hybrid Body

Duration: 30 minutes

Where: Gallery and Main courtyard in Maritime Museum of Amsterdam/ Gallery and front of Maritime Museum of Barcelona

When: February 2025

Inspiration: Felipe Teixeira and Mariana Molinos

Invigilators: Kasia Zarzycka and Vivian Campos

Description: By positioning the body at a high level (standing) and performing a single, continuous movement over 30 minutes to a low level (lying on the ground), the performance portrayed a body slowly dissolving, at times appearing almost immobile. Originally intended to question the pace of capitalist everyday life, this recontextualized version situated the body as one of the museum's artifacts—an exhibition of the hybrid body—revealing both resistance and the slow dissolution under the temporality and denying imposed by the museum space.



Figure 2: Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Gallery in Maritime Museum of Amsterdam). Photo: Kasia Zarzycka

Figure 3: Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Gallery in Maritime Museum of Barcelona). Photo: Vivian Campos

Figure 4: Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Front of Maritime Museum of Barcelona). Photo: Vivian Campos

Figure 5: Melting Down - Hybrid Body (Courtyard of Maritime Museum of Amsterdam). Photo: Kasia Zarzycka

A-3 - Positioning

Format: Photo performance

When: February 2025

Description: Photo performance session created in collaboration with photographer Christian Gamero Paz, in which personal and family migration routes were traced and merged with the lines of world maps—questioning borders and transforming the body into a convergence point of multiple paths.



Figure 6: Positioning. Photo: Christian Gamero Paz

A-4 - ¿Lo que se olvida bajo Colón?**Duration:** 50 minutes**Where:** March 2025**When:** Columbus Monument, Barcelona**Invigilators:** Mane Kirakosyan and Viola Galassi

Description: The performance was structured in three parts to revisit the oral history that tells how Black people from the Benin region, when enslaved during the colonial period, were forced to walk around the “Tree of Forgetting.” The ritual’s purpose was to erase their past and impose a new identity as enslaved subjects. To reclaim this memory—within a space that glorifies only maritime achievements—the performance involved three counter-clockwise rounds, symbolically reversing the imposed forgetting and restoring suppressed memory.

The first round consisted of a dance grounded in resistance, weight, insubordination, and a confrontation with the illusions perpetuated by official history.

The second round responded through 24 written texts, attached by a red thread to 24 hooks placed around the vertical monument—shedding light on what lies forgotten beneath the figure of Columbus, from colonial atrocities to their lingering echoes today, including the realities of immigration in Barcelona.

The third round was participatory: walking backwards with a group of people, I recounted the story of the memory erasure inflicted upon enslaved Black communities, inviting the audience to engage with this silenced legacy.



Figure 7: ¿Lo que se olvida bajo Colón? Photo: Mane Kirakosyan

A-5 - Pamphleting**Duration:** undefined**Where:** Front of the building of West India Company, Amsterdam**When:** April 2025**Invigilator:** Joana Cunha Pinto

Description: Distribution of a pre-designed catalogue featuring products “sold” in the Netherlands for 24 euros—including a “super deal” from the lands of Manhattan, USA. The action draws on the legend claiming that the Dutch purchased Manhattan from the Lenape people for this amount. On the back cover of the catalogue, a critical message invites reflection on the oppression of Indigenous peoples during colonial times. This intervention took place in front of the former headquarters of the Dutch West India Company, which, despite now functioning as an event space, still bears its colonial name and features a courtyard that celebrates this so-called conquest.



Figure 8: Pamphleting. Photo: Joana Cunha



Figure 9, 10: Catalogue of Pamphleting

In November 1626, Peter Schagen, a merchant, wrote a letter reporting that "our people have purchased the island Manhattans from the Indians for the value of 60 guilders." This letter is the only evidence of this transaction. Although this story could be a myth and there was exchange between the Lenape indigenous people and the Dutch settlers, the understanding of what it meant to "obtain land" could have been misinterpreted due to the vastly different cultural contexts of the parties involved in the potential transaction. However, this view disregarded the rich history, cultural practices, and deep connection that the indigenous people had with the island. The purchase was made without considering the rights, perspectives, or the complex relationship the Native Americans had with their environment. What was hailed as a trade in the eyes of the colonizers was, in reality, a profound violation of the indigenous peoples' sovereignty, erasing their existence and their rightful relationship with the land.

This transaction laid the groundwork for centuries of exploitation, not only of the land but also of the indigenous populations themselves. The genocide of indigenous peoples, the forced displacement, and the systemic violence they endured are often overlooked in favor of glorifying colonial expansion. The enslavement of Native Americans, along with the forced labor of African people brought to the Americas, fueled the early stages of capitalism, which thrived on the extraction of resources and the commodification of human lives. This created a world order where a hegemonic, Eurocentric culture dominated, and colonial powers exploited both land and labor for economic gain.

The repercussions of this unequal foundation are still felt today. The exploitation of natural resources, the ongoing marginalization of indigenous communities, and the global inequalities that arose from this system have contributed to a world where some nations enjoy significantly higher socio-economic conditions than others.

A-6 - (dis)cover(up)

Duration: 45 minutes

Where: ArtEZ - Photo Studio and Skylight

When: May 2025

Invigilators: Amina Riccetti, Chetna Mehrotra and Kasia Zarzycka

Description: Exhibition of the artistic research, presented in two parts. The first involved the display of my personal archive developed during my master's artistic research. Audiences entered the darkened space in small groups, each equipped with a flashlight, exploring a multisensory environment. This immersive experience proposed a decolonial counterpoint to what had previously been encountered in the museum space.

In the second part, the audience was guided toward a window and then to a spot beneath the skylight, where the body engaged in an intimate dialogue with the surrounding space and various materials—playing with the fluidity of movement and interactions and offering multiple shifting perspectives to those present.

The work featured a voice-over with reflections on the research process and subtle guidance for the public, culminating in the outdoor area, where all the materials used and the body that had inhabited and interacted with them were fully visible.

Video:

<https://youtu.be/m96iNAZzFo8>

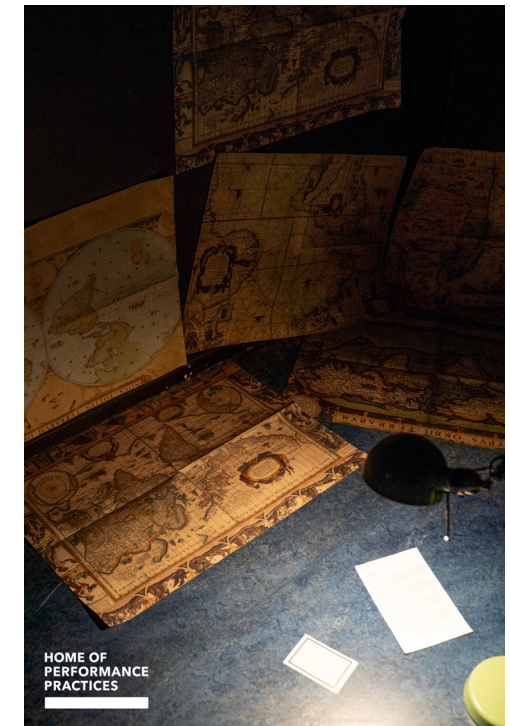


Figure 8: Pamphleting. Photo: Joana Cunha



Figure 12: (dis)cover(up) - Skylight. Photo: Steef Kersbergen

CHOR

PE

THEATRE PRACT

DEDISCIPLINED B

DIGITAL PER

CH

PERFORMANCE /

TH

DEDI

CH

PERFORMA

THEATRE

DEDISCIPLINED BO

DIGITAL PERFORMANCE

CHOREOC

PERFORMANCE

LOCO

PERFORMANCEPRACTICES.NL
FB / INSTA: HOMEOPPERFORMANCEPRACTICES