



– Institute's Colloquium –

Dr. Patricia C. Henderson

(Rhodes University)

Dancing Cloth as a membrane of the imagination in the art work of Mary Sibande

The paper places the art work of Mary Sibande, the acclaimed South African contemporary artist, in conversation with social theories of self-stylization and becoming. It explores the imagination, inversion, mimesis and desire in relation to possibilities for transcendence. A brief overview of Sibande's photographs of herself and casts of her body, clothed in elaborated domestic worker uniforms, and her more recent work, where she immerses herself in landscapes of unbridled and sometimes menacing forms is given. I argue that her early figures invert the invisible diminution of generations of domestic workers in South Africa, transforming her self-figuration and that of her ancestors into declarative, hyper-visibility and enlarged presence. The technology through which Sibande effects a sense of possibility and emergence concerns the qualities of cloth and its deployment. The paper's focus explores how cloth as putative skin becomes a membrane of the imagination through which the world is both ingested, given form, and invoked.

Wednesday, July 12th 2017

4-6 p.m.

Institute of Ethnology

Stuttstraße 21, Raum STU 105 (2.10)

Everybody is welcome!