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Black Bodies, White Gold: Unpacking slavery and North American cotton production

Agnes Talks: History is Rarely Black or White Speaker Series
2022

SPEAKERS
Jason Cyrus, Anne-Marie Guérin and Anna Arabindan-Kesson

KEYWORDS
Fashion History, Textile History, Textile Production, Black History, Canadian History

TRANSCRIPT
Jason Cyrus: Welcome to the very first of the speaker series planned in conjunction with the exhibition, History is Rarely Black or White, at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in Kingston, Ontario. My name is Jason Cyrus. I'm the curator of the exhibition. Today we are joined by Anne-Marie Guérin, the conservator and professor and Anna Arabindan-Kesson from Princeton University, and before we jump into a conversation, I want to give you a bit of an overview of how our conversation today will go. Rather than have it be too formalized we thought we could kick off by sharing a bit about our project. Anna will share a bit about her book as well, and then we'll engage in what I hope will be a lively and somewhat informal conversation about the synergies between these projects and I think their potential for learning and the takeaways. So here, we're here today to talk about cotton, and trade, labour and humanity, but we cannot talk with any of those things without talking about land. And it's very, very important to share that Queen's University and the land of which the Agnes situated on is and has been an additional home of the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee nations. As an immigrant settler myself to Canada, I'm Guyanese-Canadian. I come from a country that has been primarily taken care of by the Arawak nation. I have a very complicated relationship to land, and in my own work, and the work that I hope to be a part of, projects like this, centres at its very core, a re-look at history and the ways that colonial practice, the very framework of colonialism, has removed agency and histories from many people groups, indigenous people being one of many. So I hope that this serves as one small step towards reconciliation, and that the conversations we're having today can be part of -- can be one drop into that larger bucket where we can take a critical look at many of these very, very important topics. This conversation is part of the exhibition speaker series, and the exhibition sits within a wider framework called Agnes Reimagined, and the Agnes Etherington Art Centre is at an interesting time in its history, where we are reimagining what curatorial practice, and what artistic intervention could look like, using the wealth of collections that we take care of, continuing to curate and care for community engagement, and relationships with communities and having an honest look at relationships that we have not cared for in the past, as well as opening up the Agnes to be a place of learning and conversation through engagement with students and artists, and communities, as I said. This is part of a new era, and we're hoping that you will visit often and whether that be digitally or physically, and this will be part like I said of a new era of replacing and restoring story. So what I would like to do first is just share a

bit about the speakers we have today, and from there on I will share a bit about the exhibition itself. Okay, so like I said, my name is Jason Cyrus. I am a curator of fashion and textile, and my work primarily looks at exchanges between cultures, across history, as well as its connections to our contemporary period. I use fashion and textile as the lens of doing so, and I completed a master's in art history at York University, and I'm now in the middle of a PhD at Warwick in the UK, and I have been the Isabel Bader Fellow in textile conservation research at the Agnes, and my work is looks across the fields of installation, conservation, and curation. I'm being joined by the absolutely fabulous Anne-Marie Guérin, who is the conservator who has worked on this project, and Anne-Marie is a recent -- is a grad of the master's program at Queen's University, in art conservation, and she has worked in several heritage and art institutions, including the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and the Canadian Conservation Institute. Her own work shares an interdisciplinary focus, as well as collaboration across art conservation and curation, and we are so fortunate to have her here today to chat with us. I'm very excited to introduce Anna Arabindan-Kesson whose book, amazing trailblazing book, Black Bodies, White Gold, which please make sure that becomes a part of your reading and your frameworks going forward. Anna is an assistant professor of African-American and black diasporic arts at the Department of Art and Archaeology at Princeton. She was born in Sri Lanka, and she completed a undergraduate degree in New Zealand and Australia, before finishing her PhD in African-American studies and art history at Yale, and very interesting to note that she was also a registered nurse before moving over to academics. So what we will do is I will share a little bit about the exhibition itself. There is of course -- there's a physical exhibition at the Agnes, but our digital director, Danuta, has created a fantastic online component that's accessible through the Agnes's main page, as well as the digital Agnes platform where you can experience the exhibition and see its main talking points and main objects, but what I thought I would do is just to set this up so this is our very first series, is to just share some installation shots and to give you a little bit of an overview of what the show is about. And I will share screen. Just bear with me as I set this up. All right. Thumbs up if everyone can see it. Yes, okay, I got some head nods. All right. History's black or white, primarily looks at the cotton trade with a focus in the 1800s from the late 1700s into the very early 1900s, but our main focus is the period of the 1800s, and we're looking at cotton garments in the Agnes collection of Canadian dress, Queen's and interrogating the garments from an aspect of scientific testing, conservation and the historical cotton trade. What you're looking at here is the first gallery that sets up the garments on a platform in which we are presenting garments that are a cross-section of the -- of society, and each garment you're seeing here is either entirely made of cotton, or has cotton elements in. Behind you, you're seeing a world map in which we are using artworks from the Agnes's collection, both from its Canadian collection and its European collection, that through situating them on the map, we're trying to give you a sense of place, whether it be locally within Kingston, or in the wider cotton supply chain, whether it be ports that were important to ships and ships that transported enslaved people or ships that have taken other goods, or whether that would have been a point of retail like a store or anything of the sort. So the on the left -- get my directions right -- on the left you're seeing a map legend that guides you through the use of the artworks in different places, and the exhibition has been enlightened, has been subverted, and has been entangled by contemporary art, which is why we're so excited to talk to Anna tonight. Where the artists Karen Jones, Damian Jöel and Gordon Shadrach have each loaned and collaborated with us on artworks that have -- we’re using to really bring the history of the cotton trade into the present and show that the legacies that have taken hold specifically during this time are still very much with us today in the way that we live and work and are on the land.

What we're seeing here is Karen Jones's installation Freed. Karen Jones is an interdisciplinary artist based in Vancouver, and she created this site-specific work for us. This amazing blend of cotton with cotton balls that she has interspersed with black hair, which we will speak to much later on, but it encircles a beautiful wedding dress from 1893 that is entirely cotton. This is installation of our conservation story that Anne-Marie will speak to very shortly in which we're trying to really break down the silos between conservation, curation, and research. The conservation practice is very -- the conservation field and the work is very central to the exhibition, and we have put many of the processes upfront for folks to come and engage with and understand, and that's available digitally as well. The next gallery takes you from -- so the first gallery would have done this big overarching framework in terms of the cotton supply chain, where the cotton was coming from, what were the ships involved, the port cities and so on and so forth. The next gallery takes it from this wider look into a more specific look at the humanity involved in this and restoring the humanity and shedding a more specific light on the humanity of the enslaved folks who picked and harvested the raw cotton is the central focus of this exhibition. Sorry. This gallery we're seeing here the Songs of the Gullah fashion story by artist Damian Jöel, who is Jamaican-American and Damian's installation here, whether it be in film on the garments themselves, focus on the Gullah/Geechee nation that have been -- that are settled in the southern coast of United States all the way from North Carolina down to Florida, along the coastal regions and the Sea Islands, and Damian has created an installation that speaks to their history, their present, and their future. I love these photos. Every time I see them, I smile. We will speak to Damian's work later on in our chat. So we've gone from the water supply chain. We're now looking -- we've looked at the specifics and the humanity of one people group that would have been working on the cotton. Now we're following that trajectory through the Underground Railroad into Canada, and this last gallery looks at its connections into the way that we live in Canada today, and we can say more broadly in North America today, based on the legacy of slavery. We're seeing here, black-dyed garments from the Agnes's collection, a map of the Underground Railroad, artwork by Toronto-based artist Gordon Shadrach who is a portrait artist who paints the portraits of people and artists themselves, or creatives, and we've put them in conversation with some fantastic loans from the material archives and Queen's University's Rare Book Library. Here we're seeing some tintypes of former enslaved individuals settled in what was called Upper Canada, but we now know as to be Ontario. The far left is a very generous loan from Jennifer McKendry who's a Kingston scholar. We've paired these tintypes with firsthand accounts of the enslaved as well as allegorical accounts. You're seeing on the left, the very first print issues of the Underground Railroad by Harriet Beecher Stowe. These are the first two volumes so they still include a number of errors that have since been corrected as well as the name of a character that has changed, and we are extremely fortunate to be able to show these accounts. In the middle, you're looking at the Voice of the Fugitive, which was the first black newspaper in Canada, where it was based in Sandwich, Ontario, which is now a suburb that has been amalgamated into Windsor, Ontario, just across the river from Detroit. And this newsletter was used in many different ways to -- one of which being to communicate to the enslaved and the descendants settled in Ontario, all the folks who had come along in the Underground Railroad, and whether to be a sense of identifying them or being able to connect with loved ones or other folks that you would have known. On the right is A North-Side View of Slavery, and while Uncle Tom's Cabin is an allegorical account based on the life of Henry Josiah, A North-Side View of Slavery is the actual account of formerly enslaved and freed individuals who escaped through the Underground Railroad, and in Canada. It is separated by town, and we've opened it here to the story of Eric Brant who was settled -- who, funnily enough in

Sandwich, Ontario, where Voice of the Fugitive was based, and it's a little hard to see it from this image, but I hope that folks are able to come to the gallery physically, and go get closer to the case. They can actually read Eric's story, in which he talks about the actual process of leaving and then being settled in Canada, and how after he was settled here, life was not the bed of roses that I think we always historically look at Canadian history, I mean, in relation to American history. There was still a lot of racially fuelled violence, segregation in many different ways, and this is where the exhibition really starts to pivot, where we look at the legacy of the cotton trade that has produced some beautiful garments within the Agnes's collection, and connecting the way that these legacies have been entrenched systemically, and connect to the way that we live now. Racism is very much still a part of our experience. Many different intersectional phobias are as well, and the exhibition really starts to, I think, trouble this notion of Canada as a safe place and start to have a critical look at where do a lot of our viewpoints and ways of seeing come from? Here we're looking at other tintypes from the Ontario Archives of formerly enslaved individuals. And Gordon Shadrach's work powerfully brings this history to the present. Gordon's portraits are very much in conversation with the tintypes, and they present a lot of contemporary individuals. Some of them are creatives themselves, sometimes in historic ways, and sometimes in contemporary ways, and it's that difference of seeing people and the way that folks look different, and how our perception of them might be different based on their skin colour or their dress or the way they're presented, and what the implications for their own lives might be, and their safety. We think of the public death of murder of George Floyd, Trayvon Martin, Briana Taylor, so many others whose names you don't know, as examples of how dangerous it is for the Black person, and how your very identity and the way you are perceived by others, and how you dress yourselves could literally mean life and death. So in this gallery, I hope folks will spend some time really thinking of the ways that the cotton trade and the garments that we saw previously and the folk, the people who were involved and their own humanity and their being removed from land, how that legacy has led us to a lot of the ways that we live our lives here today. With that, I'll kick it over to Anne-Marie, who will share a bit about the conservation story, and the scientific testing and how we were able to bring these other lenses into telling of the story. Anne-Marie?

Anne-Marie Guérin: Okay, so my part of this project was really to ground and bolster Jason's story that he's trying to tell through the exhibition in the materiality of the garments. So one of the first questions that Jason asked me to look at is where the cotton came from, and part of the idea of doing that, of finding evidence of where the cotton came from is really just to ground, the collection, the Agnes's collection in the global network, in the supply chain of cotton, to basically just bring really strong evidence of the presence and the participation of Kingstonites and Canadians of the 19th century in the transatlantic slave trade, and in the every part of the cotton supply chain. So our process was really to look at the Agnes's collection, try to see what frame we wanted to work within in terms of history, the history of the garments, really tried to find the moments in history that we wanted to represent. So for example, the use of slavery in the southern United States really sort like it expanded a lot in the late 19th, and -- sorry, late 18th, early 19th century. A lot of that had to do with the Haitian Revolution, and what was happening in the Caribbean. And so we wanted to look at what that transition period was like, when cotton became more -- when slavery was being used more in the United States, in the southern United States, and then following that, when there was the abolition of slavery in the UK, and how that impacted whether or not the UK was still importing cotton from the United States, where slavery was very much still happening, and then,

because trying to find out essentially the trajectory of the cotton through from the United States to Great Britain, and then being imported back into Canada. So essentially, we looked at all the garments that were cotton that we could find, and that involved a lot of microscopy and other methods of analysis, like for your transform infrared spectroscopy as well, just to make sure that everything we were actually sampling was cotton, and we got in touch with the QFIR, the Queen's Facility for Isotope Research, which we were really lucky to just find that it was there because I didn't know that it even existed before starting this project, and they were really amazing, immediately on board. Yes, this is an interesting project and we want to work with you. And I think that for me, this collaboration, this kind of three-way between the stories that can be told from by historical garments, or artworks that can be told from these garments, and how we can kind of work in an interdisciplinary way to bring these stories up, and to really bolster some of the stories that have already been told for centuries, is really part of what this project for me really was about is being this bridge between the storytelling and the scientific analysis. And then this part that we're looking at now, which is the conservation story, kind of goes through that entire process. So this is the some of the analytical of the microscopy that I was mentioning earlier. So this piece was particularly interesting, because it's one of the earliest garments that we worked on, from between 1790 to 1820, probably more towards 1820, but what was really interesting in the microscopy was to find that the front of the waistcoat that we're looking at, all of the weft, so the fibers that we're seeing, threads that we're seeing going from left to right, is cotton, and all of the fibers we're seeing going up and down, so the warp, that is all silk, so it was really interesting, just from a material point of view to look at this object, and we also found out that the entire lining is cotton, so we had lots of different cotton elements to test with this garment. There was the lining, there was a lot the thread was cotton as well, and then parts of the exterior of the of the waistcoat. I just -- this slide is kind of -- it kind of shows one of the typical ways that cotton is identifiable, and that is by if you see this kind of twist that's happening in the fibre, that is really, really typical of cotton, and you don't always see it because sometimes when cotton is treated a certain way that twist kind of is lost a little bit and then it can end up looking a lot like silk, so that's when we ended up combining different methods, so microscopy with a TIR that I mentioned earlier for your transform infrared spectroscopy, and then that can help us understand really what the material is just by combining these different methods. Yes, so this is the isotope analysis that was I was talking about a little bit earlier, getting in touch with QFIR. I didn't know that it was even possible to find the origins of cotton until I looked into essentially contemporary analysis of cotton, because I found out that it's impossible even or very difficult today to trace back the supply chain of cotton and many other materials. So when companies, fashion brands, for example, kind of claim an ethical source of their cotton or that it was responsibly sourced, it's really difficult to be able to claim that and be sure. So these companies that want to market their cotton that way, or their fashion brand that way, will go to isotope analysis researchers to make sure that their cotton didn't come from a place where slavery is known to be used today, or child labourers, so such as areas of China and places in Uzbekistan. So those are two of the major ones, but there are many other places as well. So it's kind of coming -- for me, it kind of comes full circle of this, like, trying to source where the cotton came from, and where the history -- not just the history, but the humanity of the supply chain is because we separate those so readily, when in fact, they're so connected, and I think that that's what this exhibition is about, it's about connecting the humanity with the supply chain. So that's just sampling from the waistcoat that we just looked at. So that's me sampling, the thread that runs along. One of the other challenges that we had is we didn't know if we would -- how much material would be

needed to get representative data of isotope analysis, so we ended up doing a lot of pilot tests with contemporary cotton that we just purchased in stores, specifically cotton that we know came from Texas, South Carolina, and Georgia, as well as some historical samples of like extra lace that had been left behind by somebody that didn't, you know, that comes from the probably the turn of the century, maybe the late 19th century. So we ran those through isotope analysis first to see how much material we needed to get something representative, and we were so lucky that it ended up being just one milligram of material, because if it was much more than that, it would have been considered really unethical to take that much material out of a historical garment. So then the samples basically are sent to the lab in these little tubes, where they are washed with a -- do I have a picture of that? No. They're washed with a combination of chloroform and methanol, just to make sure that what we're testing is really what is in the material, and not anything extra that was accumulated over time. And then it's run through a GCMS, so gas chromatography mass spectrometry. Basically what happens is, the material is combusted at a very, very high temperature, so that it breaks apart into its multiple elements and then gets caught into a tube that is -- that basically can then measure the mass of each element, so that's the initial process. Then each element, so the elements we tested is are carbon, oxygen and hydrogen. So that's the first part, but then you, in order to do isotope analysis, you need to break down that even further so that you can measure each the number of isotopes per element, and this is going to tell you where the garment came from because plant materials and animals and anything organic that is living will have accumulated over its lifetime, a number of analysis from these elements based on where they live. So for example, for a cotton plant, depending on the water cycles around it, it will have accumulated a certain level of each isotope, of each elemental isotopes, and then you can it kind of ends up being a like a fingerprint of that type of plant growing in that region. So one of the aspects of this work that is a bit challenging, especially considering historical garments, or historical anything, is that with environmental changes, these can -- this can change over time, and it depends a lot on how much material you've accumulated, because what you need to be able to do is to compare that data with other existing material. So the more cotton isotope analysis we have done, the more specific we can be about where the cotton came from. So this is really just the tip of the iceberg. So there is a lot of cotton analysis that's been done that is contemporary, so that's really useful to us, but there isn't all that much historical cotton, and so I'm kind of curious, as an aside, I'm kind of curious to see, you know, if there's this much differentiation, and if we can do this work on multitudes of garments, can we just specify more and more, the cotton supply chain? And I -- right now, I'm kind of thinking about it in this very analytical, very kind of -- not objective. That's not the right word -- but like the thinking about it this way seems to remove the humanity from it, and I think that that's something that is useful sometimes, like in science, for example, like people tried to do that. I don't think personally, I don't think that it's really possible, but the idea is to really be objective about the information that you're getting, but if you're only looking at it that way, if you're only looking at it extrapolated, or taken away from the humanity of what that -- of that supply chain, you're really just looking at data, and it's not going to be meaningful to anybody, and the way that this becomes meaningful, is through an exhibition, for example, or some other art form, some other media where this information can just bolster the stories that have been told, and that are still being told, so I hope I'm making sense, but this has been kind of my point of view in this project has been to try to be like a bridge between the stories we're trying to tell, the ways in which they impact people's lives today, and then also just this very sciency, kind of, you know, removed thing that we always consider science to be so removed from us, but it can be really a useful tool, if it's then kind of put in

a context, I suppose, and I think that that's what we've done in this exhibition is put this very sciency thing into a context that makes it really meaningful. Anyway, I think that's -- I hope I didn't go over time.

Jason Cyrus: Anne-Marie, as you said, what's important is that the science gets put into context, and we have tested the garments in the cotton garments that are in the exhibition, and we've been working with the isotope lab since I would say, was it early spring? Early summer?

Anne-Marie Guérin: We contacted them right at the beginning, like in February.

Anne-Marie Guérin: I just want to do a shout out to Evelyn Leduc also, who was like the person who made everything happen in the lab, so I just want to mention that.

Jason Cyrus: In February, right. So we -- this -- so then the testing process wrapped up, you know, in early September, so the raw data has been generated, and we are waiting on Dr. Dan Layton-Matthews, who is the Associate Professor at Queen's University and co-director of the Facility for Isotope Research. He's one of the very few people who has the expertise to interpret the data and the combinations of isotopic elements that are is generated in the output, who can really interpret this and be able to tell us based on those findings, where is the cotton coming from? So you are just as on the edge of your seat as we are, as we are waiting for the results to be announced, and we will layer those into the physical exhibition and put them up online as well. But --

Anne-Marie Guérin: I just want to do a shout out to Evelyn Leduc also, who was like the person who made everything happen in the lab, so I just want to mention that.

Jason Cyrus: Hi, Evelyn, if you're here. We love you, thank you. A very key -- a very important component of the exhibition is not just a combination of historical research, but the use of contemporary art to bring these lenses together in conjunction with the science and the conservation, to be able to tell the story of the humanity that is the foundation of the cotton chain. I cannot tell you how excited I am to have Anna Kesson share about her book Black Bodies White Gold, that it was so interesting for us to be working on our separate projects and then to realize the synergies that exist within. So Anna, please give us an overview of the book before we chat about the connections that there are. Thank you.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Thank you, all. I'm just going to share my screen. So first of all, I want to say a huge thank you and congratulations to Jason and Anne-Marie for an amazing exhibition. I haven't seen it, unfortunately, but I've seen it online. And, you know, for us academics who are sort of stuck away from the world at times, it's just amazing to see how, you know, how your work is in synergy with other professionals and with other people who are thinking in a similar way, and I have to say, you know, this is my first book, and it also just made me feel like oh, I'm not completely crazy, you know? Someone else is thinking this way. Because I think in fields like art history sometimes, this sort of transnational transhistorical framework is sometimes hard to sustain, and hard to create just because of the limitations of disciplines, and maybe that's something we'll talk about later. I do also want to acknowledge that I wrote this book, I researched for it, I'm talking to you about it from unceded land. I'm here in Princeton, and I'm sitting on the unceded territory of

the Lenape people, and I just want to acknowledge elders past, present, and future, and I think talking about cotton, you know, we have to start, as Jason said, with land, and with that those processes of genocide, of clearance, and of transatlantic slavery, to really understand the continued implications of these visual and material histories today. And so my work and my book, really, I think, does what Jason sort of ended his presentation with, by saying, you know, what is it or where do ways of seeing come from? And as an art historian, and I think as, as a former health professional, that's really what shapes everything I do, my teaching and my research. How is it that we see the way we do? How is it that seeing influences the way we value and relate to others? And how can we dismantle and redesign those frameworks, and so the book also came from the work of contemporary artists, and I'll sort of unpack that as I go, but I wanted to start with this work by Hank Willis Thomas, who I'm sure many of you know. He's based in New York. It's called Black Hands, White Cotton, and it I think, visualizes and materializes, that those sort of intimate histories that I'm dealing with, which is the history of the cotton trade and the history of the slave trade, and my, what I really kind of focus on is the ways that Blackness is visually constructed the way that Blackness is formed, and for me, that starting point, in terms of cotton and slavery is the economic relationship between the commodity of cotton and the commodity, or the commodification of enslaved African people who are brought to the Americas, the Caribbean, the US, Canada, too. And so I kind of take that from Frederick Douglas, who in a lecture to abolitionists in London, said when the price of cotton goes up, so does the value of an enslaved person, and I think Thomas's image here, really helps us to visualize that economic logic, right? -- to also -- rather to visualize the ways -- the way that an economic relationship can become a visual framework, and I suppose that's really what I'm trying to do throughout the book is really emphasize how this sort of economic logic has influenced and continues to shape ways of seeing. I think another aspect of this intersection of economics and visuality in the production of blackness through the cotton trade is the way that cotton connected different people in different places, and I think that, you know, this is something that comes out in sort of global histories or popular advertisements that cotton is a kind of fabric that connects but what I think what is missed in those histories is often, as Jason and Anne-Marie highlighted, the humanity, like the lived experiences of people who are and continue to be embedded in these global exploit systems of exploitation and oppression. And I was particularly -- I work in my book and, you know, this is, -- I work with a -- the artistic oeuvre of Lubaina Himid, who's someone I greatly admire and has been very generous to me in kind of helping me frame my research, and this is a work called cotton.com with which she -- in which she is exploring materializing the relationship that cotton created between enslaved people in the U.S. South and cotton factory operatives in Manchester, England, and so she creates these canvases which are in black and white, so symbolizing that intersection. They're on cotton. They're -- she's imitated cotton textile pattern books from the 19th century, and she's also kind of used them to sort of imagine a kind of communication, right? -- between -- so cotton as a form of communication. They're also referencing letters sent by Lancashire cotton workers to Abraham Lincoln in support of emancipation, so she's sort of created -- visualizing that network, but above the paintings, you will see a brass plaque, and I think -- oh, I must have -- no, I'm sorry. I took out the text, but it says he said, I looked like a painting by Mario [phonetic] because I was balancing a water jug on my -- a water carrier on my head, and so she's quoting something from a tourist or a travel narrative of Frederick Elmstead, the architect who visited plantations in the 1850s, where he's describing seeing a young woman walking to the cotton fields with water for the enslaved cotton workers there, and this woman is describing her abstraction into an image, right? It's -- she's describing her

aestheticization and so I think what's wonderful about Himid's work, is she's showing how cotton connects, but also visualizing that economic relationship of commodification and objectification that cotton mediated in the construction of Blackness, and so using Himid's work, I look at -- I talk about the textiles that were actually used to clothe enslaved people, textiles that travelled. And at the top, you'll see an image of what was called negro cloth, cloth that was made in Rhode Island, in Massachusetts, and it was also made in -- versions of this were made in the UK and sent to the Caribbean, but these are made in the north of the U.S. and sent to the U.S. South to clothe enslaved people. And then in the bottom, you'll see textile samples that were -- that are striped that were used in the trade in enslaved people from the west coast of Africa, and but were also called fancy cloth, because they looked -- they were brighter. They were patterned. And these were often the kinds of textiles that were used to clothe enslaved people on the auction block, and so that kind of rough coarse cloth used on the plantations is really a kind of regulatory uniform. It's coarseness and, you know, it was made to look as coarse and ugly and, you know, and uninteresting as possible. On the other hand, fancy cloth was sort of meant to emphasize the value of enslaved people on the auction blocks, so they're doing these two different things but, you know, they're connecting different places and different people, and they're continuing to do that work of, you know, materializing that kind of economic logic of commodification. And in sort of conversation with these works, I also talk or look at the writings of enslaved people in which -- this is Harriet Jacobs's Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, you know, and she talks about hating wearing these clothing, this cloth. She talks about how it hurts and it's itchy and there are a lot of different kinds of descriptions like that and so I see those sorts of interventions by enslaved people as a way of refusing that objectification or refusing the object as Fred Moten describes it, and then this is a painting by Edward Mitchell Bannister, who's also from Canada, and it's the only work I've seen by a Black artist in the 19th century that may, may be referencing the cotton trade. One of his patrons was a mill owner in Rhode Island so, you know, he may have been once upon a time -- this is made after the Civil War, but it's quite possible that this family, you know, owned a mill in which cotton was made that was sent to the South, and here, I think, you know, there's a kind of way that this painting -- we might talk about it as a way of evoking that memory of slavery as it's embedded in the landscape of the U.S. North after slavery So again, you know, these are just, you know, ways of trying to disassemble that visual -- of that visual relationship, which I call a speculative vision. So what I argue is that cotton frames a way of seeing Blackness that is all about the potential for profit as under slavery, and then after the end of the Civil War, it becomes about the potential of Black people to be productive citizens, so in both instances, however, what cotton is kind of framing or mediating is a way of seeing Blackness, or a way of seeing Black people in which Black people continually have to prove their value, and I would argue this is something that continues today and is perhaps most powerfully highlighted in the phrase, Black Lives Matter, whose lives matter, whose lives have to be continually shown to matter, and so in this, these are some other images that are other works that I look at, so this is photographs of African-Americans working with cotton post -- during and after the Civil War, and I kind of make the connection that, you know, cotton here -- there's a sense in which following slavery, formerly enslaved African-Americans have to kind of prove how they can become refined into free, productive citizens, and so there's a kind of, again, that visual relationship is being used to under -- to frame meanings of Blackness. I think that this relationship between vision, between labour and value is implicitly also evoked in the work these kind of canonical works by Winslow Homer and Edgar Degas, and I've included this small image of an enslaved person being valued on the slave -- in an auction, because I think you can see, right? -- this similarity in the ways

that cotton is being valued, right? -- in Degas's painting, that classing with the way an enslaved person is being valued on that, and so this is the kind of thing I'm trying to -- that's the kind of material relationship, but I think that's another -- I think there's an ideological relationship there that I'm trying to kind of just talk about and visualize, right? -- through my research, and so I think, what I do here is also talk about how we might see in these white artists' paintings, right? -- they are also asking their viewers to visually assess their work, and this -- we can take this further because both Homer and Degas were painting these works specifically for cotton merchants, right? They wanted this work to sell. They needed to make money. We don't often want to talk about that in art history but, you know, these were works that they were -- they understood that these were works -- these were commodities. Their labour was also being commodified in a certain way, and so I think it's interesting that they use cotton, and the implicit or explicit relationship between cotton and Blackness to also kind of mediate their own anxieties as white men, white artists in the Reconstruction era. And then, kind of again, to sort of try to highlight another way of valuing labour, another way of valuing Blackness, I talk very briefly about several artists who returned to the plantation not as a site of this kind of commodification or this kind of speculative vision, but they create another kind of speculative vision in which, you know, Black labour, Black life becomes a site of community formation. It becomes a site of kinship, and so this is a work by Clementine Hunter, a self-taught artists from New Orleans who, you know, lived and grew up on -- was born and grew up on a cotton plantation, and her paintings really focussed on her experiences and her family's experiences of working on the plantation. And then I kind of end with the work of Yinka Shonibare and the ways in which West Africa or Africa in general kind of becomes a new kind of plantation for the -- in the minds of the -- of U.S. and British manufacturers at the end of the 19th and early 20th century. When I say a new kind of plantation, I mean, there's a renewed interest in growing cotton in plantations in West Africa, and there's also a renewed interest in West African consumerism, so West African communities as new markets for American and British cotton production, and what I kind of try and do is use Yinka Shonibare's work in, you know, where he's -- this is called Scramble for Africa, you know, in which he's sort of really punning on and I think materializing the speculative project of colonialism but also allowing us to speculate on other kinds of intimacies, right? -- that cotton might have created between West African consumers and the South and Southeast Asian -- many Southeast Asian traders that they were working with, you know, that they -- and so the ways that, you know, cotton might help us imagine other kinds of alliances and intimacies that are perhaps, that are also embedded in these colonial networks, and this is Agostino Brunias's painting of a market scene in Dominica in the late 18th century that I think is an interesting correlation to Shonibare's work, in terms of the movement of cotton and the kinds of connections it creates. And then I, you know, I think, again, as Jason and Anne-Marie have highlighted, you know, this work is not -- it's not just about the history, it's about its continued implications, and this is a -- when I was -- as I was writing the book, I heard about this man at Yale who worked in the dining room, dining hall, have one of the colleges that I actually used to be a fellow at, and he smashed a stained glass window of these two cotton pickers, and I think that what, you know, you can read about it. We can talk about it later. But what Corey Menafee did, I think, was such an important act of decolonization, of disassembling that I think we're trying to do here, right? But he's -- but one of the things he said was, he did that, because he didn't think it was right, that anyone could had to come to work every day, and see these pictures, see these images and work under them, and so I think, you know, for me, I think that's really what I want to do. Sort of, you know, in this -- and I think

that's what these artists are asking us to do, right? -- to disassemble, to break down these visual frameworks in order to reassemble new futures of care and collaboration and equality.

Jason Cyrus: Well, thank you. I selfishly want to just hear you talk for the rest of the time, but I know that wouldn't be fair. What I think I'm so impacted by as you've chatted, and as you've spoken, Anne-Marie too, as you've shared your own thoughts is how we keep coming back to the humanity that's the core of the cotton trade. A very basic question I think was posed to me quite recently was, why is that important? And why is it important to connect cotton to the way we live now, and what relevance does it have? And I'd like to pose that to both of you but I can say for my own self, just looking at our the way that in a sense working across conservation, curation, art historical research and teaching as well, the way that the three of us normally our fields are very siloed. We're -- they're kept quite separate. As somebody who studies fashion history and dress history, the history of textiles and trade, that focus on the materiality of garments, their constructions, the raw materials, the importance of a garment to its wearer, whether, you know, it would have been something worn at a wedding, or it would have been something used as a trade item. There's so much emphasis on that aspect of things, and yet to somebody who is racialized, I know how important the study of slavery and the study of enslavement, and extraction and land and Indigenous history is also incredibly important to the way that the other history that's come about, but very rarely they're brought together, and one of the and why I think we wanted to have a focus on this exhibition is to break down the silos and share in a way that we can collaborate across together, and have a way of relooking again at the humanity and reason why humanity is important, because we cannot understand who we are now, unless you understand where we've come. The ways that we see each other and the way that Blackness is policed now, and the way that there's so much systemic oppression, is connected to the very cotton trade during the -- I mean, slavery was happening, obviously, before the 1800s, but it's that period where slavery and the colonial project, and the inventions with the cotton gin and roller printing machine, and the political things of the abolition of slavery, and the Civil War, and many other -- and as you mentioned, like this whole parallel histories, the Caribbean. Its Southeast Asia. It's The States. A lot of the what's happening during that time joins the commercial element of things, and it becomes now part of a capitalist push that therefore then economically entrenches the systemic oppressions that you're seeing, but they actually therefore them become systemic. That's when you see wealth concentrating down much more in the UK. The Anthropocene obviously, then becomes a part of this conversation, because the mills are pumping lead into the atmosphere. You're looking at coal being taken from the earth and, you know, in ways that's environmentally detrimental. There's so many ways that you can layer this on but, you know, also the largest amount of Black -- of Africans are being trafficked across the ocean during this time as well, and it becomes part of economic system, in addition to cultural and a political one, and that way of seeing Blackness as something to be policed as an economic cog as something that is just, as Anna, as you just shared in those images. You know, you're evaluating the Black body, the way that you're looking at the quality of the cotton fibre, in the way that you are evaluating a ship, and the way that it should be enlarged to take more people and goods. That way of seeing has not left us because it becomes entrenched economically and in our structure, socially, that has led us to this system of seeing Blackness and marginalization as something to be controlled, which leads us to a long history of incarceration. And what I think is so important about restoring the humanity, is that this this allow us to break down these silos but allows us to ask highly personal questions, I think. I asked, I think it's important for me to know

when I go through the world, when encounter conversations or whether I receive reactions, where that's coming from and how they all come together? So Anne-Marie, perhaps I could ask you. I can give Anna some time to catch her breath as well, but in what ways is it important for you to, you know, bring the conservation, the science together with restoring the humanity in your own field?

Anne-Marie Guérin: Oh, well, I mean, at the risk of sounding really basic, I feel like it's just -- if we're not doing that, then what are we doing? Like what's the point? And I know that you're asking kind of more specifically but if we're not here to make -- I guess, to understand ourselves, and to understand where, like for myself, my own colonial mindset comes from and my own interactions and like all the things that make me feel uncomfortable. If I'm not here to try to understand that, then what am I even -- what am I doing? Like, what -- what's the point? Like so I think that the only way that we can, I guess, make better systems that work better, and that make people happier in general is by looking at where are we now? Why are we here? Exactly like you were saying, we -- I think that there's this -- there's a reason that science and academia even, and so many -- with all the structures that we live in, right now, there's a reason why there are -- they are siloed. There's a reason that we are taught that we have this discipline, and that we are experts here, and that we shouldn't talk to that other person over there because that might cause some discomfort, or, you know, and I think that's what's really important to break down is to like -- I mean, everything is connected, if we look at the economy, the supply chain. You can't talk about these materials and how even like, the clothing we're wearing now, we can't -- we're not separate from the materiality. We're not separate from the supply chain, and we're -- yeah, I don't know if I'm making a lot of sense but, you know, bringing the humanity into conservation is -- I think that like, also I was taught in my -- in the way that I was taught about conservation, that ethics are really, really important. It's not just about, you know, like, gluing things back together, and like, you know, here we are, here's the thing, and it was never broken, ha ha. And we were taught, really, to think about why this object is even on our desk, you know? It's on our desk because it was collected at some point, in some way. Sometimes we know how. Sometimes we don't. Sometimes it was in a really cruel way, and you can't -- you know, you have to ask yourself the question, why is this here? And why am I given the authority to have any kind of intervention with the subject? And that, you know, bringing back the humanity into science, like that's, well, I mean, sometimes it's not there, but anyway, I think that I kind of made my point, but I'm sorry, about, like the craziness.

Jason Cyrus: No, you -- no, that's a huge selling point to the sense, we have an ethical responsibility with the content that we care for and look at, to tell inclusive stories, to care for that content because we know it can be used in powerful ways, both to harm and to heal, and I think you're doing exactly that with the conservation and the testing. Anna, for you, in terms of your own lens, why would you say -- why was the humanity so important to the lens of his book?

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Thank you. Well, I mean, I agree with everything that you all said. I think on a personal level, you know, as I said in my talk, as a nurse, I saw actually in very granular material detail, right? -- how these kinds of these legacies of slavery, of colonialism, like how they physically continue to have an impact on the health and the lives and the livingness of people as well as just the way people are treated and have access, and so I think, to me, any kind of structural sort of analysis that I can do, and that's actually why I moved into the humanities, you know? -- why I left nursing, because I wanted to be able to start thinking on a structural level to rather than just having,

you know, just felt like the kind of the individual everyday sort of work I was doing was not -- individualized, everyday work I was doing was not actually doing very much in the end, but I thought any kind of structural analysis that we do has to have -- has to then have an impact on lived experience, and I think that, you know, visuality and how we see, it's so unconscious, I mean, in the sense that, you know, as a sensory experience, right? We need vision all the time, and I think sometimes that makes us forget that the way we think and the way we see and how seeing affects what we do does, you know, doesn't have that kind of connection to broader histories, and so for me, that's why I think the story -- this centralizing the material effects and the materialities of enslaved communities, of black communities, of communities who actually say, you know, oppressed, or who sustain the racial capitalism that we live in now, is really key, but I think also just, you know, as an academic, we really need to make these histories the centre of the humanities, because, you know, we all have to learn about, I mean, I don't know what -- [inaudible] you have to learn about, you know, their Western canon but –

Jason Cyrus: Yes.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: I don't know -- that we don't necessarily have to learn about these other histories that sustained it, unless you're doing African-American art or South Asian or Black diaspora, right? So –

Jason Cyrus: Exactly, exactly.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: I think for me, it's also about reorientating that framework.

Jason Cyrus: That's such a good point, and what I think is -- has -- it's hard to do often in that work is to find read material that is in service of that point, where because this lens is not a normative one. Sometimes you have to get creative with archives. You have to find, as I mean, as we're doing right now, collaborating across different areas, across different disciplines, and especially, and I'll speak from my own experience, looking into the history of these enslaved individuals that I can help bring up so you don't have to see my mug, again, just the tintypes here, but in that sense, so many of their names are unknown. There's so much unknown that you don't -- that you would love to know more of and that art is lost to whether that be in archival keeping, whether that be a knowledge creation, or in oral history stories, folks who would have kept the knowledge themselves have since passed on, and what I love, I think of the way that I'm just going to show some of the tintypes, some of the folks, that I'd like to refer to now is, for me, I know I struggled a lot with trying to find a way to fill a lot of the gaps within the archive, and bringing together in a way, these different histories or I would say, material that's sometimes spread apart, different archives and different collections, which speaks exactly to the siloing that we've been chatting about where, for example, the Ontario archives, you know, has this beautiful collection of photographs. Some stories, we know. Some stories, we don't know,. Whereas Queen's University will have the we have the rare book library, will have, you know, the North-Side View of Slavery, where we have the first-hand accounts of folks, and then in terms of specifically to my own way of seeing, the clothing, sometimes I wonder why is it we don't have the clothing of enslaved people, formerly enslaved people, or people who are born free? Archives generally preserve the, you know, the rarest, most well-constructed, you know, couture, the clothing that generally represents white wealth. Clothing of the working person, of just

regular folks, it's quite rare and becoming harder to find, that we thankfully, I think the way of shifting and collecting has changed and but by and large when we look at the 1800s, it's your -- it's easier to find, you know, beautiful worth dresses, which were ridiculously expensive and quite a sign of status, than it is to find a gown, for example, that would have been worn by this woman in the third tintype over here. So what I think sometimes I've been trying to pilot on this exhibition in this way of, I guess, bringing things together that are related, but related as this way of bringing all these stories together and see if we can see like a whole -- something that's more whole or balanced. So we don't know her need yet. We don't know where she's from yet, but we know that this photograph was taken in Toronto, and based on the time that she'd been settled in Canada, or being in Canada, she would either have to come through the Underground Railroad or she would have been born free, but by pairing it with, or, for example, we have these folks over here, where, you know, you can see the garments they're wearing, and by pairing that with garments like these from the Agnes's collection, of which we don't know their history -- these could have been donated. We're not sure. But by pairing the garments with the photographs with the actual accounts of people in the North-Side View of Slavery, it's hopefully I -- my wish is that when people walk through the gallery and you look at the exhibition, they can in a sense try to imagine what an archive holding all these stories together would look like, and at the core of it will be to, as we keep harping on over and over again, to restore the humanity of these folks, to be able to then ask questions of archives and be able to then do other research to see, okay, well, where would that clothing have been? Who would have kept that clothing? Where would it have been? And how can we bring these all together so that we don't just stand back and say, well, we don't know so much, but we try to use a combination of research and imagining, and collaboration, bring these stories together, so we're starting to see a more full picture of what these histories are. Anne-Marie, I'll put this out to both of you. I don't want to be too formal, because I don't want to run out of time, but and Anna, as well, was there some way of looking at the archives that you had to be more creative with or non-normative with to be able to tell the story?

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Yeah, that's a great question. And I think you've -- I mean, you've got the main points there perfectly. Yes, I think that, for me, it was really trying to find a way of working with what wasn't -- well, not what wasn't in the archives, but what was absent, and I think that sense of absence is an important place to start from, so I think you'd mentioned earlier, you know, the kind of trauma of just seeing names in a ledger or not even names. I mean, in my case, it was the names and measurements, you know, or descriptions of enslaved people working on plantations, kind of abstracted down to their job, so a field hand or a hoe or, you know, because they were out there furrowing. You know, so I think -- and I was really influenced by Saidiya Hartman, who talks about working from this space of loss, without re-traumatizing those -- or without reenacting that trauma. So I was -- I think that's where contemporary artists really helped me to think about different ways into that space, not in order to cover up the space or fill it, because I don't think that's what we're trying to do, but actually to speculate to that -- use the archive, you know, to, as you say, to materialize these other positionalities, other histories, but also to just, I think, to sit with that loss and remind ourselves of what that loss means for us now as well.

Jason Cyrus: Anne-Marie, for yourself?

Anne-Marie Guérin: Yeah. Well, I mean, I think that that's one of the ways in which institutions or systems, I guess, for lack of a better word, create barriers for important stories to be told, especially stories where there is absence, because one really common, I guess, thing to say, or to think, as well, we don't know so we're not going to talk about it, because there just isn't enough information. And that that comes from a very like -- I mean, I'm sure part of that is like, again, trying to protect ourselves from places where we might feel uncomfortable because we have to confront some things that we're not -- we don't like, you know? But I think it's just this really easy mechanism of saying, well, because these things don't exist, well, we're just not -- we're not going to talk about it, so I think it's really important actually, to -- yeah, like reposition our way of thinking about these archives that might be lacking in information. And first of all, you know, maybe that's not forever. Maybe it's just that there hasn't been a lot of research done, you know, to like, find these stories, and secondly, even if there isn't the material, the physical material there, there is a way to tell these stories, and maybe that is through art, contemporary art, maybe that is through reimagining the archive and, you know, even if, for example, the clothing in the Agnes that you mentioned, in reference to the tintypes, even if they were worn by white people, and we figure that out, at some point, it doesn't take away from that the show and the gallery saying why aren't these things possible? Like why don't we -- why can't we imagine these things as being true? So I think it's another opportunity for various different disciplines to come together and talk about these gaps in our minds, in our mindsets, in our ways of thinking about things. Yeah.

Jason Cyrus: And I so agree, just especially if you're referencing these gaps in archives, and you're just trying to [inaudible] contemporary art. I think one of the beauties of the time we live in is how artists are so uniquely positioned to be a wider voice of pain, of story, of history, of experience, and in the ways that they can bring us together, they can divide us, they can challenge us, they can entangle us, and one of the things that when I was reading Anna's book, Anne-Marie and I were chatting this year as well, that we loved all the synergies between Black Bodies, White Gold, and History is Rarely Black or White is the way that the contemporary art featured in both projects, makes clear the ways that the structures around the cotton supply chain and the cotton trade and enslavement, and as you saw articulately said, framed Blackness, as we really tried to show in the last gallery, effect the way that we see Blackness today, so I know, I don't want to run too much over time. We have but eight minutes left or so, but I'm wondering, Anna, can you share a bit more of that -- of your colleague at Yale, who worked in the -- is it the dining hall? -- and just I just was so fascinated by that story and the stained glass window, and perhaps Anne-Marie and I could pick one work from the contemporary art, from the contemporary section and speak to it, but I selfishly want to hear about that story a bit more.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Yeah, sure. I'd love to and actually speaking of contemporary art, I just want to shout out Jocelyn Gardner who's joining us. And I mean, certainly, she's one of the artists who, whose work has, again helped me think about these archives, their absences, but also the ways that enslaved communities were actively resisting, and reformatting, right? -- ways of seeing, and I think that's something that I found really powerful with Corey, with what Corey did. So Corey was a dining room -- dining hall worker at a college graduate -- an undergraduate college at Yale called -- formerly called Calhoun, named after the plantation owner and statesman in the South. Now, it's called Grace Hopper College, thankfully. And I was another grad student at Yale. I was a fellow of this college, so I would eat in the dining rooms, and I -- the stained glass windows are up

there, so he -- I'd never noticed it, which is to my shame, and what he did was like one -- I think one day, he just stood up on a table and smashed the stained glass window with a broom, and then, you know, he was -- I think he resigned and then he was reinstated, but it really brought so many of these questions out, you know, to the -- into the public for Yale community, for the Yale community and wider community But it was just -- you know, he was -- I think what he was saying is like these images, the -- you know, because they're not just images, right? They tell stories. They're telling histories, and they're telling us, I mean, they're telling us worldviews. They're telling us ways of seeing, so he was just really highlighting the kind of the psychological, physical effects of this kind of -- of these images, of these histories, because they continue to shape, right? -- how people see each other, and one of my colleagues, Eddie Glaude, who's the chair of our department, he talks about this idea of the value gap, and essentially, you know, what he's arguing -- and I think it's absolutely correct is that in the United States anyway, you know, certain lives are valued more than others. White lives are valued more than black lives, and that's -- and that can be seen in a whole range of structural processes, and so I think, you know, that's, for me, that's really where -- what Corey's act highlighted, you know? How that kind of valuation continues and how it affects the everyday life of people, but also, for me, it's sort of this is why it matters to look at these histories and untangle them and deconstruct them, not simply to reiterate them, but because unless we historicize, what's happening now, we're not going to be able to, I think, redesign our future, so you know, redesign the value gap for a better way of putting it

Jason Cyrus: Or smash it to smithereens.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Exactly. Smash it, smash it all and rebuild it. Yeah.

Jason Cyrus: The work you're -- even the core of what you're saying recalls to me, I work in the exhibition called Freed by Karen Jones, and I'm just going to share it very quickly. This is installationbased, just with cotton here, and it encircles a wedding dress from 1893, and just as you were chatting with Corey, I just immediately Karen's work came to mind, and it's a sense of I mean, like I said, like I study and look at dress history so often as part of my vocation and my research, but what I love that Karen's work does here, that it shows that we literally cannot see the materiality, the beauty of this garment, and its social and cultural portrait without acknowledging the raw material and the labour in the way that she's layered the cotton into here together, and to see one, you must see the other. They are inextricably linked, and we -- that's so much a part of our lens and in our lens now. I want to also thank Kristin Moriah -- I'm not sure if she's on this, on our chat today -- for connecting us, and I and Anne-Marie, and any final thoughts before we wrap up today? Anything anyone want to share that we didn't get to? It'll be run through things even though we're over time, but.

Anne-Marie Guérin: I just wanted to make a comment about Corey Menafee's work. I want to call it work, because it was an intervention, yeah. It's an intervention, right?

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Yeah, intervention. Yeah, exactly.

Anne-Marie Guérin: Yeah, and I just -- it really sparked something in me to hear that because there's been a lot of conversation in conservation circles about what do we do in instances of

intervention like this, because a lot of the time we'll be like -- we will have bosses whose -- who will want to, you know, fix this stained glass and remake it and put it back where it was and pretend like nothing ever happened, and those ideas are being challenged in conservation, and they have been, I don't know, not for very long, but they have been, and I just wanted to kind of point out this idea of treating -- of like, I guess, this institution, this conservation, and how our role is not to bring things back to the way that they were. In this instance, Cory Menafee, his work is about what is going on today. It's about feelings, the humanity that is happening today, and that, conserving that, however that would be that we would. Well, for example, the way that it was shown on the slide is all broken. That is what our role is, like thinking about what we're preserving and for what purpose? And who's benefiting from that? Who -- and, you know, where are we putting the value? So anyway, it just made me think a lot about that, so.

Anna Arabindan-Kesson: Well actually I agree, absolutely. And actually the -- I think now the window as a broken pieces is how it's being held in the gallery. I put a couple of links there, but no, I think absolutely. That's exactly what we -- that's the ethics, I think, in what we do, and I wanted -- another thing I wanted to say is that when I saw the slide you [inaudible] Anne-Marie, when you were talking about how there's a sentence in the wall text, I think, that was saying something about cotton has a history or, you know -- and I just wanted to say one of the artists I do talk about, and I didn't mention in my presentation is Leonardo Drew, and he has almost the exact same phrase. He talks about cotton as a material with memory, and he made a piece called -- it's called Untitled #25, and it's just six foot bales of cotton stacked together, and I think that's, you know, the way it was amazing to see the way you were literally showing us these threads, these fibers, because that, you know, that's the kind of work I think, you know, we need to do to, to bring out these memories which are embedded in so many materials that, you know, that we work with and think about every day, so it was -- that was a really, I think, a wonderful metaphor or analogy that you were, you know, kind of evoking for us so.

Jason Cyrus: Well, folks, I know we are way over time, and we intended to have a little Q&A at the end, but I want to be respectful of everyone's time. The exhibition is on until the -- until March 20th at the Agnes. There's an exhibition website you can visit. Anna's book is available to Duke University Press. Well, more importantly, I hope this is a platform for further research, for further conversation, for further collaboration, and Anna and Anne-Marie, it's been a huge honour to chat with you both. We could do this for so many more hours you can tell, but thank you so much for chatting with me today and for sharing of your work.