WAYS OF THINKING

POSTCOLONIAL CONDITION

Estéfani Bouza: e.bouza-arnoso@uwtsd.ac.uk/ October 2026

RECAP FROM PREVIOUS SESSION

RECAP FROM PREVIOUS WEEK

Some of the ideas that we discussed last week:

-Definition of visual culture.

-Definition of mediation.

-Visual representations as ‘mediations’ of reality but not reality itself.

-Throughout this module and this year you will begin to construct your own visual language and identify those artists that you find interesting and perhaps incorporate them in your own practices.

VISUAL CULTURE - ON SEEING

The political agency, critical insight, and social impact inscribed in visuality and representation.

How we see, comprehend, and participate in the visual world.

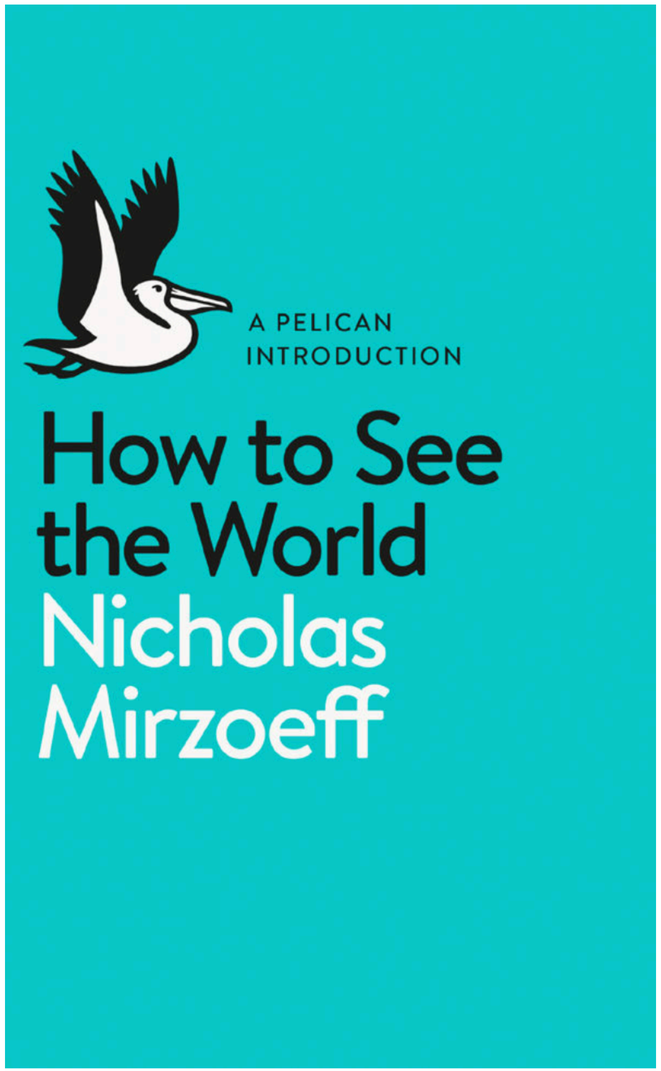
RESISTANCE TO ANY REDUCTIVE SYSTEM - RELATED TO CRITICAL THINKING

Projects that are socially, politically and ecologically engaged.

Works that are grounded on research and collaboration with communities.

A space for connection, learning, dialogue and knowledge exchange.

HOW TO SEE THE WORLD - NICHOLAS MIRZOEFF



First published in 2015.

Activity - 10min.

In groups please discuss the following ideas:

-Engaging with the world differently. According to the text, what is our role in seeing the world and shaping it?

Mirzoeff uses as example the impact of ‘Blue Marble’ in 1972 and how it functioned as a type of photographic manifesto. Can you think of any representation that have a similar role or could have a similar role?

ACTIVITY - WHAT IS THE POSTCOLONIAL CONDITION?

Activity - 10min.

What ideas come to mind when you hear about post colonialism? Can you think of any example from an exhibition that you have seen or an artist that you are interested?

What are the main ideas that are introduced in the video?

SESSION OVERVIEW

-Structural racism - who has the right to representation and how that representation is framed?
-Polarised society.
-Ideas related with postcoloniality?
-UK as ‘empire’ the histories associated with it. the British Empire ended in the late 1940s, the impact of its legacy still has meaning today.
-Relation to class, race, ethnicity and cultural assimilation. Intersectional.
-What practices go beyond the idea of visibility? Also provide an entry point to questions around systemic racism by challenging the framework for viewing blackness?

DANA SCHUTZ



Dana Schutz, *Open Casket,* (2016).



Get Out Official Trailer 1 (2017) - Daniel Kaluuya Movie

ACTIVITY

Activity - 10min.

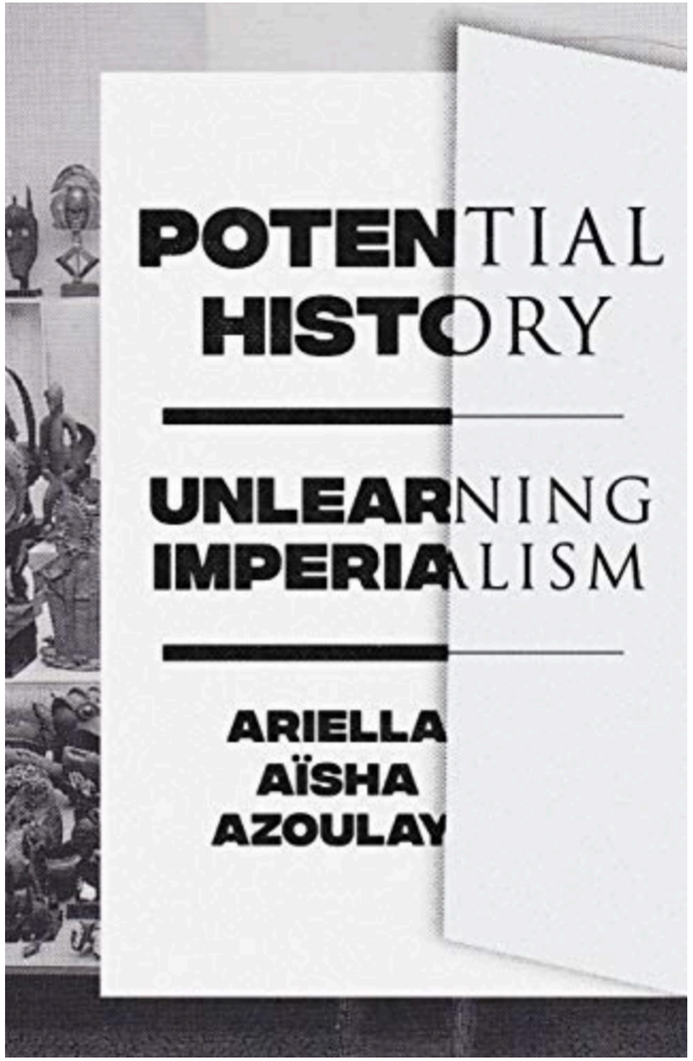
Tina Campt in *The Grain of the Amateur*

-Visual frequency
Shattering footage - film culled from *The Brith of a Nation* by D W Griffith 1915
Mobile phone video
‘[…] archive of found footage posted by various online sites’. (p.38)
‘The video for Jay-Z’s *4:44* (2017) is full of love and loss, beauty and brutality’. (p.43)

WHY DO I MEAN BY IMAGE AND RACE?

-Systems of visibility.
-Who get to be seen who remains invisible?
-The visible platforms?
-Ideas related with postcoloniality?
-The violent history of the British ‘empire’, and the postcolonial condition.
-Polarised society.

BOOKS - POSTCOLONIAL





First published in 2019.

ALLAN SEKULA - THE BODY AND THE ARCHIVE, (1986)



Plate 41 from Alphonse Bertillon, Identification anthropométrique, *1893.*

Allan Sekula in 'The Body and the Archive' (1986) argues that projects such as Alphonse Bertillon's police archive of the nineteenth century are at the intersection of a number of discourses from different disciplines that range across statistics, physiognomy, photography and social legal practices of the time. Therefore, he examines the conditions of production of these archives to explain how they produce a specific system of knowledge with its own rules.

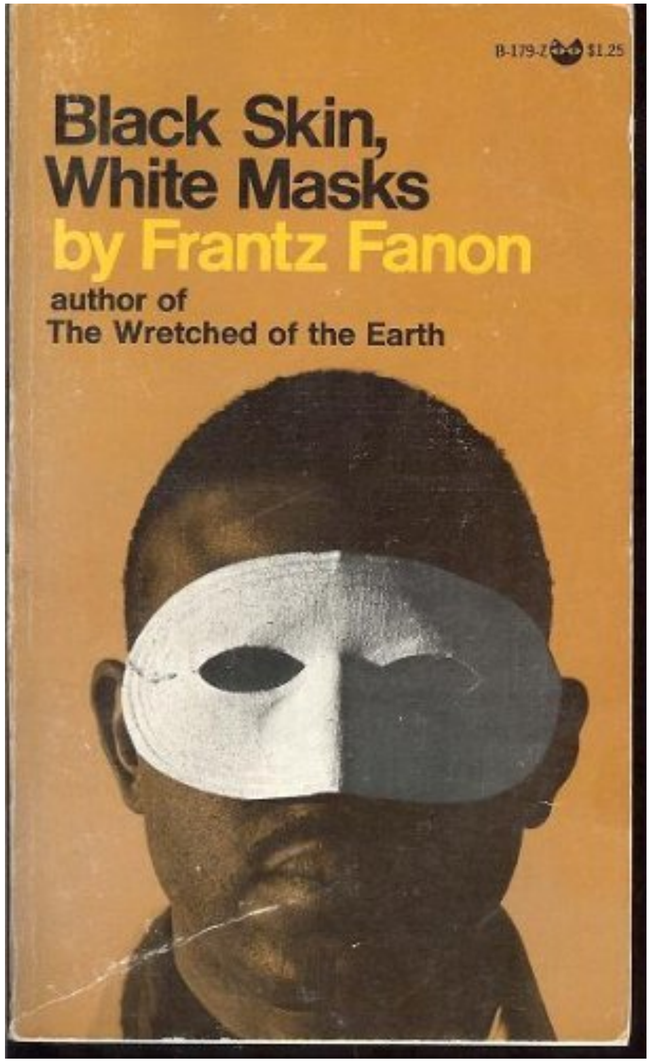
This process described by Sekula allows us to see how the instrumental use of photography is constructed. Thus Sekula exposes the archive as an image of control and the violence inflicted to those bodies through a classification system.

KADER ATTIA

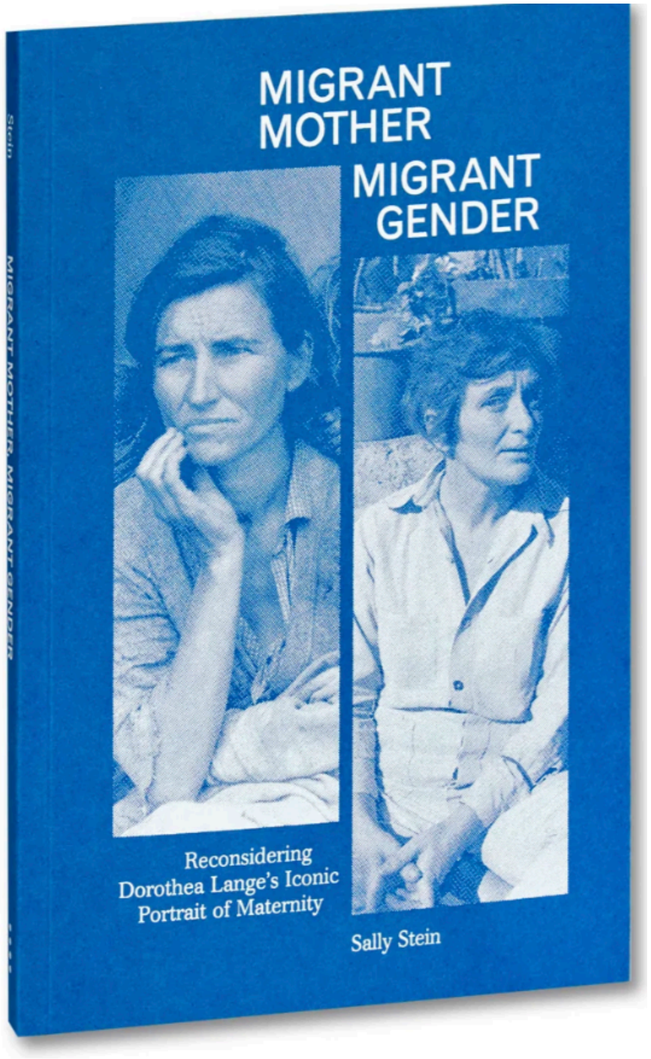


Kader Attia, *The Repair, The Debt* (projection), (2012).

BOOKS



First published in 1952.

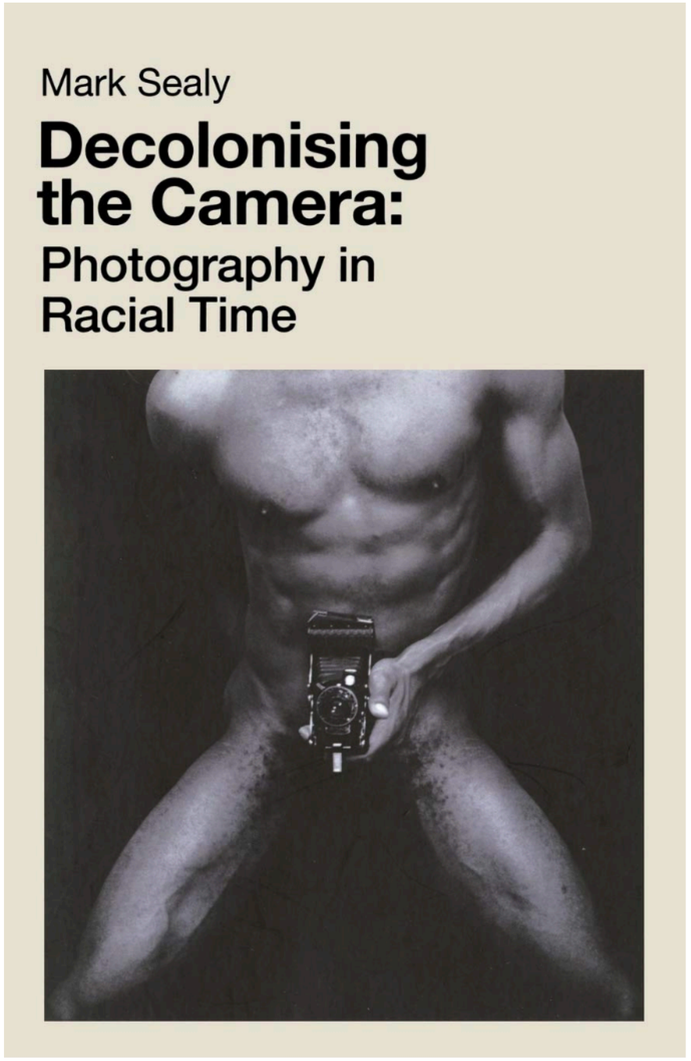


First published in 2020.



First published in 2021.

BOOKS - MARK SEALY

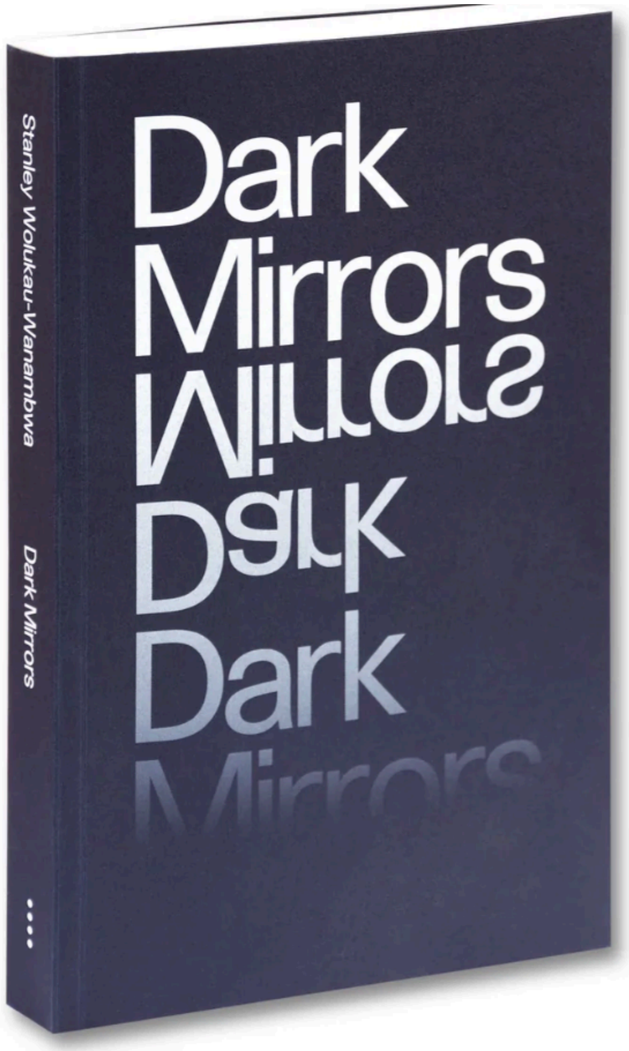


First published in 2019.



First published in 2022.

BOOKS - STANLEY WOLUKAU-WANAMBWA



First published in 2021.



First published in 2022.

WHY DO I MEAN BY IMAGE AND RACE?

-Systems of visibility. For example, who gets to be seen and who remains invisible?
-Structural racism - who has the right to representation and how that representation is framed?
-Ideas related with postcoloniality?
-UK as ‘empire’ the histories associated with it. the British Empire ended in the late 1940s, the impact of its legacy still has meaning today.
-Relation to class, race, ethnicity and cultural assimilation.
-What practices go beyond the idea of visibility? Also provide an entry point to questions around systemic racism by challenging the framework for viewing blackness?

STRUCTURAL RACISM - EARLY EXAMPLE - GORDON PARKS



Gordon Parks, *Segregation in the South,* (1956).



Gordon Parks, *Segregation in the South,* (1956).

STRUCTURAL RACISM - EARLY EXAMPLE - GORDON PARKS



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STRUCTURAL RACISM - EARLY EXAMPLE - GORDON PARKS



MR. AND MRS. ALBERT THORNTON, married in 1906, sit beneath a picture made shortly after their marriage by splicing two earlier photographs made in 1903. The old picture shows them at 29 and 17; now they are 82 and 70.

IN HIS BACKYARD Albert Thornton moves his Jersey cows to a new grazing spot. He also raises vegetables and chickens to augment his income from Social Security, from which he and his wife together draw a total of about $120 a month.

ON SUNDAY 18 FAMILY MEMBERS REPRESENTING FOUR GENERATIONS GATHER ON THORNTONS' PORCH

THE RESTRAINTS: OPEN AND HIDDEN

Both are seen in the study of one Negro family

Text by ROBERT WALLACE Photographed for LIFE by GORDON PARKS

At the center of the storm over segregation stand the 10 million Negroes of the South. Since 1865 the Negro has seen his lot improve, then worsen, then in recent years grow slightly better again. But he is still surrounded by restraints. His attitude toward these restraints is simple enough: he wants them removed.

How these restraints affect the Negro can be seen in a study of some members of one family—that of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Thornton Sr. (opposite page) of Mobile, Ala. The Thorntons have nine children and 19 grandchildren. Among them may be found various occupations—mechanic, farmer, teacher and college professor—in localities ranging north to Nashville, Tenn. The effect of the restraints, in pride, education, job opportunity, recreation and housing are shown on the following pages. In the matter of housing many white Southerners are as badly off as the Negroes, but have one great advantage: if they can, they may move wherever they please. Negroes may move only to another segregated neighborhood.

Although the Thorntons are thoughtful and, in private, articulate, they do not make many direct statements about segregation. This is because they face yet another restraint—the constant fear of publicly speaking their minds.

PART IV
BACKGROUND OF SEGREGATION

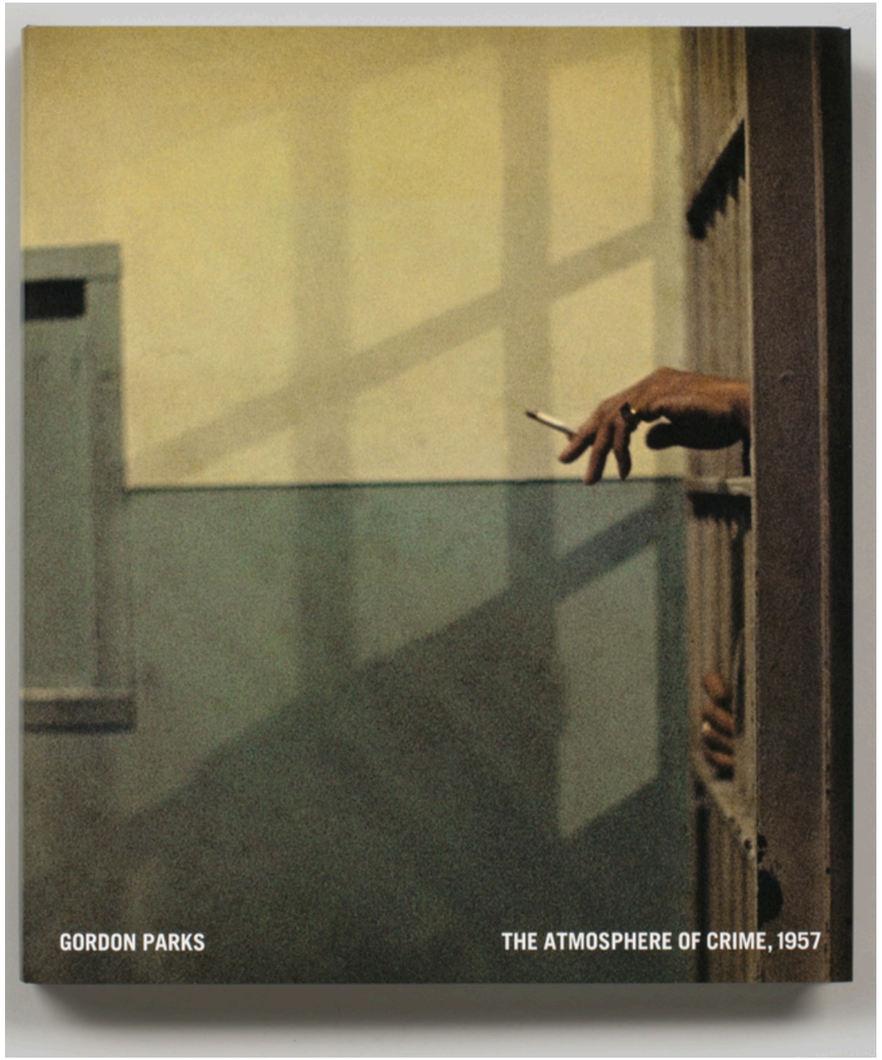
WITH A GREAT-GRANDCHILD, Mrs. Thornton sits solemnly on her porch. Passive, illiterate and devout, she hopes new laws will end segregation.

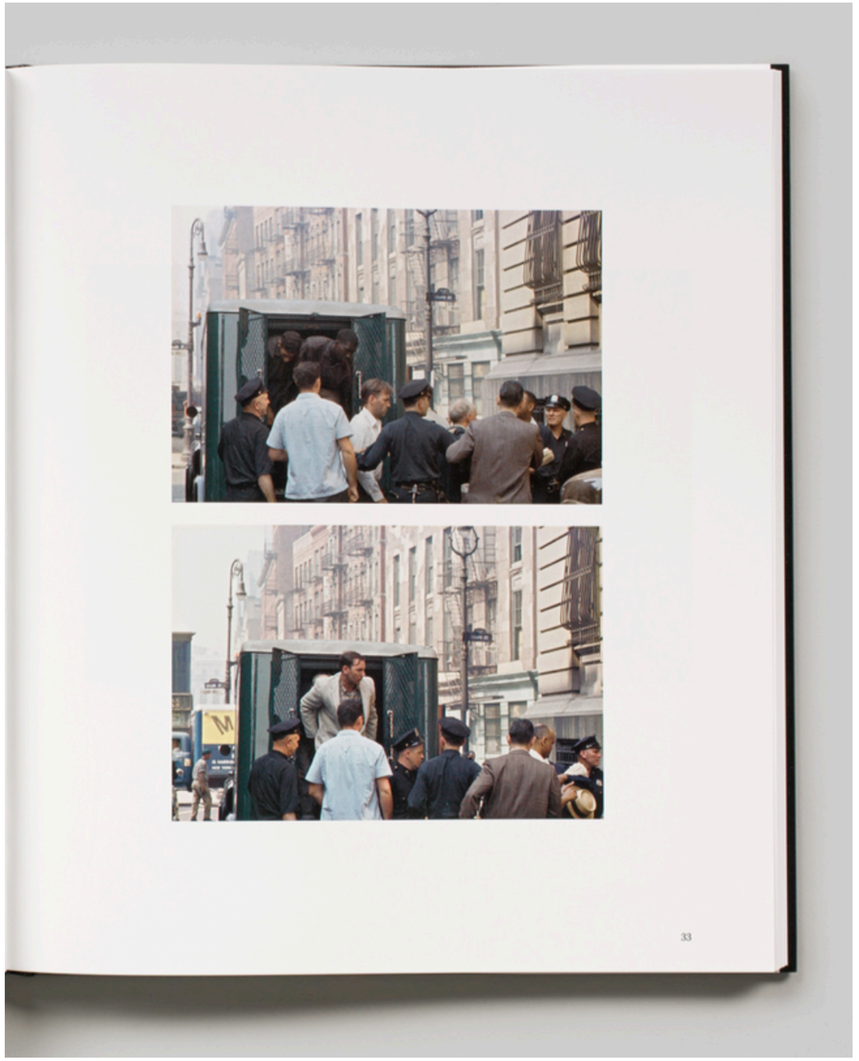
IN HOME BARBERSHOP Thornton is shaved by adopted son Aaron. Granddaughter (*foreground*) tore hair from Negro doll "to see how it would look."

CONTINUED

Gordon Parks, 'Life' magazine spread published September 24, (1956).

STRUCTURAL RACISM - EARLY EXAMPLE - GORDON PARKS





Gordon Parks, *The Atmosphere of Crime,* (1957).

STRUCTURAL RACISM - EARLY EXAMPLE - GORDON PARKS



At the end of the day in San Quentin the prisoners file back to their cells, chatting, joking, strangely casual. An order is given. They shuffle in. There is a sudden great clang of the doors, then silence.

100

1951 CRIME WAVE as seen by *National Police Gazette* included an attack in which a lady saved her sweetheart, "discomfited a desperate footpad."

TEXT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 50

U.S. Thus it may be safe to generalize about homicide—and the generalization may be rather surprising to readers of newspaper crime stories: today the rate of homicide in the U.S. is lower than it was 25 years ago. In 1930 there were about 8.9 homicides per 100,000 of population, and in 1955 there were 4.6. But even regarding these figures, which seem to "prove" something, Sellin appends a question. "Today," he says, "medical techniques are improved, more ambulances and hospitals are available, and the lives of many people who might earlier have died from assault are being saved. What does this do to your statistics on homicide?"

As Sellin says, no one really knows for sure what the trends are in crime in the U.S. Crime is an age-old condition of society. It is not like the Colorado potato beetle, a menace one day and gone the next. But the problem cannot be dismissed with such a negative observation. Sellin is a constructive thinker. He has devoted much of his life to an effort to promote the collection of truly good statistics which can serve as a basis for action against crime. Legislators at the local, state or federal level, he thinks, must have reliable statistics before they can make sensible laws. "If a law is passed merely in response to public hysteria, to satisfy vocal groups which cry 'Crime wave!' the law is likely to be a bad one."

Sellin thinks good statistics would be of great value to those who administer the law as well as to those who make it. Police, judges and penologists need statistics to check the effectiveness and the efficiency of their work. But how does one go about collecting good statistics?

Caught *vs.* uncaught criminals

ONE variety of criminal statistics, collected widely in Europe, deals only with proved offenses for which convictions have been obtained. This is based on the belief that one cannot tabulate a crime until the exact nature of an offense has been determined by a court and the guilt of the accused established. Statistics based on anything short of this are based legally on hearsay. But the system has its flaws. The criminologist is interested in *all* criminals, not merely in those who are caught. The convicted criminal may be a very poor representative of his class—the dumb-john, the bungling, lead-footed fellow who is so stupid that he cannot escape, or so reckless or arrogant that he does not try hard. Convicted criminals are, at the very best, only a small sample of all criminals, and possibly a bad one.

A second variety of criminal statistics deals with crimes known to the police, whether the criminals are apprehended or not. The "crimes known" system is used in the U.S. and some European countries and it too has its flaws. When crimes are reported to the police, the police must investigate them and determine whether crimes actually have

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101

Gordon Parks, *The Atmosphere of Crime,* (1957).

A BLACK GAZE

M. Campt, T. (2021) *A Black Gaze: Artists Changing How We See*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

‘And it is through digital rather than analog technologies that we now document, archive, and disseminate the mounting threats to Black communities’. (p.4)

‘The ascent of the current group of Black artist-entrepreneurs has been enabled by the technological advances of the Internet and social media, which have allowed individual artists direct access to modes of production, marketing, and most significantly, to media outlets and audiences that were previously out of reach except by way of largely white gatekeepers in the music, television, film, and publishing industries’. (p.6)

A BLACK GAZE

M. Campt, T. (2021) *A Black Gaze: Artists Changing How We See*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

‘But while contemporary Black-produced popular culture brings broader visibility to Black life and history, more often than not its emphasis centres on the *depiction* of Black people and communities, while maintaining existing limitations of traditional ways of narrating the Black experience. Although it often proceeds from a Black point of view, its major accomplishment is frequently that and that alone. It adds an additional perspective - a Black perspective - but it doesn’t necessarily **challenge the fundamental premise of the existing framework for viewing blackness**. It does not challenge the fundamental disparity that defines the dominant viewing practice: the fact that blackness is the elsewhere (or nowhere) of whiteness’. (p. 7)

A BLACK GAZE

M. Campt, T. (2021) *A Black Gaze: Artists Changing How We See*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

‘[…] a group of Black fine artist are initiating a different and, I would argue, more transformative cultural, aesthetic, and indeed, political shift that is drawing unprecedented attention’. (p.8)

‘This growing and increasingly influential cohort of Black artists are choosing to look after, care for, and reclaim an uncomfortable Black visual archive that makes audiences work through and toward new ways of encountering the precarity of Black life. […] It is a Black gaze that shifts the optics of ‘looking at’ to a politics of *looking with, through, and alongside another*. It is a gaze that requires effort and exertion […]’. (p.8)

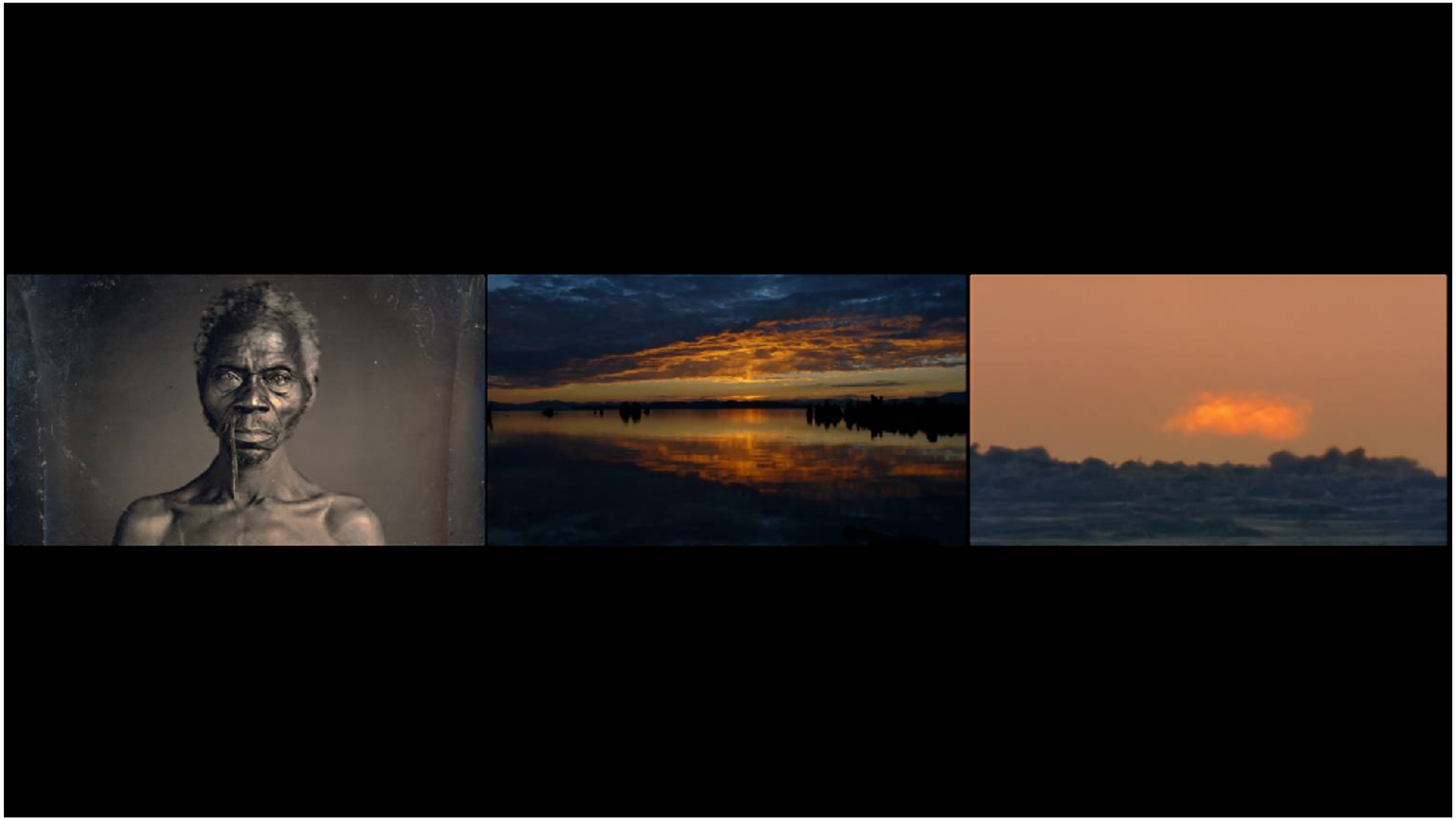
4:44 is a piece that requires us to be present we cannot simply ‘consume’ it. We need to navigate and think through how to connect the different fragments into the piece

A BLACK GAZE

M. Campt, T. (2021) *A Black Gaze: Artists Changing How We See*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

‘This book sketches the contours of this emergent Black gaze, focusing on a group of artists whose creative practice produces radical forms of witnessing that reject traditional ways of seeing blackness - ways of seeing that historically depict blackness only in a subordinate relation to whiteness. What defines and unites their divergent practices is their ability to make audiences *work*. They refuse to create spectators, as it is neither easy nor indeed possible to passively consume their art. Their work requires *labor* - the labor of discomfort, feeling, positioning, and repositioning - and solicits visceral responses to the visualisation of Black precarity’. (p.17)

JOHN AKOMFRAH



John Akomfrah, *Vertigo Sea,* (2015).

JOHN AKOMFRAH



John Akomfrah, *Five Murmurations,* (2021).

ISAAC JULIEN



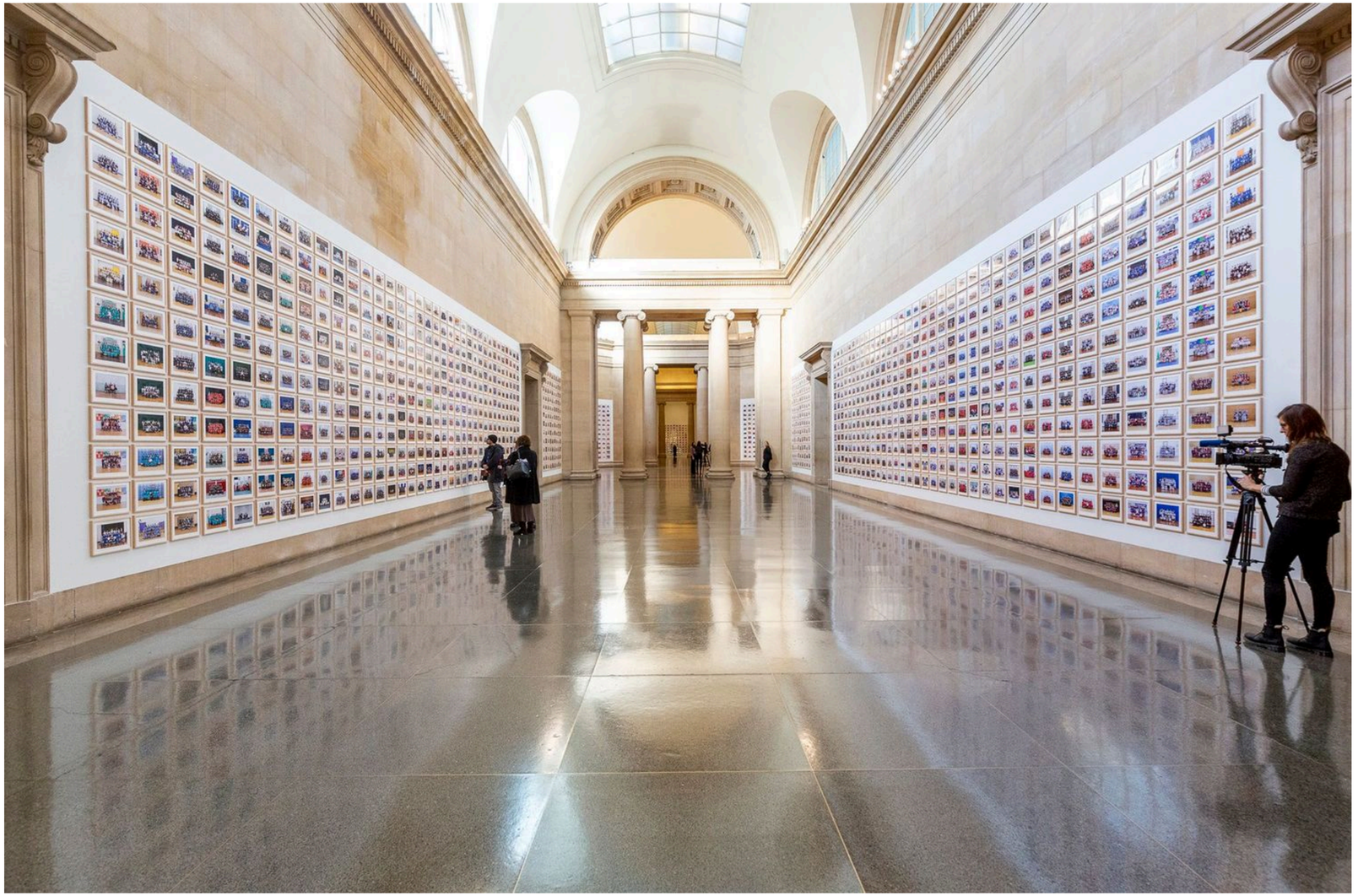
Isaac Julien, *Lessons of the Hour,* (2019).

ISAAC JULIEN



Isaac Julien, *Statues Never Die,* (2022).

STEVE MCQUEEN



Steve McQueen, *Year 3,* (Tate Britain, 12 November 2019 – 31 January 2021).

STEVE MCQUEEN



Steve McQueen, *Year 3,* (12 November 2019 – 31 January 2021).

STEVE MCQUEEN



Steve McQueen, *Year 3,* (12 November 2019 – 31 January 2021).

STEVE MCQUEEN



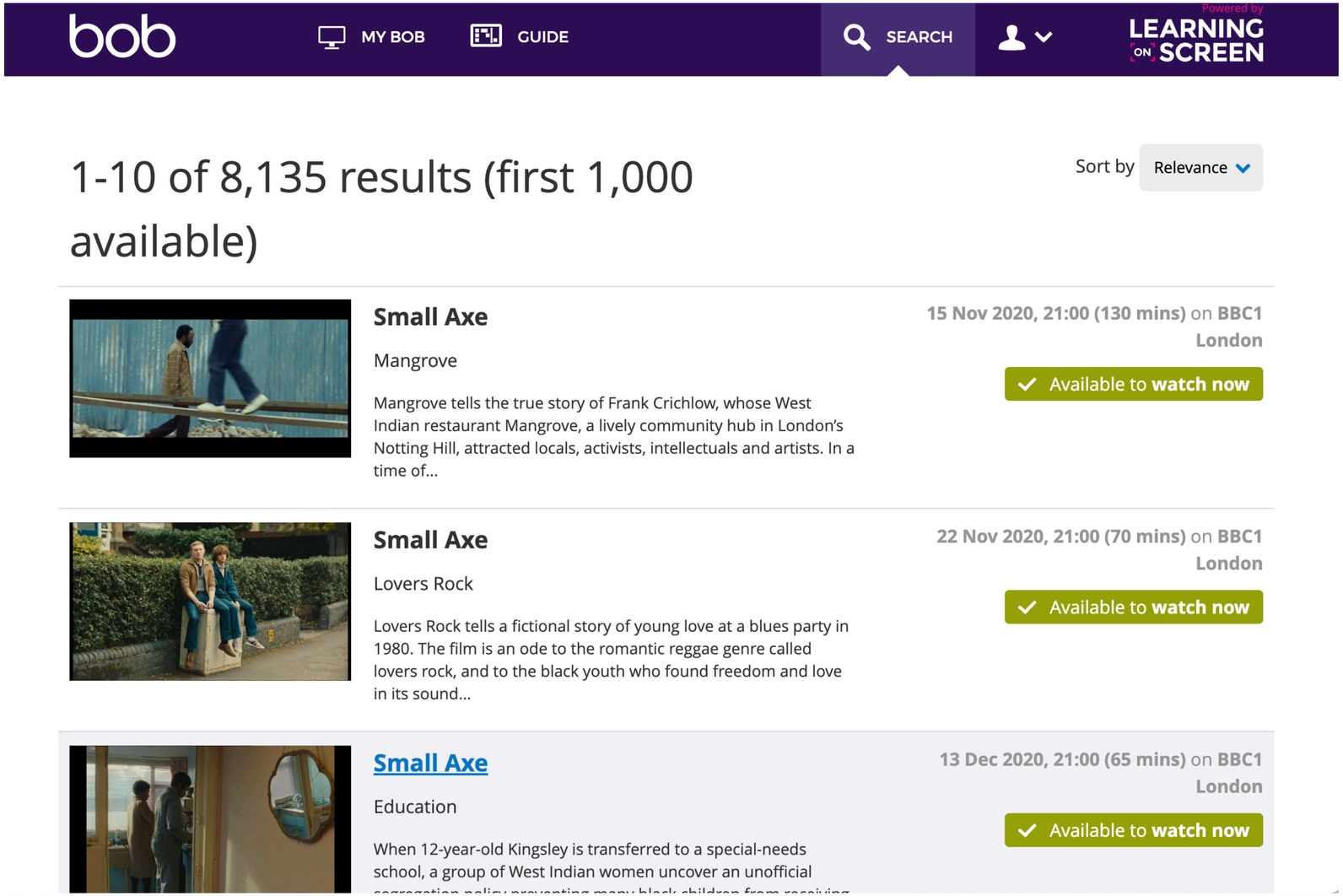
Steve McQueen, *Year 3,* (12 November 2019 – 31 January 2021).

STEVE MCQUEEN



Steve McQueen, *Small Axe,* (2020).

STEVE MCQUEEN



Steve McQueen, *Small Axe,* (2020).

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE



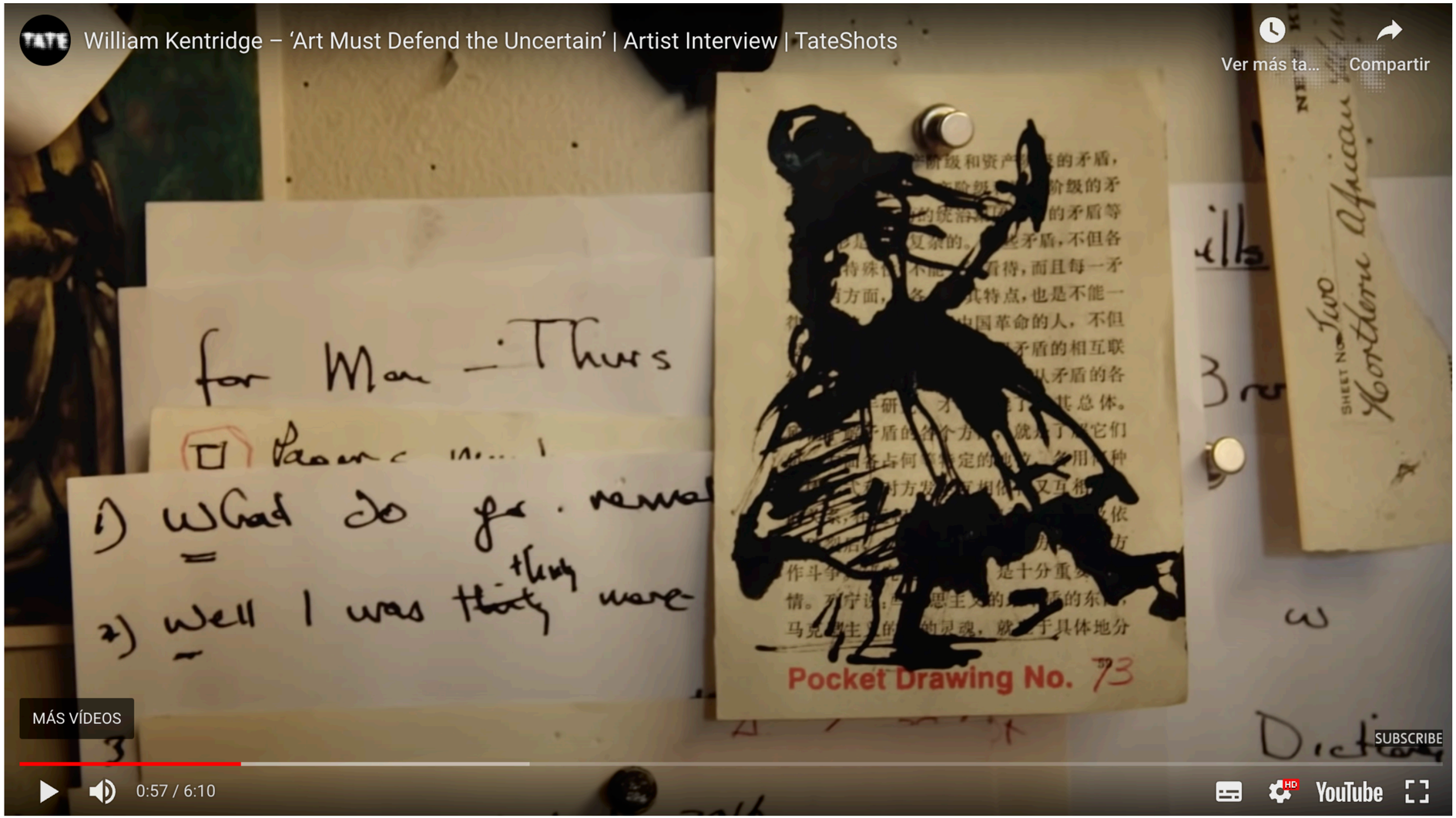
William Kentridge, *Arc/Procession: Develop, Catch Up, Even Surpass,* (1990).

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE



William Kentridge, *I am not me, the horse is not mine,* (2008).

WILLIAM KENTRIDGE



William Kentridge, *Art Must Defend the Uncertain,* (2018).

LaToya Ruby Frazier/ *The Notion of Family* / 2001- 2014/



LaToya Ruby Frazier, *Home on Braddock Avenue* (2007). Gelatin silver print.



LaToya Ruby Frazier, *Aunt Midgie and Grandma Ruby* (2007). Gelatin silver print.

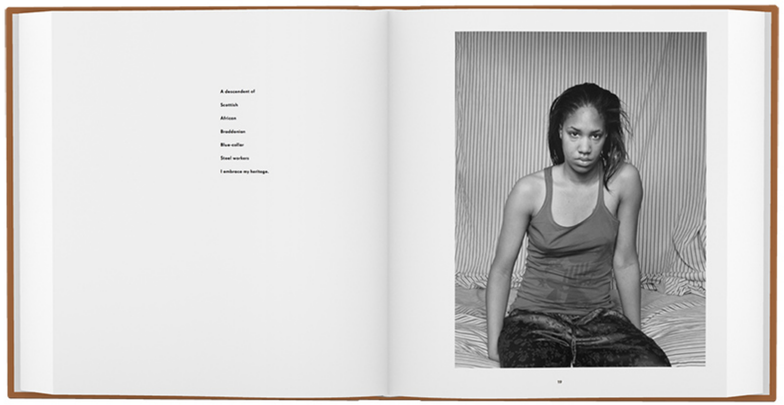
Walker Evans and Gordon Parks



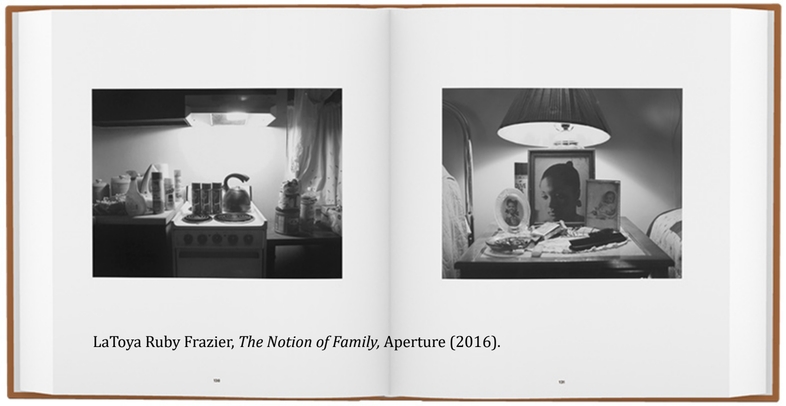
Walker Evans, *New Orleans Houses* (1935). Gelatin silver print.



Gordon Parks, *Washington, D.C. Mrs. Ella Watson, a government charwoman, with three grandchildren and her adopted daughter,* July 1942 (1942). Gelatin silver print, printed later.







LaToya Ruby Frazier, *The Notion of Family,* Aperture (2016).

LaToya Ruby Frazier/ *The Notion of Family* / 2001- 2014/

LATOYA RUBY FRAZIER



LaToya Ruby Frazier, *The Notion of Family,* exhibition view (2018). Gelatin silver prints.

Deana Lawson, MoMA PS1, New York /April 14 – September 05, 2022/



Deana Lawson, *Hair Advertisement* (2005). Pigment print.



Deana Lawson, *Coulson Family* (2008). Pigment print.

Bill Owens / *Suburbia* /1972/



Bill Owens, *Ronald Regan* from *Suburbia* (1972). Gelatin silver print.



Bill Owens, *I get a lot of compliments on the front room wall. I like Italian Syrocco floral designs over the mantle. It goes with the Palos Verde rock fireplace* from *Suburbia* (1972). Gelatin silver print.

KARA WALKER



Kara Walker, *Grub for Sharks: A Concession to the Negro Populace,* (2004).

KARA WALKER

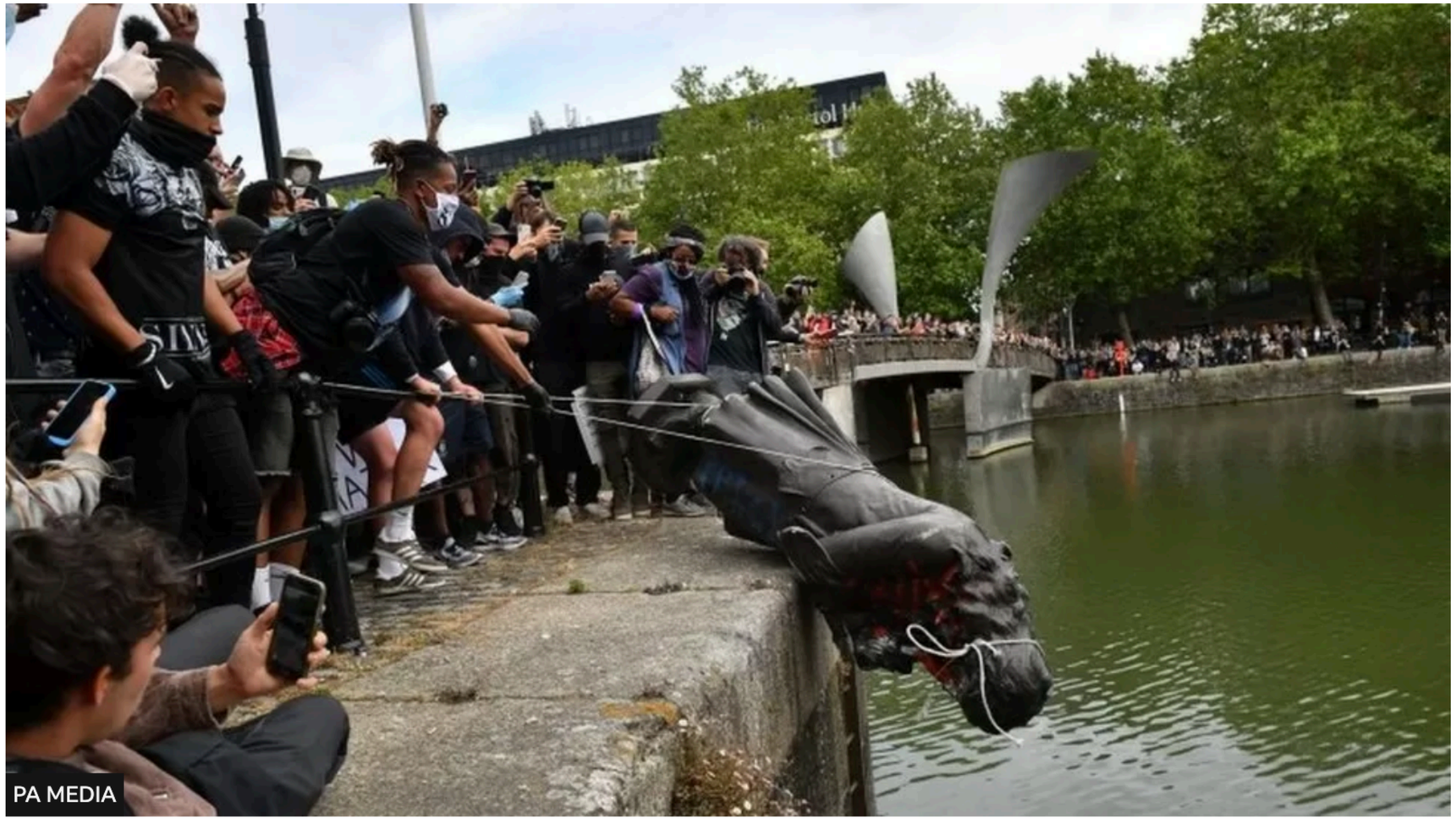


Kara Walker, *Fons Americanus,* (2019).



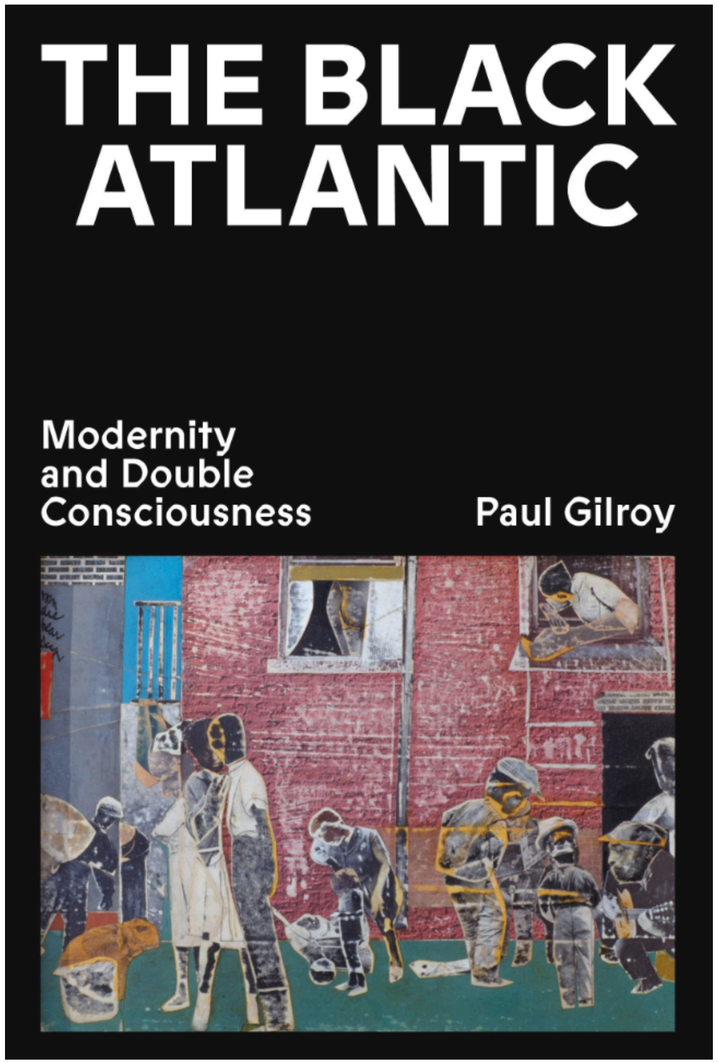
The Victoria Memorial outside Buckingham Palace, London being unveiled for the first time, (1911).

STATUE OF EDWARD COLSTON - BRISTOL - 2020



The statue of Edward Colston was pushed into the harbour after being toppled by protesters

THE BLACK ATLANTIC - PAUL GILROY



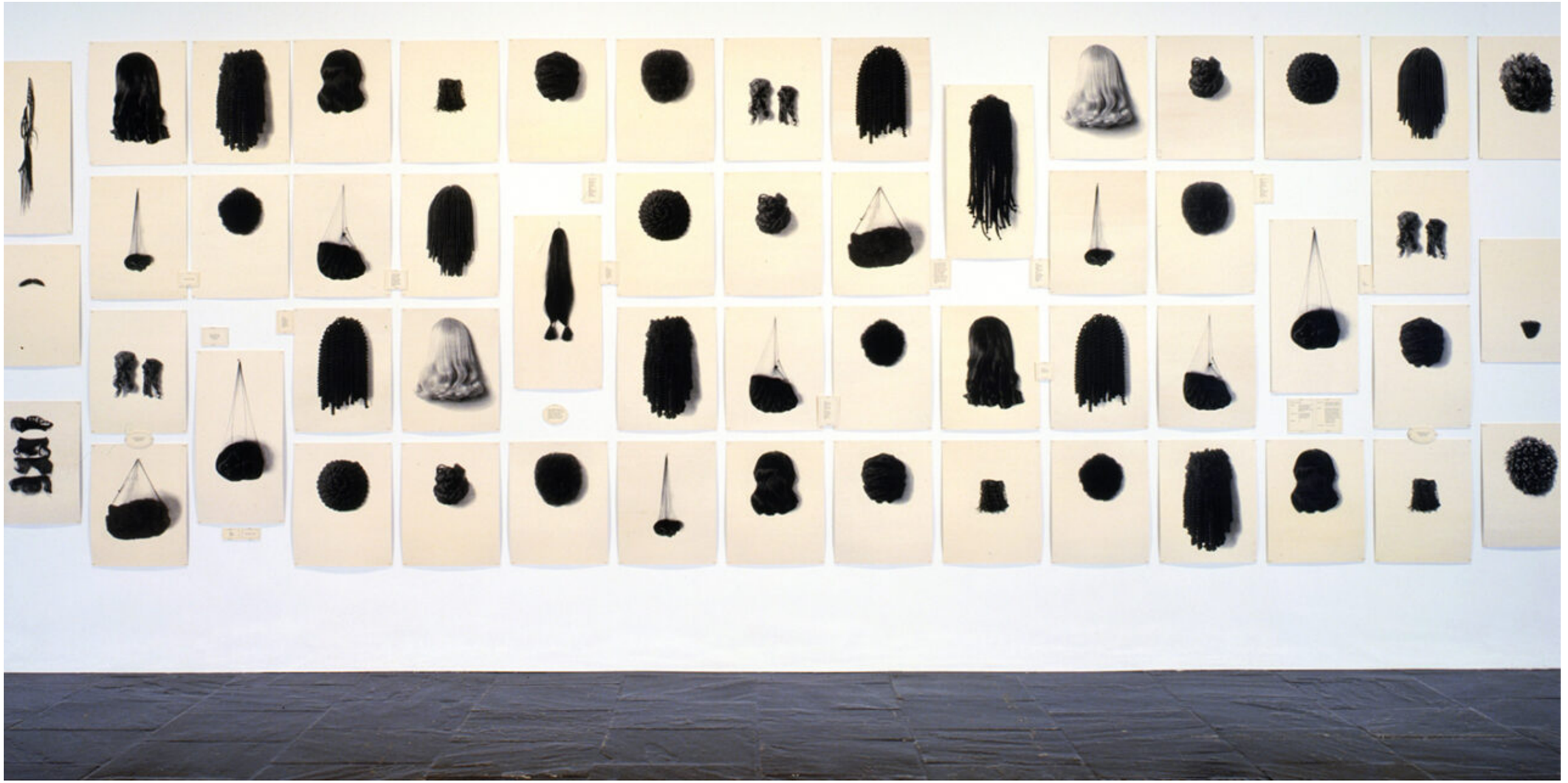
First published in 1993.

LORNA SIMPSON



Lorna Simpson, *Vantage Point ,* (1991).

LORNA SIMPSON



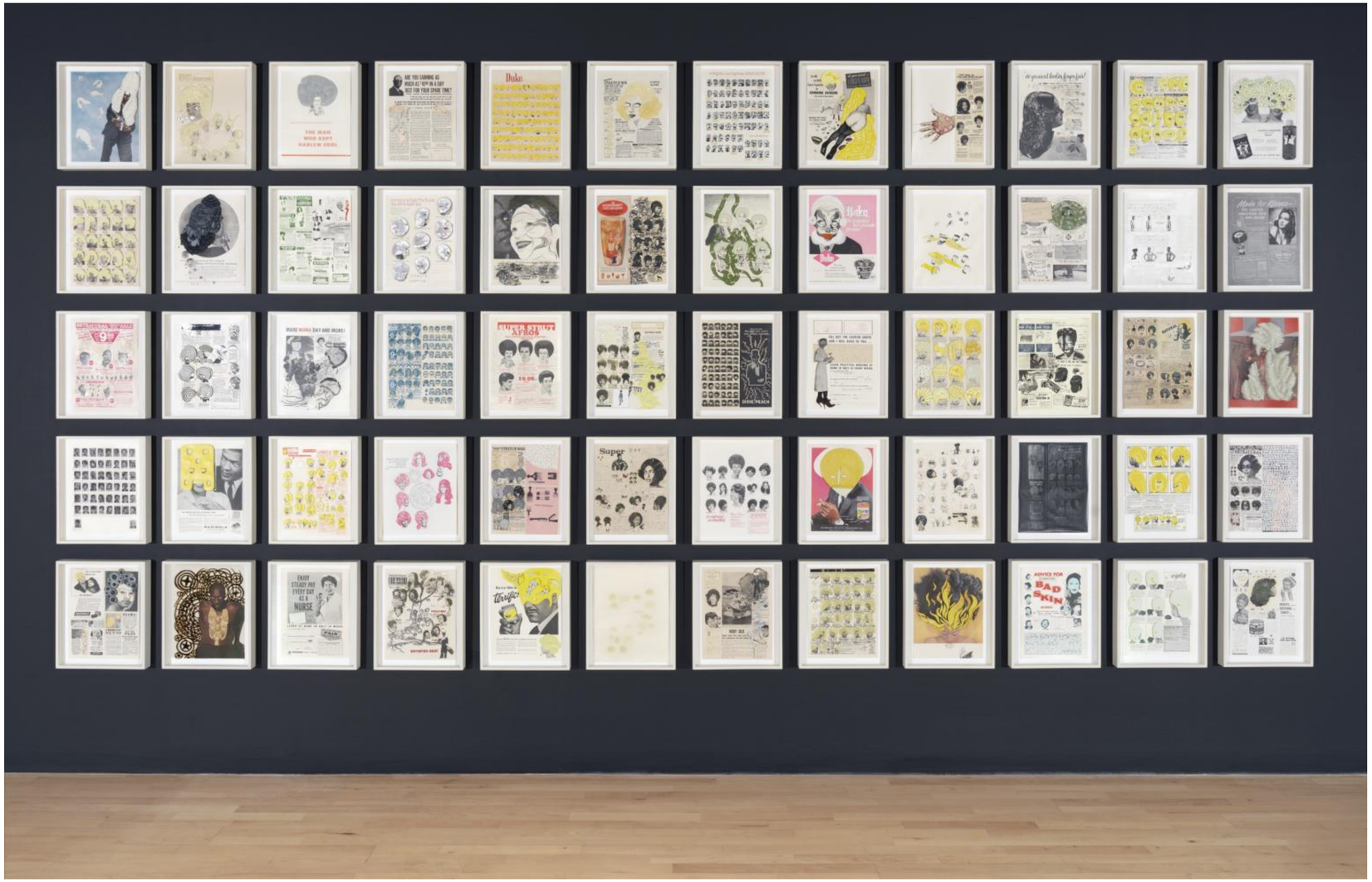
Lorna Simpson, *Wigs, (Portfolio),* (1994).

LORNA SIMPSON



Lorna Simpson, *Photo Booth,* (2008).

ELLEN GALLAGHER



Ellen Gallagher, *DeLuxe,* (2004-2005).

ELLEN GALLAGHER





Ellen Gallagher, *DeLuxe* (detail), (2004-2005).

ELLEN GALLAGHER



Ellen Gallagher, *Bird in Hand,* (2006).

ELLEN GALLAGHER

What's seen as political in [my] work is a kind of one-to-one reading of the signs as opposed to a more formal reading of the materials ... I think people get overwhelmed by the super-signs of race when, in fact, my relationship to some of the more over-determined signs in the work is very tangential. What I think is more repeated than that in the work is a kind of mutability and moodiness to the signs ... And I think that's where you can talk about race in my work ... that idea of the abstract 'I' ... what it means to look at somebody who was eighteen in 1939 ... whatever she was. That's specificity. It's impossible to know who that was. But try anyway to have some kind of imaginative space with that sign ... Sometimes it's hard for people who don't make things to understand labor, joy, attention, and whimsy. But it's in the work – I don't think it's something I need to explain.

Quoted in 'Ellen Gallagher Interview: eXelento and DeLuxe'
'Ellen Gallagher Interview: eXelento and DeLuxe', Art:21–Art in the Twenty-First Century, http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/gallagher/clip1.html

JAMES BARNOR AND DRUM MAGAZINE



James Barnor, *Drum Cover Girl, Erlin Ibreck, London,* (1966).



James Barnor, *Drum Cover Girl, Erlin Ibreck, London,* (1966).

JAMES BARNOR

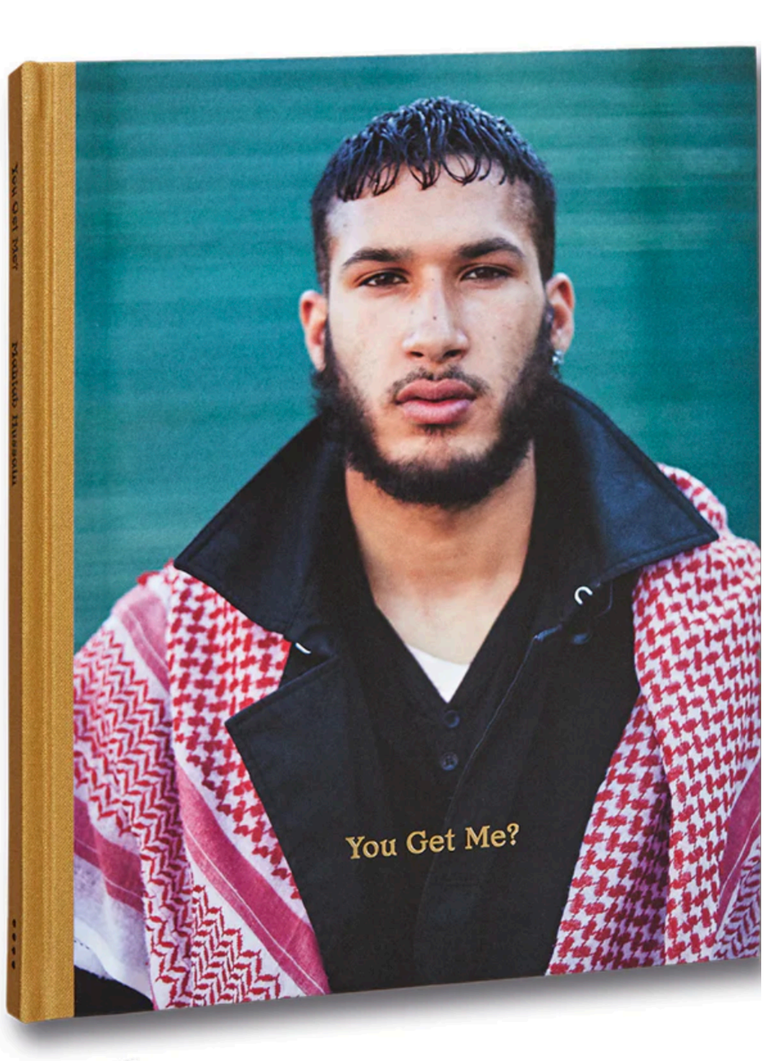


James Barnor, *Sick Hagemeyer shop assistant, Accra,* (1957).



James Barnor, *Untitled, Studio X23, Accra,* (1975).

MAHTAB HUSSAIN





Mahtab Hussain, *You Get Me?,* (2017).

MAHTAB HUSSAIN



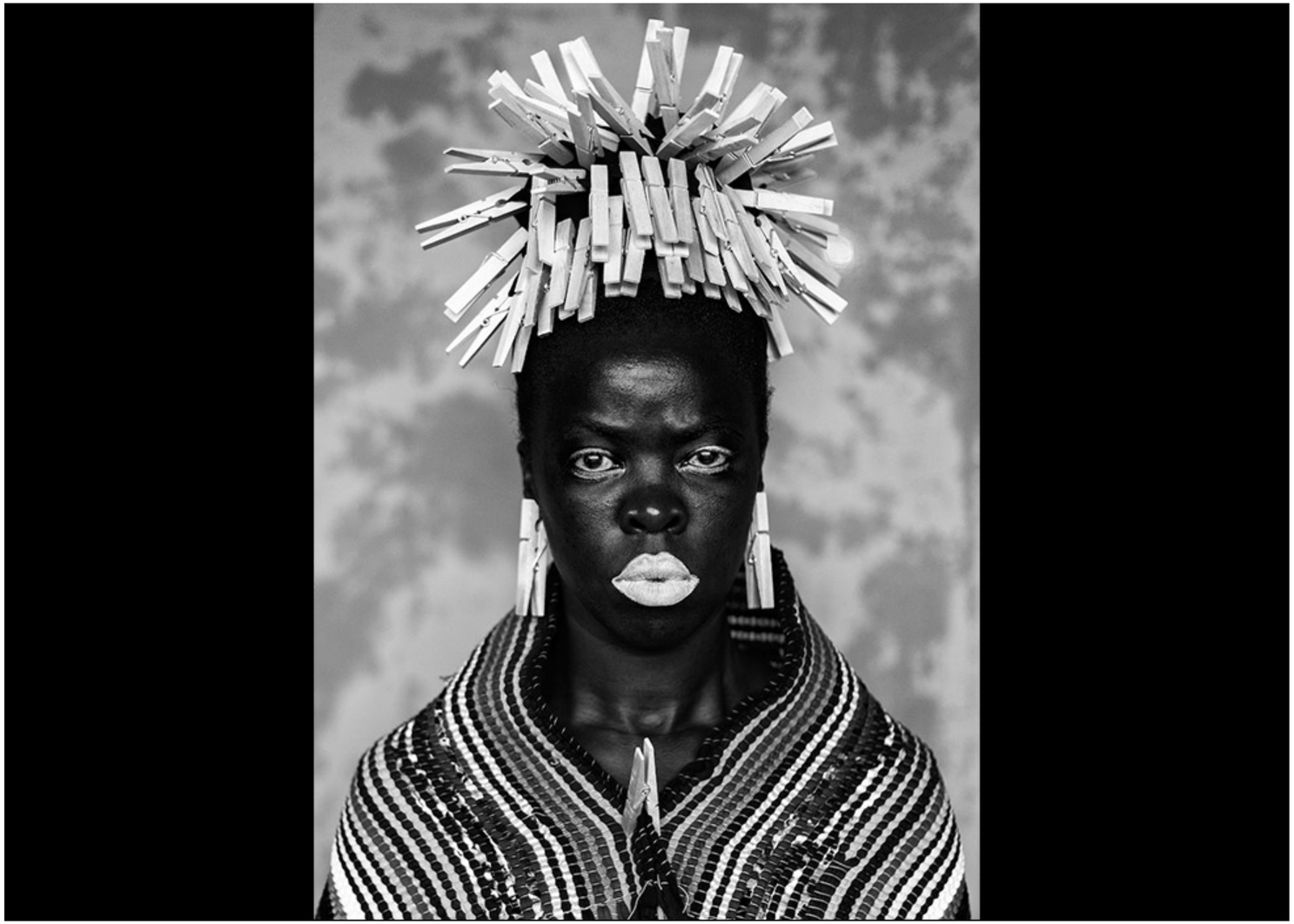
Mahtab Hussain, *You Get Me?,* (2017).

ZANELE MUHOLI



Zanele Muholi, *Somnyama Ngonyama, Hail, The Dark Lioness,* (2017).

ZANELE MUHOLI



Zanele Muholi, *Somnyama Ngonyama, Hail, The Dark Lioness,* (2017).

ZANELE MUHOLI



Zanele Muholi, *Somnyama Ngonyama, Hail, The Dark Lioness,* (2017).

THEASTER GATES



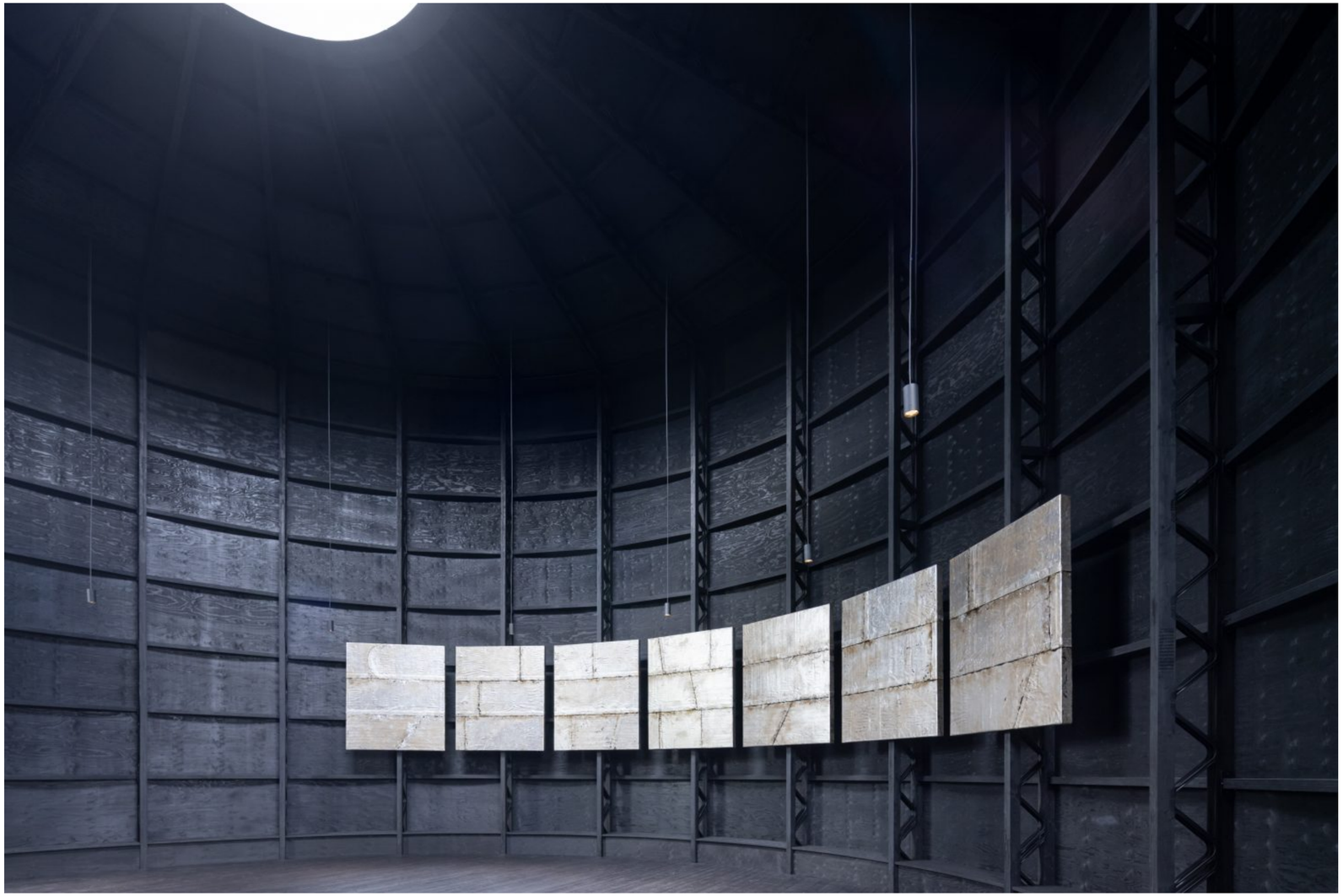
Theaster Gates, *Amalgam,* (2019).

THEASTER GATES



Theaster Gates, *Black Chapel,* (2022).

THEASTER GATES

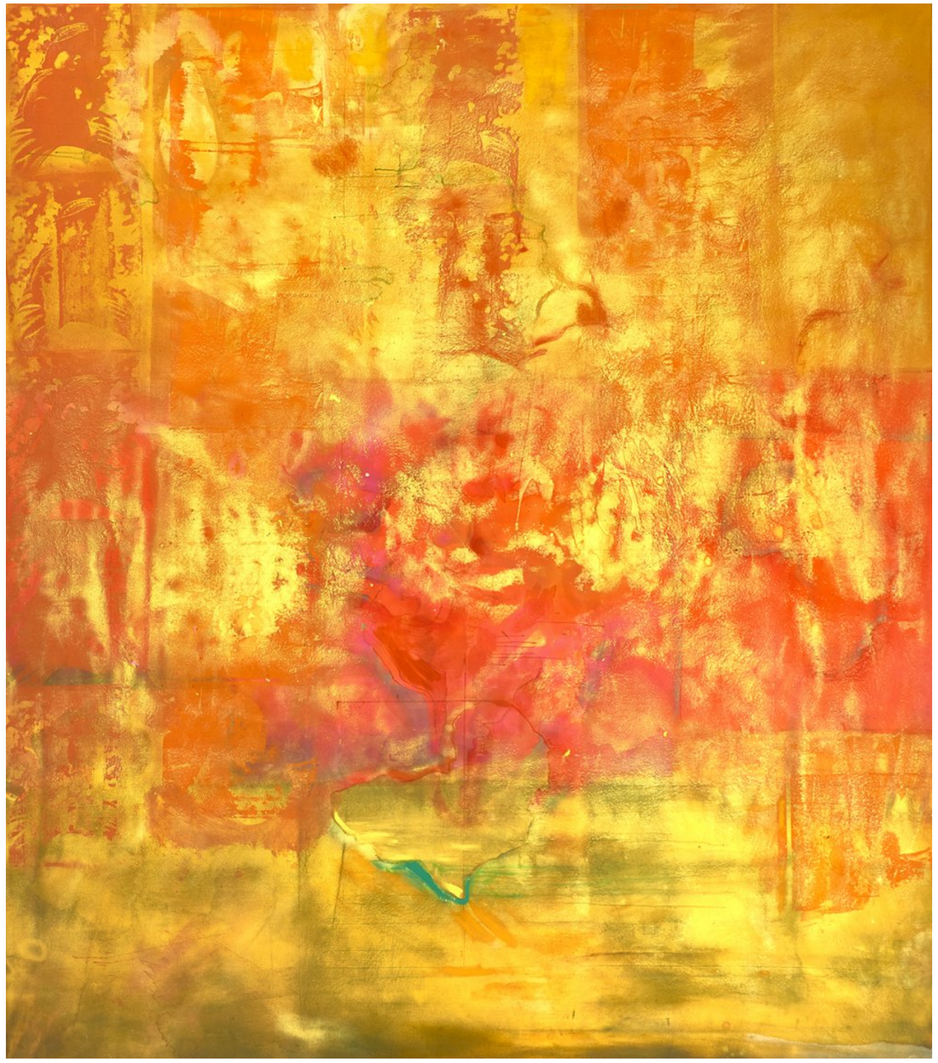


Theaster Gates, *Black Chapel,* (2022).

FRANK BOWLING



Frank Bowling, *Who's Afraid of Barney Newman,* (1968).



Frank Bowling, *Middle Passage,* (1970).



Frank Bowling, *Tony's Anvil,* (1975).

FRANK BOWLING



Frank Bowling, *False Starts,* (1970).

FRANK BOWLING



Frank Bowling, *Marcia H Travels,* (1970).

LYNETTE YIADOM-BOAKYE

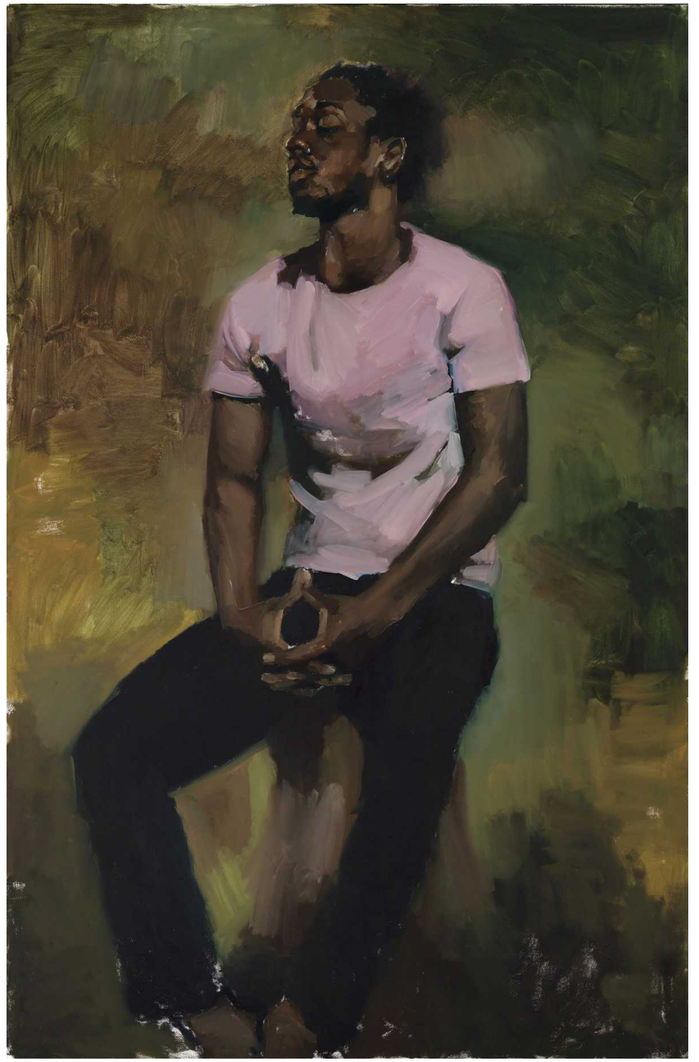


Explore the artist's exhibition at Tate Britain which brings together around 80 works from 2003 to 2020.

LYNETTE YIADOM-BOAKYE



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, *The Generosity,* (2010).



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, *Coterie Of Questions,* (2015).

LYNETTE YIADOM-BOAKYE



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, *A Passion Like No Other,* (2012).



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, *No Such Luxury,* (2012).

ZOE LEONARD AND CHERYL DUNYE



Zoe Leonard and Cheryl Dune, *The Fae Richards Photo Archive,* (1993-1996).

ZOE LEONARD AND CHERYL DUNYE

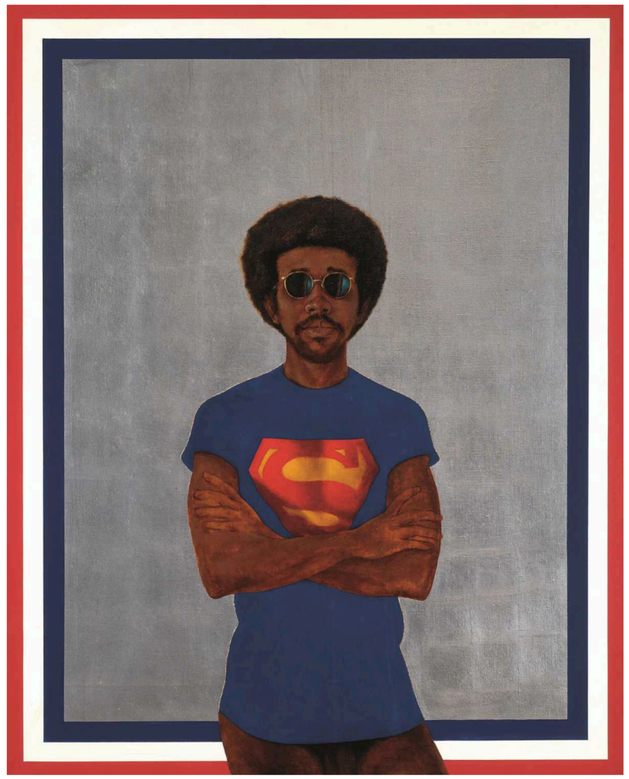


Zoe Leonard and Cheryl Dune, *The Fae Richards Photo Archive,* (1993-1996).

EXHIBITIONS

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TATE MODERN
EXHIBITION

SOUL OF A NATION: ART IN THE AGE OF BLACK POWER

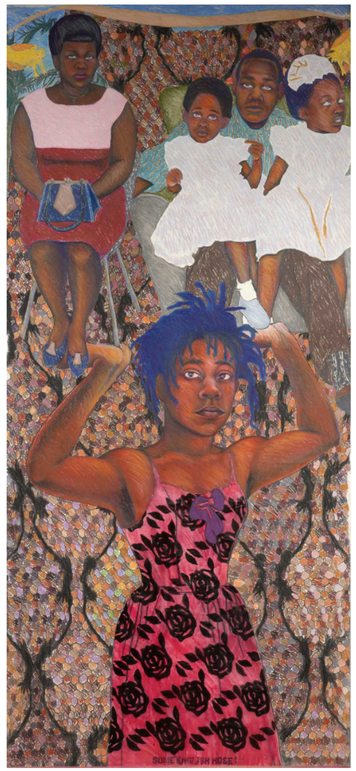
12 JULY – 22 OCTOBER 2017

Barkley L. Hendricks *Icon for My Man Superman (Superman Never Saved any Black People – Bobby Seale)* 1969 Collection of Liz and Eric Lefkofsky © Estate of Barkley L. Hendricks. Courtesy of Jack Shainman Gallery, New York. Superman S-Shield © & ™ DC Comics. Used with permission

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TATE BRITAIN
EXHIBITION

LIFE BETWEEN ISLANDS
CARIBBEAN-BRITISH ART 1950S – NOW

1 DECEMBER 2021 – 3 APRIL 2022

Free with ticket for Members

BECOME A MEMBER

Sonia Boyce *She Ain't Holding Them Up, She's Holding On (Some English Rose)* 1986 Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (Middlesbrough, UK) © Sonia Boyce. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2021

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TATE MODERN
EXHIBITION

LUBAINA HIMID

25 NOVEMBER 2021 – 2 OCTOBER 2022

Free for Members

BECOME A MEMBER

Lubaina Himid *Le Rodeur: The Exchange* 2016 © Lubaina Himid Courtesy of the artist and Hollybush Gardens, London.

LUBAINA HIMID



Lubaina Himid, *Installation view of Lubaina Himid at the Tate Modern,* (2021-2022).

LUBAINA HIMID



Lubaina Himid, *Freedom and Change,* (1984).

LUBAINA HIMID



Lubaina Himid, *A Fashionable Marriage,* (1986).

MICHAEL ARMITAGE



Michael Armitage, *The Fourth Estate*, (2017).

MICHAEL ARMITAGE



Michael Armitage, *The Promised Land*, (2019).

KERRY JAMES MARSHALL



Kerry James Marshall, *Better Gardens*, (1994).

KERRY JAMES MARSHALL



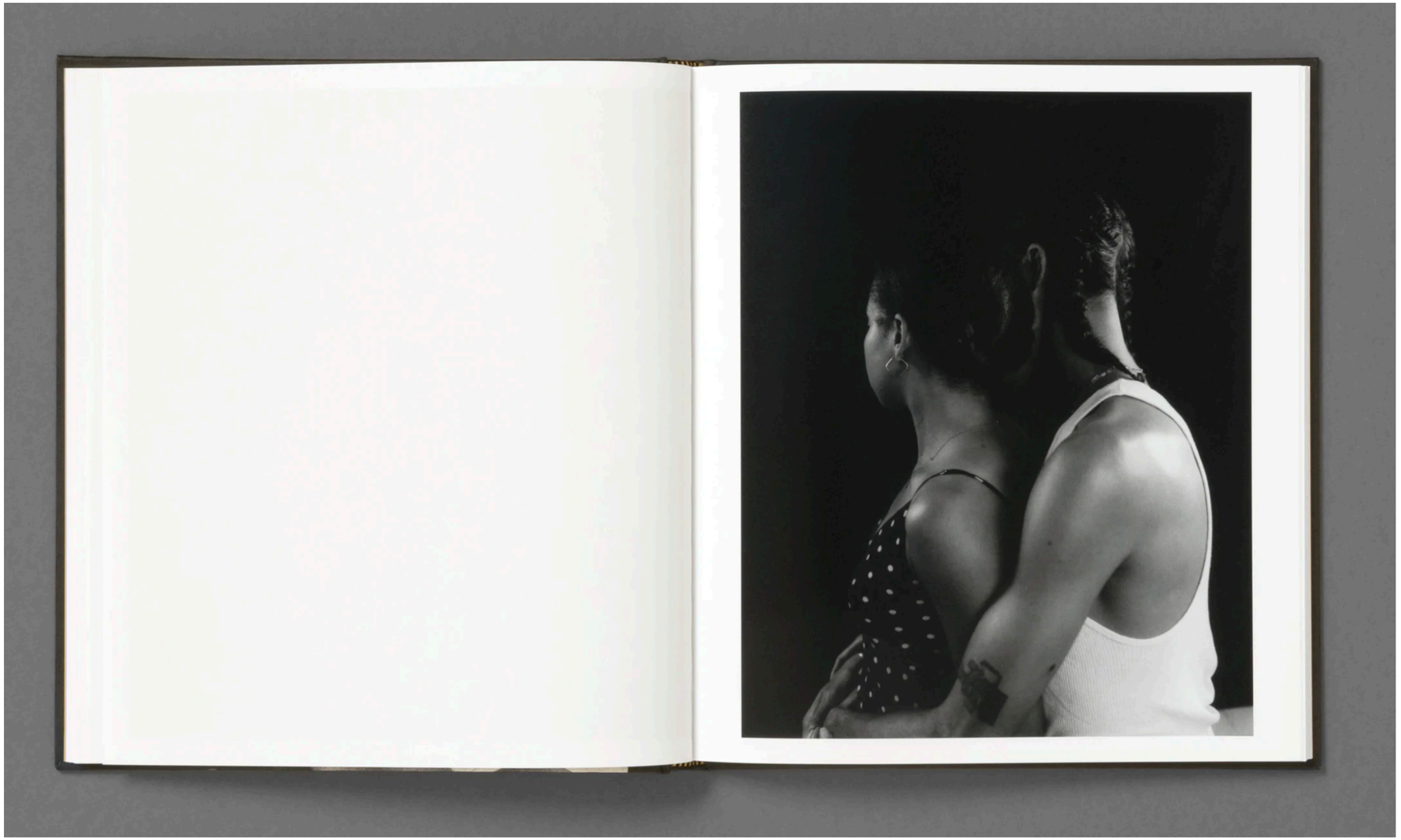
Kerry James Marshall, *Untitled*, (2009).

KERRY JAMES MARSHALL



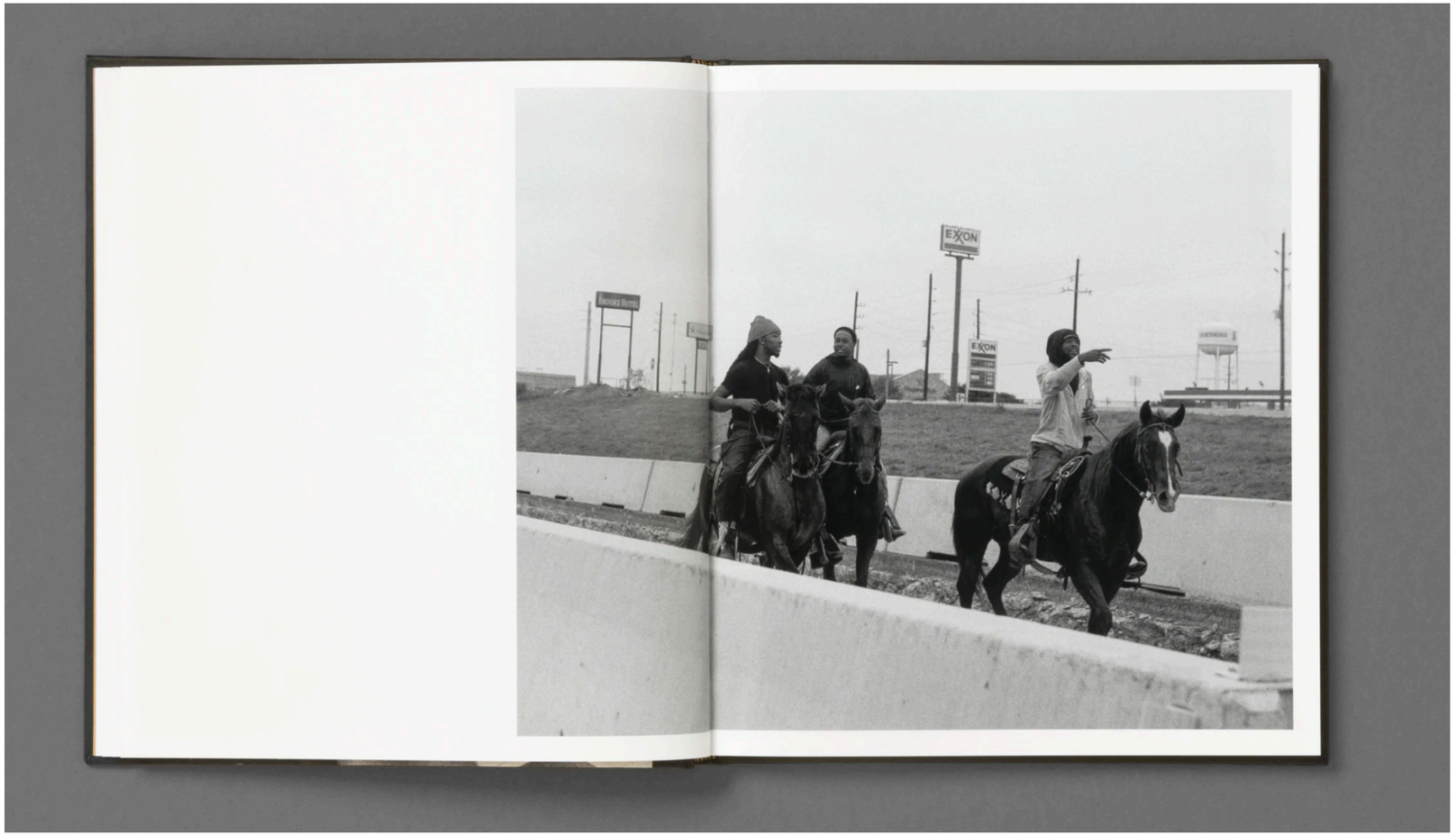
Kerry James Marshall, *Untitled (Studio)*, (2014).

RAHIM FORTUNE



Rahim Fortune, *I Can’t Stand to See You Cry,* (2021).

RAHIM FORTUNE



Rahim Fortune, *I Can't Stand to See You Cry,* (2021).

SUMMARY

Some of the ideas that we discussed today are:

- Representation and race. Questions about visibility and who is allowed to be visible.

- Contextualised those questions in relation to different practitioners and we discussed text exploring those ideas.

SUMMARY

- Finding resources through the library database.
- Applied task: finding books and artists that are currently working with the Anthropocene.

IMPORTANT DATES

Submit your draft - Tue 24th November 2026

Essay submission - Tue 8 Dec 2026

THANK YOU

Estéfani Bouza: e.bouza-arnoso@uwtsd.ac.uk/ October 2026