

# SHIFTING THE CENTRE: ANTICOLONIAL WAYS OF SEEING

C U R A T E D B Y  
**ICF**

IN COLLABORATION WITH  
**iniva**

FROM  
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TO  
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STUART HALL LIBRARY  
16 JOHN ISLIP ST  
LONDON SW1P 4JU



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**SHIFTING THE CENTRE** is International Curators Forum's (ICF) archival activation project dedicated to excavating the radical observations, emancipatory dreams, and revolutionary practices of anticolonial thinkers to develop counter approaches by asking: *what kinds of ideas emerge when those resisting dominant forces are the protagonists of world history?*

The project locates connections between seemingly unrelated events, people, issues and objects as a way of rejecting a single vantage point from which to understand, tell and mobilise histories. Ultimately, it seeks to widen what dominant forces attempt to narrow: our vision, imagination, and the political possibilities available to us.

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Anticolonialism can be understood as a tradition of thought and action; a transnational counter-politics enacted by peoples resisting the material conditions, structural legacies and ideologies that normalise empire.

*Anticolonial Ways of Seeing* is the second iteration of ICF's **Shifting the Centre** project. It considers the concept of 'anticolonialism' as a framework that allows clear links to be drawn between racialisation and capitalism, between past and present-day injustices, and local and global political struggles. The exhibition asks: *is a contemporary anticolonial visual language possible? What are its concerns, reference points, and principles? What kinds of demands can it articulate? What sort of education can it provide? What histories does it draw from?*

For the exhibition, publications from Stuart Hall Library are placed into dialogue with a variety of materials found in iniva's archive collection to build a series of constellations. Each constellation draws purposefully tenuous links between ideas, themes, and artistic interventions to posit traces of a shared

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history that transcend time, place, and rigid notions of racial and national identity. The material on display - exhibition ephemera, photographs, video, texts, excerpts from publications that have underpinned **Shifting the Centre** - were selected to explore how seemingly disparate ideas, mediums, commitments and histories might come together to constitute a cohesive visual language.

Whether or not we are aware of it, any time we engage in the act of seeing (listening, reading, thinking, creating) we are drawing from epistemological traditions, ways of knowing and perceiving the world. The traditions we draw from determine how we interact with history, how we engage in politics, and relate to our surroundings. Following on from the **Shifting the Centre: Grenada as Reference** exhibition at Black Cultural Archives, **Anticolonial Ways of Seeing** is an invitation to consider the relationship between politics and aesthetics, between anticolonialism - as a tradition of thought and action - and the visual arts.