

Contemporary Remediations of Race and Ethnicity in German Visual Cultures

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Angelica Fenner and Uli Linke, Guest Editors

Cultivating Peripheral Vision

During the final decade of the twentieth-century, scholarship in the humanities preoccupied with the construction and contestation of race and ethnicity found anchor points in an identity politics valorizing the mutability of difference and parsing the nuances of its articulation. Today, accelerated globalization has shifted some attention from this focus on identity as particularism towards a conceptualization of the fluctuating material, economic, political, and even technological frameworks that enable and disable identifications in a world whose spatio-temporal boundaries are simultaneously shrinking and expanding. If communication technologies bring us closer in illusory ways, their mediations may also breed misunderstanding and alienation. In a world now conceived by political leaders, multinational corporations, and renegade entrepreneurs as a terrain whose frontiers have been opened for limitless development, the vast disparities between wealthy power elites and the disenfranchised poor have not diminished but deepened. Climatological disasters, in turn, forge common policy concerns across nations, while also sharpening the divide between citizens whose privileges enable them to outrun disaster and those forced to contend with its local fallouts. Emancipatory revolutions across the Middle East have evoked sympathetic euphoria among the spectators of global news feeds, only to be followed by mounting evidence of the local resurgence of deep-seated ethnic and internecine animosities previously suppressed by totalitarian regimes.

Under such circumstances, network media continue to both exploit and perpetuate cultural stereotyping, while also serving as a conduit for its increasingly febrile remediation and contestation. Media flows may positively shape translocal solidarities by infusing alternate registers of history and truth with composite memories of identity, affect, and belonging, thereby forging dynamic communities across economic divides and political spaces. Digital technologies enable the archiving of political memory-banks of belonging and exclusion in virtual electronic space as well as their global transmission, rendering the remediated memories of a given people transterritorial and transglobal.

The heterogeneous landscape of visual culture in contemporary Germany offers a particularly rich site for investigating these (re)mediations, inviting us to consider such questions as: to what extent race comes to symptomize the body's relation to

capital, as Eva Cherniavsky (2006) convincingly argues in the American cultural context; the geographies relating to race and ethnicity and how these vectors are spatialized in specific settings (Stewart Hall 2000; Howard Winant 2001; Louis Wacquant 2008); how debates in performance studies, including Judith Butler’s evolving theorizations of performativity (1997; 2004; 2006; 2013), inform our understanding of the role of mimicry and masquerade in the production of ethnicity, as so convincingly laid out by Ann Pellegrini (1997) and Katrin Sieg (2002). Among these registers of temporality and historical experience, many can be seen to engage cognate memory traces from the existential life-worlds of the ‘Global South’ (Comaroff and Comaroff 2011) that have been transformed into prosthetic signs of ethnic solidarity visually appropriated, enacted, performed, and consumed within popular culture. Shifting the lens towards contemporary consumer markets, one might inquire how the “politics of interpretive license,” as Laura Ann Stoler and Karen Strassler (2000, p. 5) have suggested, introduce unconventional tactics of meaning making and racial signification. Might such new filters, configurations, and performances of ethnic selfhood possess the capacity to ‘efface’ official screen memories of racial abjectivity (Taussig 1999)? The essays assembled for this special issue draw on the evocative concept of remediation to explore how such issues are currently encoded, signified, contested, and newly imagined in the various settings where German visual cultures flourish today—in museums, installations, television, and experimental and feature film production.

Remediation of Ethno-Racial Imaginaries in the Digital Age

Remediation, understood here as the repurposing of one media form by, and in, another, has come to define the contemporary cultural and communicative landscape. As new media platforms emerge, they reflect upon or ‘nest’ those they supplant or supersede. Simultaneously, older forms continue to be deployed and to circulate, often reflecting upon their own historicity while also integrating facets of new media. When communications scholars Richard Grusin and Jay David Bolter (Grusin and Bolter 2000) first initiated their systematic theorization of this phenomenon, they were responding to trends they were witnessing in the emergent digital culture of the mid-1990s. Today, scholars and media makers alike are still very much coming to terms with the representational, technological, and political implications of remediation. Bolter and Grusin (2000) convincingly argue that this process has always been inherent to media, though it witnessed an unprecedented intensification, indeed hypermediation, as a result of the proliferation of electronic, and then, digital media in the second half of the twentieth-century.

New media’s portability and possibilities for instantaneous transmission have fueled globalization processes, facilitating the exchange of art objects and ongoing communication among cultural agents in different parts of the world. The resulting trend towards inspired borrowing, citation, and mash-up is richly evidenced in artistic production in contemporary Germany, a nation now poised at a certain historical remove from the catastrophe of the Holocaust and the cataclysmic collapse of communism. Across the past half century in both divided and unified Germanies, the analytical categories of race and ethnicity have informed public debates about national policy as much as they have questions of personal identity and representational practices. Media makers are rendering productive the resulting parallax, revisiting tropes and discourses embedded in earlier exemplars of both high and low art to both measure the nature of historical change, and to salvage, borrow, or

pay homage to what is useful or has productively shaped their own artistic practice, while also unsettling inherited assumptions and reframing those tropes that invite interrogation and deconstruction.

Independent of cultural content, the ambition of any representational medium throughout the centuries has always been, according to Grusin and Bolter, “to achieve immediacy, ignoring or denying the presence of the medium and the act of mediation” (11), such that the viewer or ‘user’ experiences the illusion of occupying the same space as the objects represented. However, new media today have also become bound up in what the authors refer to as “the double logic of remediation” (5), such that the effects of remediation oscillate between immediacy and hypermediacy, between effacing the medium and thereby enhancing our sense of ‘being there,’ and, alternately, activating within one representational object historicized layers of mediality and drawing our awareness to their effects. Unique to this special issue of *Transit* is the effort to conceptualize these twenty-first-century phenomena from an interdisciplinary vantage point by placing into productive dialogue approaches to visual culture cultivated in the fields of anthropology and of German cultural studies. Our ambition is for this interplay of concepts, paradigms, and debates from both the humanities and the social sciences to encourage thinking beyond established conventions, and to inspire a new understanding of how ethno-racial subjectivities are reimagined.

The Emergence of Global Memory Cultures

The study of culture within the social scientific enterprise can be read as preoccupied with socially shared, or collective, memory practices. Since its inception, anthropology has focused on understanding memory communities, with practitioners investigating the linkages between memory and history (effectively, between self and others), especially the fields of power in which this struggle to lay claim to the terms of remembrance, of retrievable historical consciousness, and of collective forgetting takes place. Photography and film—in addition to other visual forms of anamnesis inscribed in artifacts, material life, festivities, commemorative rites, clothing, and body art—have always occupied the center of anthropological analysis. As Elizabeth Edwards (1992) points out, anthropological research itself is encoded by “strong visualist metaphors—observing, seeing, reading—and there is the obvious analogy between the anthropologist and the camera as both occupying the place of the external observer and recorder” (p. 14). Edwards adds, “yet visual material has remained marginal.” This reticence can be traced back to the ways the ocular drive underpinning early positivist science became associated with colonial classifications of non-European worlds, exemplified in anthropometrics, in the visual practice of racial typologies, and in the stereotyping of indigenous peoples. These legacies have all contributed to a more recent suspicion of anthropological image-practices. As Edwards further notes, while “the visual image is possibly the dominant mode of communication” today, in anthropology it “is all-pervasive yet devalued” (p. 4). The camera, in particular, is “perceived as recording surfaces rather than depth”; it “looks at” rather than “looks into” society and memory (p. 14), thereby problematizing the purported anthropological project of seeing beyond the surface refractions of cultural life.

Media industries, commodity capitalism, and digital technologies have radically altered the possibilities for collective remembering. Competing representations of the past and visual depictions of the present can now be deposited and exchanged in

virtual space, creating fluid, expansive global memory archives and visual memory stores that pose new challenges to anthropological methods of research. Individual remembrance, collective memory, and narrative history now interact in highly complicated ways, as different versions of the past are constructed and reconstructed, modified, invented, and imagined. In the process, ethnicities, practices of racialization, and state interventions in human life experiences are continuously resignified and remediated. The focus on visibility in anthropology has therefore been forged not only by the changing politics of representation and indigenous visualities (Ginsburg 1991, 2013), but also by globalization.

The theories, models, and methods developed by anthropologists to study non-European worlds have been variously challenged by the reverberations of struggles “in the postcolony” (Mbembe 2001, pp. 15–16, 17), by the politicization of historical consciousness in times of “instability and crisis” (17), and, indeed, by the possibilities opened up by global visual technologies. “Crossing boundaries of nation, culture, and language, visual culture is key in this climate of escalated globalization” (Sturken 2009, p. 390), reframing the relation of collective memory to space and place. Conventional sites of remembrance are being replaced by virtual images that occupy electronic space. Once textual artifacts, data, and images about the past get archived in digital form, they can travel across national borders, and across communal solidarities, transmitting the ‘memory of a people’ to global audiences. New information technologies conjure historical imaginaries mapped along alternate vectors of space-time orientation and render the memory-banks of belonging and exclusion transterritorial and transglobal.

In the global present, the anthropology of visual memory-culture has hereby acquired a new vantage point, one that reveals entrenched inequalities across continents and renders local experiences identifiable as worldwide patterns. Postcolonial and post-totalitarian strands of historical consciousness can now be globally mapped, permitting an analysis of cognate memory traces from the Global South’s different existential life-worlds. The Global South is an imagined territory and a relational space (Comaroff and Comaroff 2011, 2012), which has produced new memory-communities across Europe that have been forged in the aftermath of war, genocide, immigration, displacement, exile, and asylum. From this perspective, visual memory-practices can be analyzed as situated political formations. The global vantage point also sheds new light on the creation of “affective communities” across political spaces (Casey 2010): visual media flows shape translocal solidarities by infusing alternate registers of history and truth with composite memories of identity, affect, and belonging.

Under globalization, the “spaces of memory and the composition of memory communities” have also been reconfigured (Assmann and Conrad 2010, p. 1). Memory-images can be viewed in real time by differently constituted publics. Transglobal memory archives are stocked with data snippets drawn from a worldwide pool of human subjects with no direct social relation to one another. As a result, visual culture no longer constitutes a stable repository for the residual traces of shared life experience. Instead, the planetary proliferation of electronic media has altered the possibilities of memory recall and input: moments in time can be recorded, stored, then “brought back to life, restaged or replayed” (Winter 2012, p. 4). Individualized access to the Internet has similarly changed practices of remembering. Digital forms of communication (email, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Skype, blogging) offer new venues for sharing visual memory beyond conventional boundaries of nation, culture, and community. Transported through cyberspace, bits of “digital network memory”

(Hoskins 2009) reside in virtual timescapes, where temporal records can be speeded up or brought to a standstill, creating parallel universes of memory, visual culture, time, and space.

In the “wake of the information explosion and the marketing of memory” (Hyussen 2003, p. 18), the societal dialogue with lived historical experience has been disrupted. Global memory stores are expansive, gaining momentum through new forms of representation, memorialization, knowledge-recycling, instant recall and replay of temporal experiences, data simulation, copying, and replication. Although “memory has become a cultural obsession of monumental proportions across the globe” (Hyussen 2003, p. 16), it is guided by consumer demands and corporate interests rather than—as previously imagined by anthropologists—the existential machinations of ethnosocial communities. Global media industries favor “random access memories” and episodic attention to newsworthy events (Morris-Suzuki 2005) over thick description and sustained analysis. Competing versions of past experience rise to the surface of our data-saturated awareness amidst the media hype of spectacle, advertisement, and entertainment.

The formation of global memory markets productively engages postmodern instabilities: a world of shifting imaginaries characterized by flows, fragmentation, and forgetting. The eventual shrinkage of collective memory in this global theater has already begun to pose challenges for conventional anthropological research. What is to become of the discipline’s humanistic endeavor in light of this emergent “future history of the world” (Lévi-Strauss 1952, p. 49)? Twenty-first-century anthropology and German cultural studies alike will need to grapple with the implications of fluid temporalities and shifting memory imprints in a virtual world of global cultural politics. The focus of this issue on contemporary remediations of race and ethnicity in German visual cultures provides one possible forum for exploring these new trajectories in situated contexts.

Remediations of Race and Ethnicity in Situated Contexts

In her contribution, “[The New Diversity and the New Public: Impressions of *dOCUMENTA \(13\)*](#),” Barbara Wolbert offers an intriguing overview of disparate approaches to re-mediating racial, ethnic, and national imaginaries that were evidenced by the art exhibits and aesthetic works displayed at the 2012 iteration of Kassel’s prestigious international art show. Within the history of this event, Wolbert maintains, *dOCUMENTA (13)* was to be unique in its message and execution. Despite its place in a recurring exhibition series, this particular show downplayed the prevailing conventions that frame public art as a nationalist spectacle. The documenta director Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev insisted on a new trajectory for the mediation of images and artifacts of visual representation, one advocating distance from ethno-national and historical imprints. Rather than conceiving the exhibit as a voyeuristic urban spectacle or nationalist festival, Christov-Bakargiev intended for it to be an organically emergent, inconspicuous, and non-ostentatious, seemingly spontaneous, low-profile event. The art objects were not to be housed exclusively in one museum site (the Fridericianum in Kassel), but instead dispersed among urban spaces, such that their discovery, and appreciation, emerged from their integration into everyday life.

This transposition of artworks into the public domain involved the remediation of art itself: a shift from treating art as a secluded, protected, self-referential practice to viewing its production as a form of life activity. The placement of artworks (objects,

plants, animals, music) in both interior and exterior spaces, in the enclosed museum galleries and in public areas (street, plaza, park, businesses), as Wolbert argues, diffuses the conventional boundaries between art world and social world, and calls them into question. The installations of *dOCUMENTA (13)* thus diminished the institutional anchorage of nationalist imaginaries, and, in the process, succeeded in dehistoricizing the exhibition itself. The assortment of creative works and their participation in everyday life as unspectacular anti-commodities, along with the ongoing reassemblage of select museum displays, which thereby became living creations with histories in the making, also transformed audiences from passive observers into participants. This staged discovery of art as an act of life, according to Wolbert, turned the exhibition into a social enterprise celebrating the ‘art of remediation.’ While this approach at de-musealization and de-institutionalization clearly unmakes the conventional meanings of art or expressive culture, it reifies notions of everyday life. Unlike the historical museum, public social worlds—seen as disorderly, happenstance, and spontaneous, as a collage of creative encounters between people, space, and material culture—are not problematized as sites of national and racial imaginaries. If everyday life in public space has a creative, generative potential, then the capacity to forge racializing imaginaries cannot be separated from the ontological act of discovering art. While depoliticizing exhibit displays to remediate institutional entanglements with race, *documenta* has left the racial politics of everyday life intact.

In “[A Path through the Woods: Remediating Affective Landscapes in Documentary Asylum Worlds](#),” Bettina Stoetzer likewise problematizes space and German national sentiment as ethno-racially charged sites. In the forests of Brandenburg, outside of Berlin, former GDR military barracks along the previous East-West German border have been retrofitted as refugee detention centers. Stoetzer’s essay critically examines how the collectively-produced documentary film *Forst* (2000) remediates the institutional conditions of refugee ‘wild life’ housing as part of a wider artistic project attempting to publicize the hidden dimensions of racist asylum politics. Concealed in the forest, and cut off from the world, the trope of the detention center not only points to an institutional ‘home’ for refugees, but to an ‘unhomely’ carceral space, where those detained are forgotten while awaiting their future fate. The film features the forests from the perspective of those who are entrapped among the trees, revealing the dark, gloomy side of a European nationalist fairytale gone awry. The film remediates the romantic lyrical forest, the trees of a nationalist origin myth, which now seem to stand guard against the refugee-outsiders from the Global South, whose isolation in an abandoned military barracks in the middle of dense woodlands, beyond civilization, reveals the dehumanizing aspect of the EU’s and Germany’s political imaginaries. According to Stoetzer, the film does not deploy the logic of immediacy, intimacy, and identification with the refugee-subjects, but rather seeks to intensify the viewers’ sense of disorientation and estrangement. The film thereby speaks to the visual remediation of a policy of dehumanization by destabilizing formal conventions of representation.

The film shows how East German forests have become redesignated as a ‘world of the stranded.’ Although it aims to document the repurposing of the forest environment and its militarized landscape, the film does not frame these discoveries as documentary truth. Visual remediation here consists of, as Stoetzer puts it, “remedying something defective, as well as refashioning earlier, exclusionary forms of representation.” *Forst* works against an easy identification with the figure of the migrant as a displaced subject. Instead, it evokes the forest domain through

estrangements of sight, sound, and perspective. In emphasizing the phantasmatic as a communicative medium, the film's portrayal of the forest and its interior landscapes deliberately alternates between a realist mode of representation, on one hand, and estrangement and disorientation as aesthetic devices, on the other. National security and border fortification—the orderly world—are remediated as a landscape of terror, entrapment, and sensory deprivation. As *Forst* redirects our focus towards the 'unhomely' reworkings of race, nation, and nature in the borderland-forests of contemporary Germany, Stoetzer argues, the film sketches the outlines of a critical analysis that attends to the 'stickiness of social formations' as they are remediated in contemporary forms of living and dying in Europe's asylum worlds. According to Stoetzer, these 'sticky' remediations do not require a sense of immediacy, that is, a documentary portrayal of migrant life as it 'truly is.' Rather, as attempted by the film's remediation process, such an analysis engages the racializing frame by foregrounding affective environments in which one cannot be at ease.

Claudia Breger's contribution, "[Hardboiled Performance and Affective Intimacy: Remediations of Racism in the Cenk Batu *Tatort*](#)," by turn, deftly takes up the twin logic of immediacy and hypermediacy, which Bolter and Grusin have maintained governs remediation processes, and tests its pliancy within the realm of performance theory. The latter, she observes has generally been characterized by an analogous tension between, on the one hand, Brechtian-derived models that frame performance as contrivance and theatricality, and, on the other, more recent phenomenological theorizations of authenticity and of 'the aesthetics of presence.' She finds these tensions replicated in six episodes of the mainstream TV crime series *Tatort* that were released between 2008 and 2012 and featured the Turkish-German criminal investigator Cenk Batu. The role was performed by the actor Mehmet Kurtuluş, who first gained prominence through film roles in Fatih Akın's *Kurs und Schmerzlos* (1998), Dorris Dorrie's *Nackt* (2002), and Akın's *Gegen die Wand* (2004). Breger maintains that the remediation of these previous screen performances in the television series had the effect of triggering resonances with Kurtuluş' previous casting but also propelled aesthetic and cultural innovation within Germany's most popular and influential television show, which regularly garners attention and sometimes criticism for tackling controversial social issues.

The Batu episodes rework *topoi* pertaining not only to Kurtuluş' earlier performances as a Turkish-German character, but also to portrayals of urban ethnic masculinity prevailing in the German media. Cenk Batu's characterization deviates from traditional television portrayals of German police inspectors as state employees, and instead has more in common with the trope of the hardboiled American detective displaying the individualism and street smarts often attributed to anti-heroes. Breger reads the relatively short lifespan of the Batu episodes—the character being killed off, as it were, in the sixth episode—as evidence that the German viewing public did not respond favorably to Batu's characterization. She suggests that those episodes may have elicited discomfort precisely for their capacity to engage critically with issues of identity at the level of form, since they repeatedly framed the racialization of his character as a matter of social racism rather than of race as essence. Given this emphasis on the theatricality of identity, viewers were invited to recognize the mutability of identity, including that of Muslim identity, while also responding to the deployment of aesthetic techniques that draw us affectively closer—perhaps too close for comfort. While such techniques accord with global trends in both mainstream and independent film productions towards a renewal of the notion of a 'cinema of attractions,' Breger maintains that their deployment within the conventions of the

Tatort universe may have destabilized both formal conventions and cultural expectations among domestic audiences too radically to gain enduring traction within the nation’s longest running television series.

Performance and the mutability of ethnic identity are again foregrounded in Barbara Mennel’s essay, “[Ming Wong’s Installations](#),” which closely engages with an installation piece by the Singaporean multi-media artist that restages key scenes from *Imitation of Life*, the classic Universal Studios blockbuster of the 1950s directed by the German-born Douglas Sirk. Wong’s double-projection, *Life of Imitation*, anticipates in its chiasmatic reversal of terms the types of ethnic and gendered inversions at work in Sirk’s film. For the roles of biracial daughter Sarah Jane and her African-American mother Annie Johnson, Wong strategically casts three different Singaporean actors, each representing one of the country’s dominant ethnic groups (Chinese, Malaysian, and Indian). The cross-dressing male actors perform highly melodramatic scenes of mother-daughter conflict via a bathetic dialogue inflected by their respective foreign language accents, thereby ‘dragging’ not only ethnic but also gender identities. The artful employment of mirrors in Sirk’s *mise-en-scène* finds its corollary in Wong’s double-channel video, where the staging of the same scenes in two different videos is choreographed so that the bodies on each screen move not in parallel to one another but rather towards the shared center of the frames, with composition, *mise-en-scène*, and blocking consistently mirroring one another. Spectatorial paths of identification are further unsettled as a result of the video’s editing, with cuts in each projection coinciding with the switching of roles by the three actors—an effect that makes it impossible to align an individual actor with a particular role.

Although Sirk aimed to draw attention to, and critique, the racism to which biracial individuals were subjected in his era, his representational project also relied upon coherent identities fixed as white or non-white, e.g. black. Yet even Sirk’s project itself remediates Hollywood’s unacknowledged body politics, remaking Jonathan Stahl’s *Imitation of Life* (1934), which itself was an adaptation of the Fannie Hurst novel. In the process, Sirk shifts attention from the Oedipal tensions surrounding Bea Pullmann and her daughter Jessie to those surfacing between black housekeeper Annie Johnson and her biracial daughter Sarah Jane. Wong’s installations in this context and elsewhere invite us to consider anew the assumptions underpinning narratives familiar from global art cinema. Employing new media’s affinity for electronic excerpting, looping, and recombination, Wong raises meta-textual questions about originality, reproduction, imitation, and the global circulation of visual texts, including their remediation via site-specific installations around the world as well as via the Internet.

In the final contribution to this special issue, “[Remediating Fassbinder in Video Installations by Ming Wong and Branwen Okpako](#),” Katrin Sieg takes up two further video installations by Wong inspired by the films of Rainer Werner Fassbinder. Both works discussed—*Lerne Deutsch mit Petra von Kant* (*Learn German with Petra von Kant*, 2007) and *Angst Essen/Eat Fear* (2008)—were produced following Wong’s relocation from London to Berlin, and as such are also filtered through his experience as a racial minority and gay man overcoming professional and personal anxiety in the context of migration. Wong crucially reworks the triangular structure of looking relations within *Bitter Tears* into a one-person performance that instead encompasses the gaze of the viewing public. By turn, Sieg is able to explain the shift to higher production values, including Wong’s use of multiple Singaporean actors, in the ensuing installation *Eat Fear* in the context of patronage he received from the

Künstlerhaus Bethanien; his production took place against a wider foment that emerged in the mid-2000s at the Künstlerhaus amidst Berlin's restructuring, privatization of public property, and rising rents, which crowded out local artists while still accommodating international artists. Wong chose to restage in the Bethanien's stairwell the famous scene from *Fear Eats the Soul* of the charwomen on lunchbreak—a move Sieg reads as critically reflecting on the ambiguous social standing of newcomers, including foreign artists, to Berlin.

Sieg is able to place Wong's remediations of Fassbinder into further productive conversation with another such work by Nigerian-born filmmaker Branwen Okpako, who has been making films in Germany since the mid-1990s, and produced *Seh ich, was du nicht siehst?* (*Do I see something you don't?*, 2002) in the context of a biennial set in the eastern German village of Werkleitz. The latter is located only 40 km away from Dessau, where a year earlier three neo-Nazi youth had attacked and killed Mozambican and 20-year resident of the GDR, Alberto Adriano. The Werkleitz Biennale had chosen Fassbinder's *Whity* as one of three 'prompts' for artists to engage the category of race. Okpako's three-channel, sixteen-minute video installation was set up in the emptied village church, where the screens, occupying the space of the altar, seemed also to reflect upon Fassbinder's deification within German film history. Looping subtitled clips from *Whity*, the center screen was flanked on each side by footage showing Okpako and Afro-German actor Ernest Hausmann in close-up, capturing their facial reactions in profile and their verbal comments as they view the footage on the central screen. The effect is for Okpako and Hausmann to productively reflect on fellow Afro-German actor Günther Kaufmann's status here and elsewhere in Fassbinder's oeuvre as part of a collectively shared but also contested predicament. In the process, they also recover agency for themselves and Kaufmann with regard to a film whose fraught representational agenda otherwise verged on engendering the very racism it sought to critique.

Ultimately, both Wong and Okpako alike engage Fassbinder's work as a fruitful intertext for their own artistic reflections on experiences of racial oppression and racial solidarity, alike. As such, Sieg maintains, their installations can be located within a broader history of Fassbinder reception that parallels controversies in queer studies regarding sexually charged portrayals of racial difference. Certainly, integral to all the essays collected in this special issue is their reflexivity regarding how artworks serve to remediate cinematic fantasies of race in more senses than one, both transposing a particular medium into another, and in the process, also seeking to redress the injuries perpetrated against racialized populations. In analogous fashion have the present authors also adapted and repurposed existing conceptual models and discursive tools with the aim of generating new modes of delivering academic scholarship on contemporary German visual cultures, while also rethinking the aesthetic, social, and political issues at stake in representing race and ethnicity.

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