

Authors Bio

1. **(Production and direction) Emma-Lee Amponsah** is a PhD student in Communication Studies at Ghent University, Belgium. Her research explores the emergence of a Black cultural memory in Belgium through Black people's media practices. She is also a founding member of Belgo-Dutch grass root organization and media platform Black Speaks Back, for which she produces audio-visual content centering Afro-diasporic narratives, arts, and futures.
2. **(Research and production assistance) Serine Mekoun Ahefa** is a Belgian-Togolese-Beninese independent multimedia journalist, art researcher and producer working between Brussels and the African continent. She works as a research and international development officer for the Flemish Social Fund for Performings Arts (Brussels). Her researches explore the multiple connections between past present and future with artists and creative communities in the Global South and how they engage and activate social change in post-colonial contexts.

Abstract

KREYOLIZATION II - Hacking the White Cube

If art reflects reality, how are the realities of racism and coloniality implicated in the lives and artistic expressions of artists of color who navigate in Belgian art institutions?

The art world was observed to remain a predominantly white environment, erected as a temple full of promises of redemption; an alleged space of emancipation and free self-expression that continuously confronts artists of color with a white norm, classism, elitism, colonial, racist, and sexist dividing lines ([Demart and Abrassart, 2015](#), [Cole 2012](#)). This exploratory research is built around three objectives. Firstly, it aims to better understand the structural racist mechanisms affecting trajectories of artists of color in the Belgian art sector from early training to the integration into public institutions and private creative entities. Secondly, it documents strategies of resistance developed outside and at the margins of said institutions. And thirdly, it offers suggestions for opening up discussion and safe sharing spaces for the experiences and issues put forward in this work for and by artists and cultural workers of color.

By means of focus group interviews, we have gathered a series of critical personal narratives from the non-white Belgian art and cultural scene at large. Through an intersectional and decolonial approach we have sought to broaden the notion of art as commonly understood in Western institutional contexts, highlighting practices shaped from marginalized paradigms and specificities of respondents outside and at the margins of the white cube that is the art world ([Kilomba, 2008](#), [Mignolo 2011](#)). Kreyolization II is a creolized project in itself, merging academic inquiry and grass roots artistic practice. In doing so, it translates critical personal narratives into a visual poetic trip that may serve as a source for artists of color to recognize and combat the various elements of marginalization that are at stake in the

institutional artistic environment through which they navigate over the course of their careers.

Bibliography

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