

AMBUSH OF TAKEN-FOR- GRANTED BRAZILIAN DAILY RIGHTS: CONTEMPORARY AFRO-BRAZILIAN GUERRILLA ARTIVISM

Isis Costa McElroy

This presentation traces new direction in socially collaborative visual and performative arts currently being mapped by 21st century Afro-Brazilian artists. The life trajectory of artists of the new generation parallel the processes of Brazilian re-democratization (presently on hold) and the legitimization of historic demands of Brazilian Black movements. The contemporary development of an engaged Afro-dialogical art built on exchange and negotiation between virtual and real-life realms relies on the practice and language of a Wi-Fi Diaspora, interventions of artist collectives, and digital activism. Due to its aggregative power, as well as its conceptual density and artistic significance, the political art of Moisés Patrício is a focal point in presenting the art of the Afro-Brazilian generation of the first decades of this new millennium. Patrício's art integrates a poetics that connects the corporeal gesture of displacement with interventions of occupying and gathering rejected urban objects and spaces in São Paulo. The physical and sensorial experience of being present, confronting ethnic-spatial segregation, and suggesting new meanings is shared and elaborated on social media. Patrício's art projects include his participation in collective occupations of abandoned factories organized by the MAOU (Artistic Movement of Urban Occupation), political actions of infiltrating symbolically banned elite art spaces organized by the artist collective Presença Negra (Black Presence), as well as the photoperformances of his virtual exhibit Aceita? (Do you accept it?) displayed on Instagram. The activist projects of Patrício are emblematic of a contemporary artistic approach toward bringing Afro-Brazilian bodies to the visual sphere of contested territories, re-inscribing a corporeality perceived as disruptive, and challenging and re-signifying racist conventions of social interaction in Brazilian metropolitan centers.



Isis Costa McElroy received her PhD in Comparative Literature at New York University, where she also received an MA in English Literature. She is the co-author with Eduardo Muslip of *Brasil: ficciones de argentinos* and *Passo da Guanxuma: contactos culturales entre Brasil y Argentina*. She was Guest-Editor with Emanuelle Oliveira-Monte of a special issue of the *Afro-Hispanic Review* on the Afro-Brazilian Diaspora. She is currently working on a manuscript entitled *Mnemonic Maps of the Afro-Brazilian Diaspora*, as well as *Simulacros cibernéticos: literatura brasileira do século 21* (*Cybernetic Simulacra: 21st Century Brazilian Literature*). McElroy has been a Visiting Assistant Professor in Contemporary Brazilian Literary and Cultural Studies at The Ohio State University since the fall of 2015. Her field of specialization includes: interdisciplinary approaches to Brazilian literature and culture; Afro-Brazilian performance, visual arts, literature, and poemusic/orature; Afro-Diasporic sacred and secular manifestations in its various expressions; and politics of identity, gender, and race in the literatures of the Americas. Her other teaching and research interests include: politics of identity and comparatist studies of Mercosur countries; cyber-literature and activism in the Americas; performance studies; Latin American cinema (especially documentaries and animation); Afro-Latino children's books and graphic novels; and Brazilians in Angola/Angolans in Brazil. McElroy has served the profession through committees in several professional associations. McElroy is currently a member of the Editorial Board of the *Afro-Hispanic Review* at Vanderbilt U and the Council of the Afro Digital Museum in Rio de Janeiro at Rio de Janeiro State U.

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