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Association Internationale  
des Critiques d'Art

International Association  
of Art Critics

Asociación Internacional  
de Críticos de Arte

**INVITATION TO THE 3rd  
RUPTURED HISTORIES  
WEBINAR**

**RUPTURED  
HISTORIES**

**RUPTURED HISTORIES:  
THE STREET: DYNAMIC  
DECOLONISATION BY THE PEOPLE**

*RUPTURED HISTORIES* is a series of Web Symposiums presented by AICA International (The Association of International Art Critics), on the initiative of the Fellowship Fund Committee. This third iteration of Ruptured Histories has the support of AICA Germany and AICA Lithuania.

Tarptautinės dailės kritikų asociacijos (AICA)  
Lietuvos sekcija



**DATE: Friday 23 February 2024**

**TIME: 15.00 (CET); 09.00 (EST)**

**DURATION: 2 hours**

Ruptured Histories is open to AICA members and non-members, students and academics, worldwide. There is no charge for attending.

After the moderated discussion between the speakers and the respondents, there will be time for the audience to raise issues, present questions and discuss points with any of the speakers.

**PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

To subscribe to the Web Symposium please send an e-mail to:

[aicainternational.webinar@gmail.com](mailto:aicainternational.webinar@gmail.com)

You will receive a link 24 hours before the event.

## **RUPTURED HISTORIES: CRITICAL EXCHANGES ON ISSUES OF DECOLONISATION**

The Ruptured Histories Project brings together a multiplicity of strands of the global debate on Decolonisation to enable us to investigate it from different geographical and cultural vantage points. Decolonising has been defined as the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies, attitudes, mechanisms of power, of superiority, and privilege of Western thought and approach. The awareness created by activist critiques in post-colonial debates and Subaltern studies has today evolved into proactive Decolonisation to address a range of issues. In this context, it's important to understand that Decolonisation has a history beyond the 21st Century academic discourse and critical practice, as it has long been an integral part of the anti-colonial resistance and a vital part of the national consciousness of post-colonial nations.

**Original concept:** Niilofur Farrukh and Anselmo Villata

AICA International's Fellowship Fund Committee now launches the third in this series of webinars on the complex history and legacy of colonisation and current policies of decolonisation in art criticism, exhibiting and collecting.

### **'Ruptured Histories: The Street - Dynamic Decolonisation by the People'**

This webinar will investigate the informal Decolonisation process where new histories are being written on the street and public spaces. In the last few years we have seen the removal of, or intervention in,

statues and monuments from the public space. These interventions are made by artists and the general populace in rejection of official narratives. These actions reveal how public memory is asserting itself to de-glorify the colonial past and its heroes and echo similar actions that followed the independence of post-colonial nations when physical remnants of the past were relocated and re-contextualised. This webinar addresses the interventions of artists and public as an important part of the discourse of Decolonisation. A discourse that is relevant in many countries.

### **PREVIOUS WEBINARS IN THIS SERIES:**

The first of this series, titled **Decolonisation in the Museum: Interrogating the History of Slavery** revolved around two topical exhibitions: the 2018 exhibition Afro-Atlantic Histories at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo/MASP and the 2021 Slavery exhibition at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. It was presented on 3 September 2021.

**Concept:** Joke de Wolf and Robert-Jan Muller.

The second webinar was held in conjunction with the Karachi Biennale in November 2022. It was a hybrid webinar/seminar aimed at encounters between (former) colonised and colonisers, aimed at opening up dialogue under the general topic of **Critical Exchanges on Issues of Decolonisation**.

**Concept:** Niilofur Farrukh

## Ruptured Histories:

### The Street - Dynamic Decolonisation by the People

#### PROGRAMME

#### INTRODUCING THE TWO KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:



**Professor  
Brenda  
Schmahmann**

Photo by Paul Mills

Brenda Schmahmann holds the South African Research Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at the University of Johannesburg. She has authored, edited or co-edited nine scholarly books, the most recent of which are *Iconic Works of Art by Feminists and Gender Activists: Mistress-Pieces* (New York and London: Routledge, 2021), which she edited, and *Troubling Images: Visual Culture and the Politics of Afrikaner Nationalism* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2020), which she co-edited with Federico Freschi and Lize van Robbroeck. She has sole-authored more than 80 articles or book chapters, guest edited or co-edited special issues of *Image & Text*, *De Arte*, *Textile: Cloth and Culture and African Arts*, presented numerous conference papers and guest lectures and curated two large-scale complex travelling art exhibitions. She is also co-editor of the journal, *Public Art Dialogue*.

## The caged lion and the released bird:

Creative interventions to monuments commemorating Cecil Rhodes

**Abstract:** While the #RhodesMustFall movement of 2015 drew attention to sculptures of Cecil Rhodes formerly at the University of Cape Town and at Oxford University, there are other monuments commemorating Rhodes in the public domain with equally charged content. In this presentation, Brenda Schmahmann considers how various statues and sites have been negotiated before and after #RhodesMustFall. Making a case for such monuments to be reworked, she examines the creative ways in which artists have responded to statues and sites through performances and installations. These include, amongst others, a 1999 performance on the part of the P.T.O initiative organised by Public Eye when Brendhan Dickerson installed a cage around one of the lions by John Swan at the Rhodes Memorial as well as a performance that Sethembile Msezane undertook while Walgate's sculpture was being removed, one in which the artist invoked reference to the iconic stone bird removed from the Great Zimbabwe site and acquired by Rhodes. There have also been protests at monuments. For example, a 2017 protest at Pegram's sculpture in Gardens in Cape Town, involved an installation which referenced Rhodes' culpability in instigating the Glen Gray Act. Additionally, monuments have been overlaid with graffiti or been subject to some other form of desecration. Complicating a reading of desecrations as nothing more than acts of "vandalism", the speaker will instead interpret them – like authorised interventions – as powerful forms of public discourse.



**Kristina Norman**

Photo by Erik Norkroos

Artist, Kristina Norman, was born in Estonia. She is an artist whose interdisciplinary work includes video installations, sculpture, and projects in the city space, as well as documentaries and performance. She is interested in the issues of collective memory and forgetting, the memorial uses of the public space, but also the subtle sphere of the body politics that transgresses the boundaries between the public and the private. In 2009 she represented Estonia at the 53rd International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia with a solo project, a multilayered mixed media installation *After-War* (discussed below). In 2022 Norman represented Estonia at the 59th Venice Biennial with an ecocritical exhibition *Orchidelirium. An Appetite For Abundance*, a duo show with Bitá Razavi, curated by Corina Apostol. Norman's experimental film trilogy commissioned for the Estonian Pavilion, offers multiple ways to reflect on the legacies of colonialism from a specific Eastern European perspective.

## **After-War (2009)**

**Abstract:** Norman's research project, *After-War* (2009), deals with the dramatic aftermath of the relocation of the Bronze Soldier monument in Tallinn in 2007, an event that strongly affected the small country's society with 30% population identifying as non-Estonian and polarized between different interpretations of the results of the Second World War. It is a case-study of the monument erected in 1947 as the main symbol of Soviet power in the post-war Soviet-occupied Estonia, and of the social conflict the statue of a Red Army soldier eventually came to symbolise in the re-independent Estonia. Norman's *After-War* and her *Gold Soldier* intervention (replacing a life-size gilded replica of the original statue in its former location in the center of Tallinn), combines the recycling of a historical symbol, and mapping the existing as well as the imagined subject positions in relation to both monument and conflict.

Conceived in 2009, *After-War* was first presented to the international audience as a multilayered mixed-media installation in the five rooms of the Estonian Pavilion set in palazzo Malipiero in Venice. Anticipating that the meaning of the Bronze Soldier monument itself and the artwork would keep changing in time, it was put forward as an open-ended work in progress, accumulating the reception of the entire project and its individual parts as a natural component of the project. An intervention in public space inducing participation of different groups of audience some more, some less aware of the artistic context, was placed at the heart of the project. In Estonia, this raised discussions about the borders of an artwork, the autonomy of art, and the ethics of a work that was mostly perceived as a political provocation. In her presentation, Norman will speak about the genealogy of the project and its effects on her following practice.

## INTRODUCING THE TWO RESPONDENTS



**Alexander Koch**

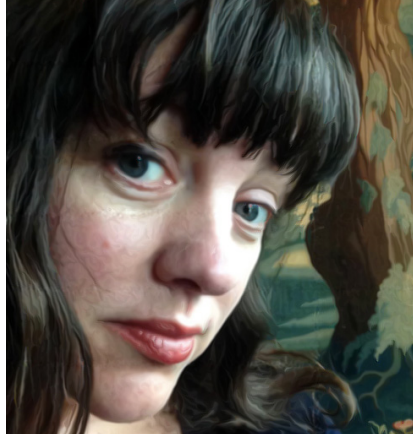
Alexander Koch is a curator, author, gallery owner, mediator and consultant. In 2007, he co-founded *Galerie KOW* in Berlin and *New Patrons* in Germany and was recently elected Chair of the International *New Patrons* Society. Both projects are ongoing. Since 1998, he has been responsible for numerous exhibitions, publications and events in favor of socially oriented art. Since 2002, Koch has laid the foundations for a theory and historiography of the withdrawal from art. Since 2005, texts on the functional differentiation of the art field and on a socio-political interpretation of artistic practices have followed. He has participated in around 100 exhibitions, including projects with *Chto Delat*, Barbara Hammer, Hiwa K, Henrike Naumann, Santiago Sierra. More recently, Koch has been increasingly active in cultural-political contexts.



**Dmitry Vilensky**

Dmitry Vilensky (born in Leningrad in 1964) is an artist, educator and cultural environmentalist with no art degrees. He elicits situations and relationships. No one knows what he is up to right now: perhaps he is editing a new issue of *Chto Delat's* newspaper, or maybe administering the *Chto Delat* Mutual Aid Fund, or editing a film, or talking with the participants of the School of Emergencies, or making a set for a new play, or sitting in the zoom assembly with cultural workers who are relocated from Russia at the time of war... Most likely, he is doing all this and dozens of other activities at the same time, surrounded by various comradely compositions of bodies and minds in exile in Berlin, at zoom and in many other places around the world.

## INTRODUCING THE MODERATOR



**Dr. Joke de Wolf**

Joke de Wolf is a fulltime freelance art critic, publishing regularly for the national newspaper Trouw and weekly newsmagazine De Groene Amsterdammer. She studied art history and history of photography in Amsterdam and Paris, and defended her PhD thesis at the University of Groningen in 2022. Her topic was on the commission by the City of Paris of the photographs by Charles Marville of Parisians streets. Joke has been chair of AICA Netherlands since 2019 and is a member of the FFC of AICA International

### About the organisers

#### Members of the Fellowship Fund Committee:

**Prof. Karen von Veh, FFC Chairperson**, is Professor Emerita, affiliated with the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Previously HOD of the Visual Art department, she now concentrates on research projects and postgraduate

supervision. She has published widely on postcolonial art, gender in art, and transgressive religious iconography in South Africa. For her recent writing on postcolonialism see: von Veh, K. and Raubenheimer, L. 2022. "Memorials, landscape and white masculinity: dialogic interventions in South African Art." *Image & Text*. Vol.36: 1-27. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2617-3255/2022/n36a17>

**Dr. Danièle Perrier, AICA Germany** and past chair of the FFC, is an art historian, founding director of the Ludwig Museum Koblenz and writer on modern and contemporary art. She is a regular contributor for different German and Austrian art magazines and editor of numerous catalogues, the Yearbooks of Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral and the Proceedings of the 52nd International AICA Congress *Art Criticism in Times of Populism and Nationalism*, published online on arthistoricum.net in July 2021 and as BoD. She is past-president of AICA Germany (1916-2023), Vice-president of AICA International and member of the Committees on Censorship and Freedom of Expression, Congress and EMC of AICA International.

**Robert-Jan Muller, MA, AICA Netherlands**, is a full-time freelance art critic and consultant based in Amsterdam. He writes on modern and contemporary art and has published for Dutch as well as for non-Dutch publications as *Artforum*. He is co-editor of the book "The Words and the Images: Text and Image in the Art of the Twentieth Century" and has published on activist issues in art. He was chairman of AICA Netherlands for nine years and member of the AICA Committee on Censorship. Currently he is AICA International Board Member.

**Nilofur Farrukh, AICA Pakistan**, is an art interventionist whose seminal initiatives have expanded the space for art publication, curation and public art in Pakistan. Motivated by issues of decolonisation and the convergences between political ideology and visual narrative, her writing has focused on the interdisciplinary connections that keep getting lost in Pakistan's tangled cultural and political matrix. Her first book, *Pioneering Perspectives*, made visible the resistance of women artists during the draconian regime of Zia-ul-Haq. She is one of the editors of Pakistan's *Radioactive Decade: An Informal Cultural History of the 1970s* (OUP). She was recently elected as the Chair of the AICA Censorship Committee.

**Prof. Elona Lubyté, AICA Lithuania**, is a curator of the collection of Sculpture at The Lithuanian National Museum of Art. She defended her PhD in Social Sciences ("*The System of Contemporary Art and Its Management*") at Vilnius TECH in 2000 and has been a lecturer at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, since 2011 – professor, until 2020 at the UNESCO Department for Cultural Management and Cultural Policy, and from 2021 at the Department of Art History and Theory. She has been a member of AICA Lithuania since 1991 and was President from 1998-2004.

### **The FFC committee is planning the following topics for future webinars:**

Unsilencing Colour: Conversations of Empowerment; and Ruptured Histories: Art Academia and the Museum. The Ruptured Histories project aims to include art critics, artists, and academics from all countries, especially from those who are unable to be fully engaged in international discourse due to geography, economy, and/or social circumstances.