

Terra Critica: Interdisciplinary Network for the Critical Humanities
&
Netherlands Research School for Gender Studies (NOG)
&
Critical Pathways (Utrecht University)

are excited to announce

two upcoming events with
Dr. Rizvana Bradley
(University of California, Berkeley)

Workshop

The Critique of Form: Anteaesthetics and Black Aesthetics

Friday, April 19, 2024 (14:00-17:00)

@ Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons

Lange Nieuwstraat 7, 3512PA Utrecht

Doing Gender Lecture

Flesh Before Body, Earth Before World

Monday, April 22, 2024 (15:15-17:00, Drift 25, 0.02)

The events build on Rizvana Bradley's new book *Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthetics and the Critique of Form* (Stanford University Press, October 2023). The book engages practices of aesthetics – broadly across painting, cinema, video installations and digital art – with the question which aesthetic forms are foundational to modernity and how these are deconstructed and challenged especially in Black art. Dr. Bradley's examination of form and *aesthetics* as anterior to – that is: as framing modern regimes of knowledge and worlding



Photo Credit: Cassidy DuHon

- closely resonates with Terra Critica's ongoing research on ways of unworking the modern, Enlightenment grammar of critique with its implied splits, such as nature/culture and subject/object. Bradley's book gives particular emphasis to Black aesthetics. The perception of aesthetics as providing deep framings of modernity is highly relevant to contemporary discussions, and her focus on critique of form has wide-ranging implications for challenging the hegemonic framework of CPC (capitalism-patriarchy-colonialism) and earthly matters of critical sustainability.

In conjunction, the workshop and the lecture will ask how art can demonstrate foundationally modern aesthetic forms and deconstruct them to move toward other imaginations of planetary cohabitation. As these events propose, unworking the grammars of modern onto-epistemology requires not only the arts and culture, which contribute to shifting the frameworks within which sustainability and planetary cohabitation can be approached, but also the collaboration of various research angles and disciplines. We cordially invite you to join us for both or for either of these upcoming events. For more details, please scroll down.

Registration for the workshop no later than Friday, March 29, 2024: info@terracritica.net

Registration for the Doing Gender Lecture no later than Monday, April 8, 2024: nog@uu.nl

Biography Rizvana Bradley

Rizvana Bradley is Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies and Affiliated Faculty in the History of Art and the Center for Race and Gender at the University of California, Berkeley, as well as the 2023-24 Terra Foundation Visiting Professorship for American Art at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Bradley's book, *Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthetics and the Critique of Form*, was published in 2023 by Stanford University Press. Her scholarly work has been published in *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary Criticism*, *Film Quarterly*, *Black Camera: An International Film Journal*, *Discourse: Journal for Theoretical Studies in Media and Culture*, *TDR: The Drama Review*, *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge*, and *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*. Her art criticism has also been published in *The Yale Review*, *Artforum*, *e-flux*, *Art in America*, and *Parkett*.

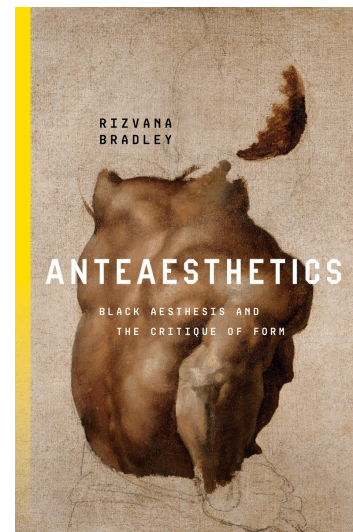
workshop

The Critique of Form: Anteaesthetics and Black Aesthetics

Friday, April 19, 2024

14.00-17.00 @ Casco Art Institute, Lange Nieuwstraat 7, 3512PA Utrecht

The workshop is inspired by Rizvana Bradley's book [*Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthetics and the Critique of Form*](#) (Stanford University Press, 2023). The book begins from the proposition that blackness cannot be represented in modernity's aesthetic regime, but is nevertheless foundational to every representation. Troubling the idea that the aesthetic is sheltered from the antiblack terror that lies just beyond its sanctuary, Bradley insists that blackness cannot make a home within the aesthetic, yet is held as its threshold and aporia. The book problematizes the phenomenological and ontological conceits that underwrite the visual, sensual, and abstract logics of modernity. In this workshop we want to explore this argument and ask what the critical purchase of her critique of form (modernity, art, aesthetics) can be in view of other imaginaries for planetary cohabitation.



The workshop strives to offer ample space for discussion to explicitly reflect on how the question of *anteaesthetics* relates to our own research projects. How does *anteaesthetics* address challenges in your work? What can we learn from such a conceptual framework in view of our own projects?

Preparation and participation

This workshop brings together interested faculty, PhD students and advanced RMA students. For a lively discussion during the workshop, all participants are asked to prepare the assigned readings in advance. The texts will be made available upon registration. Research Master students interested in obtaining ECTS (via Netherlands Research School of Gender Studies (NOG)) can contact the organizers (email info@terracritica.net).

Required Readings:

from *Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthetics and the Critique of Form* (2023):

- Introduction (pp. 1-45)
- Toward a Theory of Anteaesthetics (chapter 1) (pp. 53-104)

Rizvana Bradley/Denise Ferreira da Silva, "Four Theses on Aesthetics" in *e-flux Journal* #120 (available @ <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/120/416146/four-theses-on-aesthetics/>)

Doing Gender Lecture

"Flesh Before Body, Earth Before World"

Monday, April 22, 2024

15:15-17:00 @ Drift 25, room 0.02, Utrecht University

In the lecture, also drawing on her book *Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthetics and the Critique of Form* (Stanford University Press, 2023), Rizvana Bradley zooms in on a selection of works of art and reads the recent work of contemporary artist Sondra Perry to develop a critique of the metaphysical architecture of capitalist worlding, the phenomenological body-subject of worldly inhabitation, and their aesthetic reproduction in and through the logic of value. She argues that Perry's artwork demands a reckoning with transatlantic slavery, the corporeal order of the world it fashioned, and their mutual constitution of the ecocidal drive of global capitalism. Then, turning to Ed Roberson's poem, "To See the Earth Before the End of the World," Bradley shows how the phenomenological subject presumed by both the logic of value and the project of worlding cannot be disentangled from modernity's racially gendered imperative to cleave bodies from flesh and world from earth, thereby raising difficult but crucial questions regarding efforts to fashion social formations beyond the ecological catastrophe of capitalism.

Required Reading (for RMA GS students):

- "Unworlding, or the Involution of Value" in: *Anteaesthetics: Black Aesthetics and the Critique of Form* (2023) (chapter 5, pp. 281-315)