

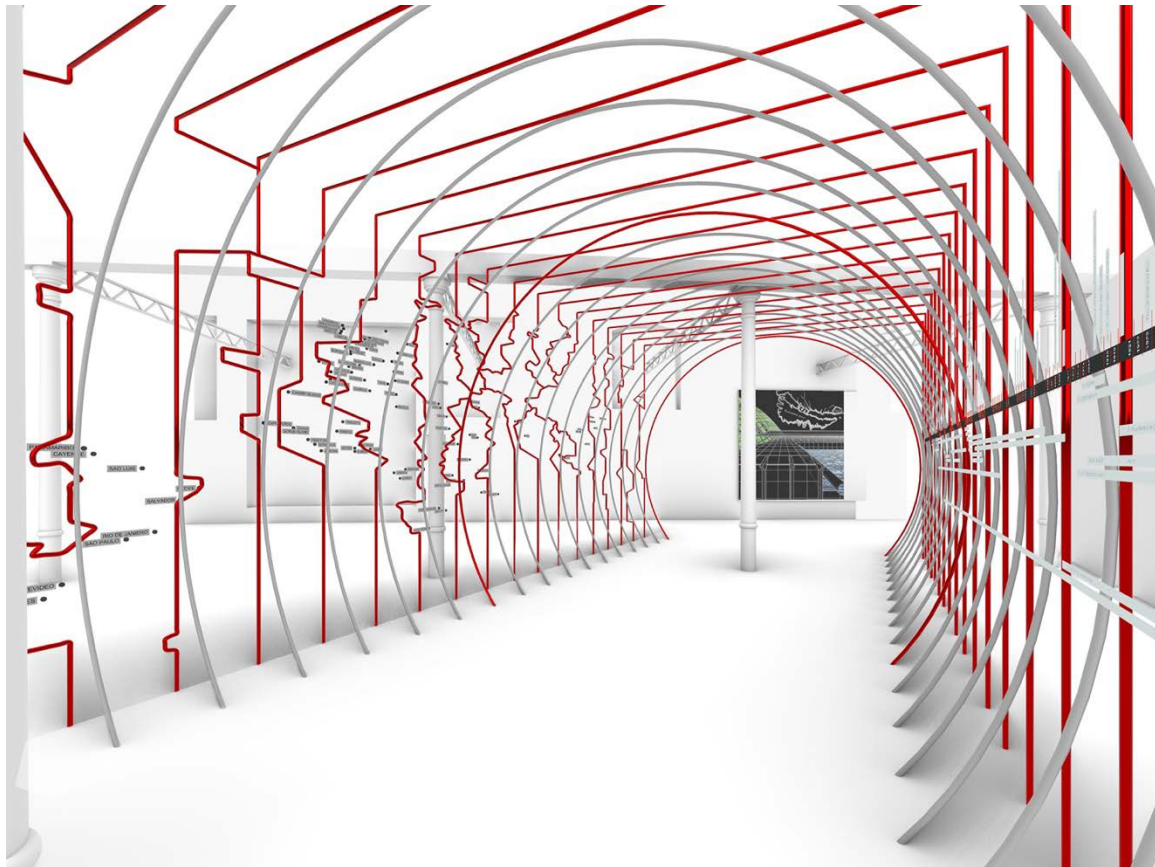
Spring 2023

## The **BLACK City**: Situating Diasporic Women

4.s15 | 3-3-6 | M 2:00-5:00 PM | N52/399

A Design-research and Fabrication Workshop

The BLACK City Lab | Associate Professor J. Yolande Daniels



### **Global**

**75.6 million** domestic workers

**81.5%** of all domestic workers are female

**73.4%** of all migrant domestic workers are female

**81%** of all domestic workers are informally employed

### **Local**

**2.2 million** American domestic workers

**91.5%** of USA domestic workers are female

**52.4%** of USA female domestic workers are Black, Hispanic, or Asian

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### **Overview:**

A design-research and fabrication workshop that invites both students with research and fabrication interest and skills to join in the development of an installation for the 18<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. The class will travel to Venice over spring break. In the workshop, we will construct a network comprised of points and lines extracted from events and movements in settlements and cities of the African diaspora. The constellation transforms the two-dimensional representations of the African diaspora into a three-dimensional space-time field and reveals the lives and diasporic settlement of “Black” women from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to today.

### **Course Goals:**

The course goals are twofold: 1. Complete the narrative components of the installation; and, 2. Supplement this with a series of readings to foster an understanding of intersectional analyses of “race”, identity, gender, citizenship, and nationality. The specific readings and the amount will be agreed upon by the group.

### **The Installation:**

The installation consists of a main structure to be fabricated by others and narrative installation components to be fabricated by the class. The narrative components include a video of dictionary plates, a diaspora map, and a timeline. Each component is indexed to the other.

#### **C-1. Map:**

The Diaspora Map traces the flows of descendants of Africa (whether voluntary or forced) within the visible tension between the mathematical regularity of meridians of longitude and the biases of international date lines.

#### **C-2. Timeline:**

An anchor to the Black city Editions, the timeline represents a chronological ordering of time and space within a linear graphic system of horizontal movements and vertical events that maps the legal and extralegal structures that have affected the settlements of African descendants to reveal simultaneous time-scapes and patterns over time.

#### **C-3. Spatial Narratives:**

The Dictionary Plates contain spatial narratives about the lives of African diasporic women and the spaces they inhabited. The narratives illustrate the effects of subjugation and devaluation

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and the multiple displacements of race and gender. The plates require researching for narratives, collating the data, and creating a map for each entry.

**Archive:**

All the events, places and narratives that are located on the timeline, map and the dictionary plates are collected in a database. The class will work collectively to expand and add more details to an existing database.

**Teaching Method:**

The teaching method will consist of one-on-one and teamed fabrication and discussions, and group discussions of readings.

**Assignments:**

A class schedule with a breakdown of the component deliverables will be provided.

**Class Trip:**

The class will travel to Venice over spring break. Partial funding and Visa assistance may be provided.

**Desired Outcomes:**

Master the ability to think critically and use interdisciplinary theories in architectural discourse.

Develop an understanding of issues of “race”, identity, and citizenship.

Develop an understanding of issues pertinent to an intersectional analysis of “race”, identity, gender, citizenship, and nationality.

Gain experience producing an archive and collating and representing data.

Gain experience working on set fabrication tasks individually and in groups.

**Performance Assessment:**

Attendance 10%

Weekly workshop sessions and reading: 25%

Weekly lab sessions: 20%

Weekly Fabrication assignment: 45%

**Grading Assessment:**

**Grade A** Exceptionally good performance. The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and exhibits excellent research, representation, and fabrication skills.

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- Grade B** Good performance. The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute coherent research and fabrication strategies.
- Grade C** Adequate performance. The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and needs improvement.
- Grade D** Minimally acceptable performance. The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, poor research, or a lack of critical awareness,
- Grade F** Fail and must repeat subject. The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness, and the research is clearly negligible.

*(A+ to C- with modifiers used)*

**MIT Grading Policy:** <http://catalog.mit.edu/mit/procedures/academic-performance-grades/#gradestext>

**Graduate Academic Standards:** <http://catalog.mit.edu/mit/procedures/academic-performance-grades/#graduateacademicstandardstext>

**Grad Support:**

As a graduate student, a variety of issues may impact your academic career including faculty/student relationships, funding, and interpersonal concerns. In the Office of Graduate Education (OGE), [GradSupport](#) provides consultation, coaching, and advocacy to graduate students on matters related to academic and life challenges. If you are dealing with an issue that is impacting your ability to attend class, complete work, or take an exam, you may contact GradSupport by email at [gradsupport@mit.edu](mailto:gradsupport@mit.edu) or via phone at (617) 253-4860.

**Academic Accommodations:**

MIT is committed to the principle of equal access (or an inclusionary environment, or similar wording). I encourage students to meet with me to discuss possible disability-related needs, including accommodations which you may need in order to fully access this course.

**Attendance Policy:**

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The student is responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to the instructor to substantiate the reason for absence. Among the reasons absences are considered excused by the college are the following.

**Excused Absences:**

For absence due to illness, religious observance, or a class conflict,

**Late Submission of Work:**

- All course work must be submitted on time.
- To request an extension on a deadline for an assignment, students must speak to the professor one week prior to the due date.

**Academic Integrity:**

<https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/citing-your-sources/avoiding-plagiarism-cite-your-source>

Plagiarism occurs when you use another's words, ideas, assertions, data, or figures and do not acknowledge that you have done so. If you use the words, ideas, or phrasing of another person or from published material, you must

- Use quotation marks around the words and cite the source, or
- Paraphrase or summarize acceptably and cite the source.
- If you use charts, graphs, data sets, or numerical information obtained from another person or from published material, you must also cite the source.
- Always acknowledge your sources by citing them.

**Academic Writing:**

In the creation of the archive, we will adhere to the MIT Standards for academic integrity as outlined in the *MIT Academic Integrity Handbook*: <https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/writing-original-work>

**Source Notation:**

- Direct Quote
- Paraphrase
- Summarize

**Citations Needed for:**

- Print sources

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- Electronic sources: <https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/citing-your-sources/citing-electronic-sources>
- Data
- Images
- Recorded material
- Spoken material

### **Assessment of Source Reliability:**

- Name of the author
- Name of the sponsoring institution
- Date of posting

### **Social Media Sources:**

Social Media sources are not allowed. Instead consult the references for the post.

### **Bibliography\*:**

- Elizabeth Buettner. 2016, *Europe after the Empire. Decolonization Society and Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, pp.1-21.
- Oliver Cox, "Race Prejudice, Intolerance and Nationalism," *Caste, Class, & Race; a Study in Social Dynamics*, New York: Doubleday, 1948.
- Oliver C. Cox, *Theory of Race, Prejudice, and Racism*, *Race Relations: Elements and Social Dynamics*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1976.
- Steve Garner, 2010. "The Idea of Race and Practices of Racism," *Racisms an Introduction*, London: Sage, 2013,1-18.
- Stuart Hall, 1997, Chapter 3, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London, Sage, 1997, 239-259.
- Kate Hepworth, 2016. "Insecurity and Irregularity at the Edges of Citizenship," *At the Edges of Citizenship. Security and Constitution for Non-Citizen Subjects*, Routledge, New York, 2013, 1-27.
- Margaret Hunter, "Shape Shifting into Blackness in the Post-Civil Rights Era," Paul Spickard, Lily Anne Y. Welty-Tamai and Matt Kester (Eds.), *Shape Shifter. Journeys Across Terrains of Race and Identity*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000, 313-330.

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- Angelica Pesarini, “You Are the Shame of the Race”: Dynamics of Pain, Shame and Violence in Shape Shifting Processes.” Paul Spickard, Lily Anne Y. Welty-Tamai and Matt Kester (Eds.), *Shape Shifter. Journeys Across Terrains of Race and Identity*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000, 189-216.
- Pamela Barnhouse Walters, "You're too independent:" How Gender, Race, and Class Make Many Plural Feminisms,” Michèle Lamont, Ed., *The Cultural Territories of Race: Black and White Boundaries*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, 1-8.
- Ellis Cose, “Twelve Steps Toward a Race-Neutral Nation,” *Color-Blind: Seeing Beyond Race in a Race-Obsessed World*, New York: Harper Collins, 1997.

\* Additional readings related to the database research may be suggested.

### **SCHEDULE**

Class will meet on Monday from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm for 3 hours and include a 3-hour lab on Friday from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, and 6 hours/week of work outside of class.

Classes will be hybrid on February 5<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup>, and May 15<sup>th</sup>.

M Feb 06	1 <sup>st</sup> Class <b>[Remote]</b>
M Feb 13	<b>[1<sup>st</sup> in-person class]</b>
M Feb 20	Presidents' Day, Holiday
Tu Feb 21	Make-up Class
M Mar 06	
M Mar 13	
M Mar 20	
<b>Sa Mar 25</b>	<b>[Class Travels to Venice through Saturday, Apr 1st]</b>
M Apr 03	
M Apr 10	
M Apr 17	Patriots' Day, Holiday <b>[Installation]</b>
M Apr 24	
M May 01	
M May 08	<b>[Installation pt. 3 - Remote]</b>
M May 15	Last Class <b>[Remote]</b>