clip wgbtf to tell our stories

anthropocene –
humans versus aliens clip

bucky mix

sunra loop

james baldwin tracy adorno

i was a stranger in a strange land...
General Tubman

The entire sphere of popular music, even there where it dresses itself up in
modernist guise

The entire sphere of popular music, even there where it dresses itself up in
modernist guise

is to such a degree inseparable from past temperment, from consumption
Why do I call these interventions 'Audio-Visual Anti-Lectures'? I am implementing a 'formula' in which artistic practice, academic research, and the blending of multilayered narrative, destabilizes traditional, hegemonic sagacity and static structural institutions of Knowledge. Much of the content speaks to nomadic subjectivity (Braidotti 2007), memory/re-memory (Toni Morrison 1987) as a form of 'time travel', blurring and/or deconstructing borders (geographical, social, psychological). I do this through a lens that gives a nod to the Afrofuturist aesthetic and narrative. Here, the form (Audio-Visual Anti-Lecture) reflects a philosophy centered around an alternative unfixed chronopolitics – one which subverts the dominant narrative. An Anti-Lecture displaces the position of the 'lecturer' as the 'owner' of Knowledge and works to liberate from the strictures of erudition. It gives privilege to a Knowledge that could be called intuitive rather than 'rational'. Through multi-layered narrative, I use different mediums, which include soundscape, visual loops, text both academic and poetic to tell stories, which in many ways mirrors griot tradition. It is not only a way of imparting stories that often get lost within hegemonic discourses, but also imparts 'ideas' which are open to more fluid interpretations. The engagement of different perspectives, a progressive, dialectical approach to discourses brings us closer to a notion of Knowledge as free and flowing.

Methods of (un)reasoning: knowing & the unknowable
Perhaps intuition partially feeds into re-memory, a place where something can be re-released and/or re-experienced often via certain triggers. These re-memories are yes, based on empirical/lived experience but also exist on a cellular level. We may know something without knowing we know it. Keeping this in mind, perhaps the space between the transmitter (of knowledge) and the receiver is a kind of no-man's-land in which the unknowable exists – a place where imagination gestates.

Process and its evidences
The rest of this document is the continuation of a near-verbatim partial script of the presentation that I gave in Vienna as part of the Un_University panel of interventions and workshops. Frames from the corresponding visuals are added below within the script. Each photo has a time code (TC) reference. Tap hyper link (https://youtu.be/Lh6D4Bvr1fG), and there you can use the time code to follow the sequences shown during the original intervention.

SCRIPT:
Anti-Lecture Multi_Verse
I would now like to show a clip from an Audio-Visual Anti-Lecture I did a little while ago as part of the Now Not Now conference in Vienna. I do this not only in the tradition of sampling, re-working and re-contextualizing, but also to make transparent my process. Each lecture has been a continuation, to some degree, of the last and consequently, as ideas evolve, so do my presentations of that work. This audio-visual mash-up is extracted from we go back to the future to tell our stories. Here I use a blend of visuals and sound to give resonance to the layered futurist narratives of WOC (Women of Color) – our resistance, and spaces where memory/re-memory become vehicles for time travel.

the in between
what we know without knowing
Some of these clips were sampled from an even earlier period when I began exploring WOC as FAR (fugitive archetype of resistance). To begin to unravel this complex concept is to first of all comprehend agency from the margins and influence where it is often erased. As a result of this erasure the ‘subject’ (in this case WOC) demands alternative frames of engagement (in this case FAR). Again I use various elements; quotes from academic texts, sonic noise, and manipulated and performed visual imagery. Too much to take in one viewing, I have been told, certain elements (images, sounds, texts) stick with you and reemerge in your day to day (sub)conscious musings over time. The purpose of the Audio-Visual Anti-Lecture is not to pretend to give definitive answers, but to leave space open for progressive interpretation.

otherworld frequencies … missing pieces to a story …

Always, even since the emergence of the written word, we have used oral transmission, images (icons), to inform our mythologies – to pass on stories. Myth is meant to in some way mimic something that really took place and/or reflect an ideology of a certain period. But what happens when you don’t exist in that Reality? How do you find your ‘truth’ inside a cordoned-off slice of time and space – in which you are little more than a hologram propping up a kind of theatre which has little to nothing to do with you?

The transmission of Knowledge is a reciprocal process in that it can allow for discourse and present questions which encourage ongoing exchange and discovery. The institutional structures which dictate methodologies for gaining, collecting, and regurgitating Knowledge are often gilded by privilege and access. Intrinsic to this is an unwritten hierarchy. Knowledge that we in the western world take for granted as having ‘value’ continues to be imprisoned within the tropes of a largely heterogeneous ideology and inflexible, learned methods of thinking. We have been so thoroughly indoctrinated, our assumptions becoming so rooted, that we are unable to dis-entangle ourselves from antiquated systems of Knowledge and, consequently, systems of reality.

fictions and eruditions pieces of dream.

From the age of enlightenment through to the current discourses around the Anthropocene … there were, yes, important ideals and celebration of evolutions of ideals and sustainable Knowledge. But who was/is talking? Who was/is speaking?

The last work in progress I will present today is called humans vs. aliens: a deep-sea transmission. I began developing this piece as a participant in the 18th Black Market project (Paris, Musée de l’Homme, November 2015). I was one of over 100 experts who dialoged around threads which weave the tapestry of what is known as the Age of the Anthropocene. I used an audio-visual experiment to trigger questions around who would be excluded from the Anthropocene, whether it is possible to radically decolonize western thinking, and how does this ‘age of the Anthropocene’ reflect the ‘age of Enlightenment’ when similar questions around progress and ‘humanity’ were broached.

The transmissions from the deep-sea city is a message from a ‘mirror soul’ who lives in an alien deep-sea utopia. These cities’ populations are also largely descendants of unborn babies that were in the wombs of pregnant would-be slaves thrown overboard during the trans-Atlantic journey.* Some are amphibious, many are able to take human form but are also capable of breathing underwater. Some who elect to remain in human form are artists – only some consciously remember their heritage. Here I am presenting only a clip which I believe echoes the themes present in this Audio-Visual Anti-Lecture on the anti-lecture multi_verse.

* This story is inspired by Detroit Electronic Music duo Drexciya’s manifesto for their oeuvre. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drexciya
I aim to explore the ways in which artistic practice, academic research, and the blending of multilayered narratives destabilizes traditional, hegemonic sagacity, and static structural institutions of knowledge. An anti-lecture displaces the position of the 'lecturer' as the 'owner' of knowledge and works to liberate from the strictures of erudition. It gives privilege to a knowledge that could be called intuitive rather than 'rational'.

Biography

Jamika Ajalon is a poet, writer, filmmaker, musician and educator. Alongside her solo projects, she has toured and recorded with Zenzile for over 14 years, as well as collaborating with many artists including Tony Allen. Her latest album is Don’t Feed the Gate Keepers (Chapter 1: out Nov. 2016; Chapter 2: due spring/summer 2017). www.jamikaajalon.com


Biografie