

COLUMBIA GSAPP

URBAN FUTURES/FUTURE ARCHITECTURES USA 6.0

Faculty: Mabel O. Wilson and Jordan Carver w/ Gene Han

Advanced Studio V F22

M/Th 1:30 - 6:30p

Post-Plantation Museum(s)

The plantation moves through time, a cloaked anachronism, that calls forth the prison, the city and so forth.
– Katherine McKittrick, “Plantation Futures”

A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.
– International Council of Museums, new definition of museum approved 24 August 2022

After decades of political antagonism that has taken the museum as a site of contestation, whether through the artwork or otherwise, it is more widely understood that the museum is not an institution that should be reformed, restaffed, or even critiqued, but rather one that has failed its historical claims to curating art and publics.
– Andreas Petrossians and Jose Rosales, “Is the Museum Obsolete?” From the *Strike MoMA Reader*



1 . Strike MoMA protest April 2021



r. Cameron Rowland. *Disgorgement*, 2016, collection of MoMA

A sweeping canopy, transparent glass entrance, security/COVID check point, donor wall, atrium/rotunda, ticket/membership desk, ticket collection point, elevator/escalator, and gallery entrance form the sequence of spatial enclosures erected by contemporary art, science, or history museums. What these architectural thresholds enclose are the collections of artworks and artifacts in the museum's possession. The acquisition, study, conservation, and display of these objects have produced bodies of knowledge and hierarchies of value in regards to what constitutes modern society, culture, race, and nation. By proselytizing their mission as one that contributes to the public good, museums often veil their entanglements within networks and histories of theft, dispossession, and domination. Contemporary museums, whether those claiming history, art, or authority over the modern condition, all make claims on how, where, what, and who should be inscribed within our shared cultural cannon.

Those claims are based on forms of knowledge, expertise, and market power. Recent works by Decolonize this Place, Cameron Rowland, Forensic Architecture, Andrea Fraser, Nan Goldin, and others have drawn our attention to the ways in which cultural institutions work within the logics of the market, exploiting vulnerable populations, and enriching their own collections and corporate boards.

While museums may appear arrested in time, as repositories for historical and cultural cross sections in time, activists and fellow artists have shown how these institutions function according to the continued circulation of objects, labor, bodies, meanings, ideologies, and wealth—a model developed via the logics of the plantation. The plantation typifies the organizational system of enclosure and extraction that Europe that proliferated in the form of property in the colonization of the Americas, Asia, and Africa. This model continues according to Katherine McKittrick “in agriculture, banking, and mining, in trade and tourism, and across other colonial and postcolonial spaces—the prison, the city, the resort—a plantation logic characteristic of (but not identical to) slavery emerges in the present both ideologically and materially.” We will add the museum to McKittrick’s list of spaces that have been historically formed and continually operated within the logics of the plantation. In doing so, we will begin to understand the contemporary museum within the longer history of its colonial and racialized development and how those histories have formed the foundation to the museum’s current condition. Against the plantation’s logic of enclosure, collection, and possession, McKittrick also suggests that “differential modes of survival emerge—creolization, the blues, maroonage, revolution, and more—revealing that the plantation, in both slave and postslave contexts, must be understood alongside complex negotiations of time, space, and terror.” We will analyze the museum’s architecture and mission as global, influential, entrenched, violent, uneven, spatial, exploitative. Following McKittrick’s modes of resistance and survival, the studio will remake the museum as a possible site of imagination and potential liberation.

Post-Plantation Museum(s) studio will examine the plantation’s architecture and spaces as an evolving typological model and discursive form to understand, undermine, explicate, and complicate the mechanics and techniques of enclosure and circulation. We will also study New York’s preeminent institutions as “plantation museums”: National Museum of the American Indian, American Museum of Natural History, The Guggenheim, The Met, MoMA, Queens Museum, and The Whitney. The status of the body and modern subject, both tied to the enclosures of property and racialization, will be deeply interrogated and highly legible in each studio project. This studio will imagine new architectural protocols for a post plantation future. The studio will evolve through three research projects (working in teams of 2 or 3) and a final project (working in teams or as individuals) situated in relation to the student’s chosen institution. To begin, the studio will engage in a collective research project—*1_plantation lexicon*—analyzing the form and logics of the plantation to develop a lexicon for its various components and dispositions. For the next research phase—*2_plantation museums*—the studio will utilize the terms collected in the lexicon to examine through drawing (diagrams, sectional axonometrics) the persistence of the plantation logic in a specific museum or cultural institution. The final research phase—*3_enclosure systems*—will develop models and drawings formalizing the various systems of enclosure operating in and out of the museum. Along with understanding how enclosures are built and function, the studio will also document spaces and instances of intervention, where the logics of the plantation and systems of enclosure are subverted, resisted and refused. These spatial protocols will become foundational to how these sites can be transformed over time in a final project: *4_post plantation museum*.

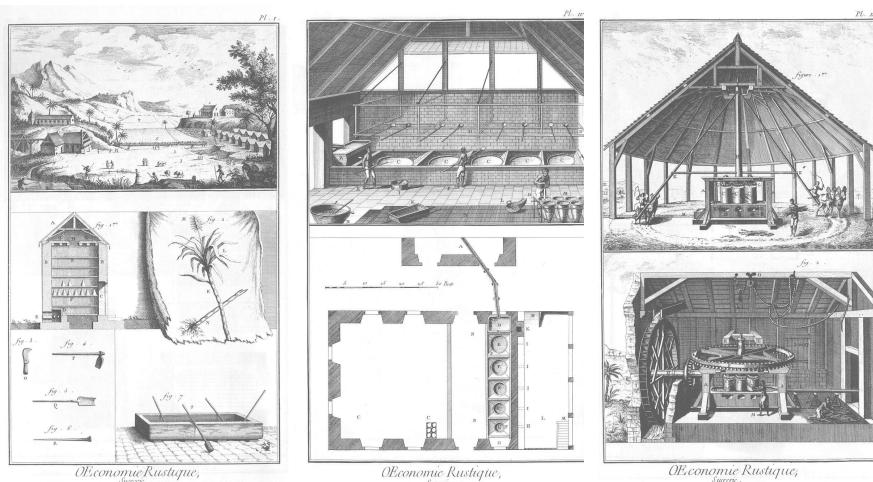
The **Post-Plantation Museum(s)** studio will be supplemented by a seminar shared with Prof. Mario Gooden’s studio. Interlocutors [to be confirmed] will be artist [Cameron Rowland](#), theorist [Elleza Kelley](#), artist [Imani Jacqueline Brown](#), and a series of public conversations *Black Counter-Cartographies*. The studio will also take a daytrip on October 15 to visit [Sylvester Manor](#) (1652), a historic plantation (+23 enslaved people) that two English colonist built on the land of the Manhasset tribe to grow provisions for their two sugar plantations (+200 slaves) in Barbados, which demonstrates the global extractive logics central to the plantation model from its inception.

1_plantation lexicon

plantation—The action of planting seeds or plants in the ground. The settling of people, usually in a conquered or dominated country; esp. the planting or establishing of a colony; colonization. Now *historical*. [OED]

lexicon—The vocabulary proper to some department of knowledge or sphere of activity; the vocabulary or word-stock of a region, a particular speaker, etc. [OED]

In Diderot and D'Alembert's seminal volumes of the *Encyclopédie* (1751), a gathering together (akin to the museum collection) the tools and techniques that would construct the modern world, appear plates explaining the processes of sugar cultivation and production. The landscape perspectives, plans and sections through structures and machines, and details show a plantation located in an unnamed French colony, showing the plantation's architecture as foundational to modernity's emergence. To transport plant specimens for cultivation around the Empire—to Asia, the Americas, and Africa—the West's scientists and plantation owners deployed Wardian cases, which connect plantations to the culture of specimen collection and displays of science museums. The studio begins with several important readings on enclosure and property in order to create a lexicon of the plantation by studying its spaces, systems, and logics (typological, material, bureaucratic, economic, social and architectural). The lexicon's entries will document the typological, spatial, and textual elements that will be our guide for the rest of the semester. The lexicon should incorporate an analysis of objects, concepts, subjects, and methods. Terms like property, owner, domesticity, value, work, worker, restraint, violence, control, safety, home—for instance—should be specifically defined as they pertain to the logics of the plantation, its subjects, and forms of control and enclosure. The lexicon will give the studio a set of working terms located historically but transcalar yet working across time.



The studio will work together to develop the lexicon's terms based on readings and research. Each entry should include a written description explaining its function, as well as include related entries. Each entry should also be accompanied by an image that captures the term and a diagram that articulates the formal and spatial protocols. [Bernard Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts*](#) and [WBYA?'s *Critical Field Guide*](#) offer excellent models for these types of diagram and analysis. Together the studio should collate and format all entries, images, and diagrams into one cohesive constellation of terms and descriptions for presentation.

Denis Diderot & J.L.R. d'Alembert, "Rustic Economy-Sugar" in *Encyclopédie* (1751)

required readings and project deadlines:

due 12.09.22

- Katherine McKittrick, "Plantation Futures," *Small Axe*, #42, Nov. 2003.
- Lisa Lowe, "Intimacies of the Four Continents," *Intimacies of the Four Continents*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. 1-41.

due 15.09.22 - group workshop of lexicon terms. Each person should have at least three terms to contribute.

- Louis Nelson, "The Jamaica Plantation: Industrial, Global, Contested," *The Eighteenth Centuries: Global Networks of Enlightenment*, eds. David Gies and Cynthia Wall, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018. [PDF]
- Cameron Rowland, [3 & 4 Will. IV c. 73](#).

due 22.09.22- Plantation Lexicon due

- Rinaldo Walcott. "Property is a Problem," *On Property*. Windsor, Ontario: Biblioasis, 2021, pp. 1-42.

SCHEDULE_draft_08.29.22

Please see GSAPP events for lectures and other events - <https://www.arch.columbia.edu/events>

09.12 introductions + readings [412 Avery]

09.15 group work + readings [412 Avery]
visit to [Raphael Montañó Ortiz exhibit](#) at El Museo

09.19 desk crits

09.22 **due - 1_Plantation Lexicon** [412 Avery]
group work + readings -
Workshop - Jonathan Gonzales

09.26 desk crits

09.29 group work [408 Avery]

10.03 desk crits

10.06 group work [412 Avery]

10.10 desk crits

10.13 group work [408 Avery]

10.15 - visit Sylvester Manor

10.17 desk crits

10.20 **Mid Review - due 2_Plantation Museum(s) +
3_Enclosure Systems** [Avery 115]

10.24 desk crits

10.27 group work [412 Avery]

10.31 **FALL BREAK**

11.03 group work [408 Avery]

11.07 desk crits

11.10 group work [412 Avery]

11.14 desk crits

11.17 group work [412 Avery]

11.21 **¾ Review** [300 Buell North]
Event: Scenes of Subjection, book event, Wood
Auditorium

11.24 **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

11.28 group crits

12.01 group work [412 Avery]

12.05 desk crits

12.08 desk crits

12.12 **Final Review - due _Post-Plantation Museum**
Avery 115