

Country-Focused Season: Thinking the Archipelago: Africa's Indian Ocean Islands

## Colorful Threads: The Interwoven Worlds of Art and Culture in the Western Indian Ocean

**DECEMBER 14-16, 2023**  
SHARJAH



### **COLORFUL THREADS: THE INTERWOVEN WORLDS OF ART AND CULTURE IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN**

The Africa Institute | Sharjah  
Location: The Africa Institute, Auditorium

Free admission. [Pre-register](#) to attend.

### Conference Program

*\*The working agenda of this multi-disciplinary conference currently consists of four-panel discussions featuring 13 presentations.*

*\*Timings/dates of each session are to be confirmed.*

#### **PANEL 1: WOMEN, FEMINISM, AND THE INDIAN OCEAN**

##### Discussant

- **Elizabeth W. Giorgis** - Associate Professor of Art History, Theory and Criticism, The Africa Institute, U.A.E

##### Panelists

- **Archival Entropy: Tracing the Photographic Representations of Djoumbé Fatima Kinaya Hassane** - Ph.D. Candidate, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, U.S.A
- **Women and the creation of Omani-Swahili Identity**  
**Jodie Marshall** - Historian of Africa in the Indian Ocean, Michigan State University, U.S.A
- **The Indian Ocean as Feminist Aesthetic Space: Thinking with Lubaina Himid's Contemporary Practice**  
**Franziska Fay** - Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany

## PANEL 2: MATERIAL CONNECTIONS AND RUPTURES

### Discussant

- **Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann** - Associate Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Africa Institute, U.A.E

### Panelists

- **The Commonality of Labor: The History and Legacy of Building Construction in Modern Mauritius**  
**Dwight Carey** - Assistant Professor of Art and the History of Art, Amherst College, U.S.A
- **From Swamp to Sea: Mangrove Poles and the Making of Space in the Western Indian Ocean**  
**Nidhi Mahajan** - Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Cruz, U.S.A
- **Escape Artist: Vamona Navelcar's Flight Across Continents**  
**R. Benedito Ferrao** - Assistant Professor of English & Asian and Pacific Islander American Studies, William and Mary, U.S.A

## PANEL 3: CINEMA AND PLACEMAKING

### Discussant

- **Surafel Wondimu Abebe** - Assistant Professor of Performance Studies and Theory, The Africa Institute, U.A.E

### Panelists

- **Cinema as an Archipelago of Desires: Mauritian Film Culture in the 1930s**  
**Debashree Mukherjee** - Assistant Professor of Film and Media, Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University, U.S.A
- **Movie-mad Island: Cinema and Public Leisure in Colonial Mauritius**  
**James Burns** - Professor and Director of the Humanities Hub, Clemson University, U.S.A
- **Imaging the Peripheral: Island Making in Postcolonial India**  
**Bindu Menon** - Associate Professor of Media Studies, Azim Premji University, India

## PANEL 4: REPRESENTATIONS AND IMAGINARIES

### Discussant

- **Meg Arenberg** - Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature, Department of Humanities and the African Languages and Translation Program, The Africa Institute, U.A.E

### Panelists

- **Arrivals and Departures, Desertions and Betrayals: Fraught Intimacies in Zanzibar and the East African Coast**  
**Gaurav Desai** - Professor and Chair of the English Department, University of Michigan, U.S.A
- **Imaging the Dodo Bird, Imagining Extinction (Mauritius)**  
**Pamila Gupta** - Research Professor, Centre for Gender and Africa Studies, University of the Free State, South Africa
- **Black, Brown, and Blue: Fabulatory Aesthetics in the Work of Shiraz Bayjoo and Kama La Mackerel**  
**Natasha Bissonauth** - Assistant Professor, Visual Art and Art History, York University, Canada
- **Distributed Objects, Distributed Personhood: Interwoven Relations between the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean Worlds**  
**Neelima Jeychandran** - Assistant Professor of African Visual Culture, Department of Art History, Virginia Commonwealth University, Qatar

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*[Learn more](#) about the theme.*