

CULTURAL THREADS

TRANSNATIONAL TEXTILES TODAY

Saturday
February 7
10:00-4:30

A day-long symposium about contemporary textile practices and multiple cultural influences to mark the launch of *Cultural Threads* (Bloomsbury: 2015).

Speakers' Biographies

Jessica Hemmings writes about textiles. In 2010 she edited a collection of essays titled *In the Loop: Knitting Now* published by Black Dog and in 2012 edited *The Textile Reader* (Berg) and wrote *Warp & Weft* (Bloomsbury). Her latest editorial and curatorial project, *Cultural Threads*, is a book and exhibition about postcolonial thinking and contemporary textiles (Bloomsbury: 2015). Jessica is Professor and Head of the School of Visual Culture at the National College of Art & Design, Dublin.

Sarat Maharaj is a writer, researcher, curator, and professor. He is a Professor of Visual Arts and Knowledge Systems at the Malmö Art Academy at Lund University in Sweden and was Professor of Art and Art Theory at Goldsmiths College, London from 1980 to 2005. Maharaj has held visiting professorships and fellowships at several institutions including Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht and Humboldt University, Berlin. His writings, curatorial projects, and presentations have appeared all over the world. Maharaj is also a member of the advisory board of the journal *Third Text*.

Christine Checinska wrote her PhD at Goldsmiths on the genealogy and impact of the creolised aesthetic of the Empire Windrush generation. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of East London and an Associate Researcher at VIAD, University of Johannesburg. Her research looks at textiles, culture, race and the mapping of missing diaspora histories.

Helen Jennings is a London-based journalist, consultant and author. She was editor of *Arise*, the leading global magazine celebrating African fashion, music, culture and society for five years, and is now launching the new media platform *Nataal*. She is also author of *New African Fashion* (Prestel: 2011) a book about contemporary African style, beauty and photography. Helen won Fashion Communicator of the Year at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Africa 2012 and has a decade of experience contributing to titles around the world including *Dazed*, *The Fader*, *iD*, *the Guardian*, *AnOther* and *Oyster*.

London-based French artist, **Françoise Dupré** trained at ual, Chelsea College of Art and Design, and Camberwell College of Arts. She is a senior lecturer in Fine Art at Birmingham School of Art-BCU where she contributes to the Centre For Fine Art Research. Dupré makes textiles-based sculptures and temporary installations for art and non-art spaces including hospitals and libraries. Combining individual and collaborative-participatory approaches, she exhibits internationally and works with a wide range of communities in the contexts of migration, post-conflict and health.

Sarah Rhodes has just completed her practice based PhD at Central Saint Martins and is currently Research Coordinator at the London College of Fashion. Her PhD research reframes the nature of collaboration between designers and African craft groups, illustrating how co-creational agency, through equitable creative exchange can engender successful outcomes. Sarah's jewellery has been exhibited internationally, including the London Design Festival and Sotheby's, and her consultancy work includes designing for fair trade jewellery company *Made* and developing the curriculum for Botswana's first jewellery design and manufacture course.

After a preliminary career working in science, **Julie Ryder** retrained as a textile designer and artist in the late 1980's, and completed an MA through the Australian National University in 2003. She has gained international recognition for her work that combines her expertise and interest in both art and science. Her hybrid arts practice encompasses labour intensive hand work through natural dyeing, stitching and assemblage, as well as large digital designs for textiles and architectural projections. Her significant collaborator is nature itself, and by using unconventional media she seeks to reveal the hidden stories that lie within conventional research.

Toril Johannessen is a Norwegian artist, based in Bergen, Norway. Johannessen's practice —spanning various media such as photography, text, prints, sculpture, installation and public art works— often engages in scientific topics and sheds light on the metaphors and creative elements inherent to the various methods of knowledge production.

Godfried Donkor is a Ghanaian artist living and working in London. He studied art and art history at Saint Martins and the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and Escolla Massana in Barcelona, Spain. Donkor was Ghana's representative to the 2001 Venice Biennale and his work is in the collection of the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institution. "The Currency of Ntoma" was recently exhibited in *How Near How Far* at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (Sept. 19 – Feb. 1, 2015).

Jasleen Kaur is a Scottish Indian artist and designer based in London. Having been brought up in a traditional Indian household in Glasgow, she is fascinated by the continual evolution of people and cultures, and their ability to adapt to new environments whilst keeping their traditions and subtle habits. By designing and refashioning objects, she traverses cultural boundaries and subverts traditional notions of use. Jasleen is a visiting lecturer at the Royal College of Art and devises workshops and programmes for the Victoria & Albert Museum, Museum of Childhood, Crafts Council and Sorrel Foundation. She has exhibited worldwide and her work is part of the permanent collection of the Royal College of Art and Crafts Council.



Jorge Lizarazo and Hechizoo Studio, *Inga*, 2013. Wood canoe, glass beads. Image courtesy of Cristina Grajales Gallery and Andres Valbuena.

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