

# The Monument is the Struggle

Funded by the Mayor of London's Untold Stories, Diversity in the Public Realm Programme and Goldsmiths Impact Fund



**Staff in Visual Cultures lead cross-departmental project on how histories of colonisation and enslavement register in urban infrastructures and social life.**

For two years, researchers in Visual Cultures have led an inter-departmental group of staff, students, alumni and local residents on a research and impact project answering the question 'how do the spectres of colonisation, enslavement and the plantation register in local urban struggle?'

De-sedimenting colonial histories of the Deptford Dockyard *The Monument is the Struggle* explores how the logics of colonial administration, geography, finance and community organisation figure in contemporary urban spaces and communities. Local study groups set up with Goldsmiths staff work through reading sessions, walks, curricula, long term research projects and campaigns. A website and series of QR code plaques developed by Goldsmiths Computing in the neighbourhood will be released in the coming months to mark the ongoing relation to colonial history in the local area.

The project is led by Professor Jorella Andrews and Dr Janna Graham who are mobilising participatory methods for collective study using Visual Cultures practices

including **thinking with conditions**, a process for collective analysis and cartography of historical forces in contemporary conjunctures and **interviewing Images** a phenomenological practice of working with material culture to mark historical and contemporary experiences in urban space.

Professor James Ohene-Djan (Computing) is generating a multi-layered approach for presenting participatory mapping in the local area through a website and QR codes (see the test site here <https://test.dphm.org/home>).

Lara Paquete Pereira (GARA, STACs) is developing curricula with local young people and families.

Responding to demands set by the Goldsmiths anti-racism occupation in 2018, and Goldsmiths Emeritus Professor Joan Anim-Addo's important work on Black histories of resistance in Deptford, the project is formed in partnership with the Deptford People's Heritage Museum, a recently established Black-led grassroots museum set up to support communities and contest erasures of local Black autonomy. The project is funded by the Mayor of London's *Untold Stories, Diversity in the Public Realm* programme, set up in the aftermath of monument toppling in response to the death of George Floyd in 2020.

Assessment of the implications of the project's approach for London's public realm strategy, commissioners and community groups locally and internationally has been supported by the Goldsmiths Impact Fund.

The project is composed of studies developed with visiting community researchers working in the Department of Visual Cultures including:

### **Black Autonomous Spaces**

Local community organiser and radio broadcaster Tracey Jarrett and Visual Cultures alumni Choe Murr with mentorship University of Nottingham researcher, Lisa Robinson, chart erasures of Black community-led spaces and the ongoing campaigns to preserve them.

### **River Logistics / Plantation Imaginaries**

Visual Cultures doctoral candidate Naomi Hennig is working with Dr Janna Graham and local dockyard historians to research the colonial emanations of finance, managerialism, and agriculture from the colonial dockyard and their echoes in contemporary processes of land dispossession.

### **We are Moving On**

Community organiser and co-founder of the Deptford People's Heritage Museum Joyce Jacca and health justice activist Hussein Hamza (Red Ribbon Living Well) work with Dr Jorella Andrews to understand how colonial health practices impact health inequalities of the present and ways to mark community organisers and grassroots health care support in public space.

### **Carceral Logics of the East India Company**

Visual Cultures alumni Niharika Pore works with the Rights Collective to consider technologies of the East India company and their manifestations in the experiences of South Asian communities in London.

### **Sonic Vandalisms**

Visual Cultures doctoral candidate DJ /Scholar Lynee Denise and others will consider the role of women in Deptford's sound system cultures as a response to fascism.

### **Monumental Slang**

Led by Lara Paquete Pereira (GARA, STACs) students on the BA Curating and local young people are generating secondary level curriculum based on participants' analysis of power and resistance in local history.

### **St James Hatcham Museum School**

Students in the BA Curating are working with Deptford People's Heritage Museum Joyce Jacca and Bianca Santa Anna Caballero to turn project findings into a children's history museum in St James Hatcham School dedicated to local histories of colonialism and resistance. Set to open in January 2025, staff and students will use strategies drawn from popular education and constructivist learning to build the museum with students, parents and staff.

### **Re-thinking Monuments Podcast and Policy**

Students and Alumni from MA in Contemporary Art Theory module Transcultural Memory are working on research towards a report that will be presented to the Mayor of London's Public Realm strategy group..

### **Future**

In the coming years the project will work with national partners at Museum of Maritime Intolerance / Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar and in the Museum of British Colonialism (Kenya) to extend the reach of the research to other community – led initiatives.

The project is managed by MA Contemporary Art Theory alumni Bianca Santa Anna Caballero and produced by media artist Inaya Hussein.