

Universidade do Porto
Faculdade de Belas Artes



Afrofuturism & the Present:

An (Auto)ethnographic journey to Walking interviews with Black Women Arts Practitioners in Porto

Claire Sivier
Supervisor: Sofia Ponte

Masters: Art & Design for the Public Space

Edition: 2018-2020

Contents page

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	6
A Dystopian Present	6
Positioning: Motivations & Reflexivity	8
Methodological Groundings:	11
Arts-based Research: An (Auto)ethnographic Approach	12
Afrofuturism	14
Intersectionality	16
Walking as method	19
1. Transatlantic to Porto: The State of things	22
Historical Cartographies of the Black Diaspora	22
A brief Portuguese Context	26
Experiencing Porto	29
2. Subjectivities of Space	32
Cartographies of the Self	33
Só de Noite	37
Purga	38
Flaneuse: Women Walking the City During Corona	41
3. Walking Interview Processes & Methods	44
Participant Recruitment	45
Interview Schedule	45
Interview Protocol	46
Interpretative Phenomenology Analysis (IPA)	47
Process of Analysis do walking interview	48
Qualitative Validity	49
4. Walking Acts of Subjectivity	51
Melissa: Transformation through time, place & searching for home	51
Desiree: Developing home and work through collectivity	53
Lola: Embodying the bigger picture	53
Reflections and Discussion	54
Conclusion Notes	56
Bibliographic References	59
Appendix	63

Acknowledgements

This investigation has been formed through a process of co-creation.

Through conversations with loved ones, peers, colleagues, strangers - four years of interactions, exchanges, being challenged, support with emotional upheaval, are all embedded within this text.

I would especially like to thank all of the incredibly giving women involved in this process, namely Desirée Desmarattes, Lola Rodrigues, and Melissa Rodrigues for placing their trust in me, for walking with me, sharing your stories, for embedding your presence in this work, and our future. For each woman involved in the projects developing this work, thank you.

Thank you to my supervisor Sofia Ponte, for providing a steady hand in what has been a challenging time for completing this investigation. The ability for me to be candid, open, and honest with the subjects I have explored has been essential - thanks for providing that space.

Thank you to my MADEP professors and colleagues - Cristiana, Fernanda, Juana, Rayan, Gisela, Titos Miguel, Gabriela and Jorge for the creative space and learnings

Thank you to Vijay, Tiago, Miguel, Bel, Sherida, Zinzi, Godo, Tian, Ninda, Uchenna, Rachel, Marianna, Paula, Melissa S, Hannah, and Dougie, InterStruct Collective - your words of encouragement, time, knowledge and support across these two years have been a driving force.

To my family, thanks for your continuous presence and support

To my future self, I hope you took a big nap after this.

Abstract

Afrofuturism and the Present is an Arts Based Research project that considers existing historical narratives brought together in Porto and addresses: how can we ground Afrofuturism in to a vernacular approach, to remap cartographies into reclaimed subjective frames of reference; to counter the erasure of black female voices; to address how this might influence the future of black women artists and their work in the city.

Through a series of three walking interviews, the research seeks to address the socio-spatial experiences of three black women art practitioners who have recently relocated to Porto through the performative act of walking. Working across visual, performance and video art these artists are connected historically through the diasporic transatlantic. How do their experiences, connected historically through the transatlantic slave trade, relate to European cities linked to this legacy today? This approach has been provided an opportunity for analysis of the intersections of black women's geographies from the diaspora through.

Through groundings in Afrofuturism and the framework of intersectionality, the work highlights the process of development through an (auto)ethnographic approach, and result in three individual stories documenting the interviews, combining images, audio, as well as individual maps created through GPS mapping of each route taken during the interview process. This chosen method of the walking interviews combines observations and semi-structured recorded interviews which aimed to create a collaborative process between interviewee/interviewer. The performative act of walking through the city together as two black women allow each artist to recall, examine and capture their own ideas of identity and mobility in Porto

Key Words:

Afrofuturism | walking interviews | black women | Porto city | arts based research | intersectionality

Resumo

Afrofuturism and the Present é um projeto de *Pesquisa Baseada nas Artes* (Arts Based Research - ABR) que considera narrativas existentes históricas reunidas na cidade do Porto e discorre sobre: como podemos fundamentar o Afrofuturismo numa abordagem vernacular, para remapear cartografias de referências subjetivas; para combater o desaparecimento de vozes femininas negras; para abordar como isso pode influenciar o futuro de artistas negras e seu trabalho na cidade.

Por meio de uma série de três entrevistas em formato de caminhada, a pesquisa busca abordar as experiências socioespaciais de três mulheres artistas negras que se mudaram recentemente para o Porto, através do ato performativo de caminhar.

Trabalhando com arte visual, performance e videoarte, essas artistas estão conectadas historicamente pela diáspora transatlântica.

Interroga-se, então: como essas experiências, conectadas historicamente através do comércio transatlântico de escravos, relacionam-se com cidades europeias ligadas a esse legado hoje?

Esta abordagem oferece uma oportunidade para a análise do cruzamento de geografias de mulheres negras daquela diáspora.

Usando como base o Afrofuturismo e as estrutura da interseccionalidade, o trabalho destaca o processo de desenvolvimento por meio de uma abordagem (auto) etnográfica, que resulta em três histórias individuais com entrevistas documentadas, combinando imagens, áudio, bem como mapas elaborados por meio de mapeamento GPS de cada rota percorrida durante o processo de entrevista.

Este método escolhido para as entrevistas em formato de caminhada combina observações e entrevistas semi-estruturadas gravadas, o que visa criar um processo colaborativo entre entrevistado / entrevistador.

O ato performativo de caminhar pela cidade, enquanto duas mulheres negras, permite que cada artista relembre, examine e capte as suas próprias ideias de identidade e mobilidade no Porto.

Introduction: A Dystopian Present

“The propensity to despair is strong, but should not be indulged. Sing yourself up. Imagine a world in which you might thrive, for which there is no evidence. And then fight for it.”

Gary Younge, 2020

Afrofuturism and the Present: An (Auto)ethnographic journey to Walking interviews with Black Women Arts Practitioners in Porto is an Arts Based Research (ABR) investigation that considers existing historical narratives brought together in Porto. Through a series of three walking interviews, and exploratory projects, this research addresses the socio-spatial experiences of black women art practitioners who have immigrated to Porto, working across visual art, performance, and music, these artists are connected historically through the transatlantic, what I'll later define as the *Black Atlantic*.

How can a historical identity relate to day to day experience in a city with a colonial background? As a black woman connected to the transatlantic diaspora, this central question is something I have always thought about, and negotiated in my day to day, having moved to Porto from London over two years ago. This thinking has expanded further when thinking about my connection to other women who share similar colonial histories. Porto, like many cities with a colonial legacy, is embedded with both material imagery and immaterial legacy making its past very much present and the attention of our bodies in the spaces means that ‘the theatre, the home, the streets, the school, the club, and the marketplace are now visible as spaces where people can be seen to have experienced modes of imperial and colonial power¹’. I think about how we, as black women, relate to each other, how this manifests in the city in which we live, and how we might take additional ownership of the stories connected to our historical legacy, and how this might impact our futures. Within the current global climate of 2020, these

¹ Ballantyne, Tony. Burton, Antoinette. (ed) *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History*. Duke University Press, 2005, p6

questions feel poignant. As I write this introduction, we all find ourselves within what feels like a dystopian period in human history: a global pandemic. Where the lives of many have been lost, social-spatial relations have changed dramatically, and movements such as Black Lives Matter² have manifested in cities globally. It's been a period of wondering about the future, and thinking about this present moment, and parallel narratives, and in this work, that parallel narrative could be read as Afrofuturism.

Based on all of these concerns and thought processes, through this research I further consider: how can an Afrofuturist and intersectional lens influence walking art practices? How can arts-based research methods such as walking help understand these experiences? And how can researching these spatial histories help us understand the present-day geographic organisation and how quickly has it changed? The research looks at how these approaches can or can not provide opportunities for reframing post-colonial historical narratives in Porto, counter erasure and imagine future possibilities. In addition, the research looks at how this may or may not affect artistic output, using Porto as a key example, within the European context. The research incorporates and considers the intersections of race, shifting identities, gender, post-colonial movements and cartographies within the present-day context of artistic production, and what they might mean in the present, through the lens of Afrofuturism.

(Auto)ethnography as an ABR method underpins the research to explore lived experiences of black women artists in Porto (phenomena), using walking art practices combined with qualitative data to generate an archive of experience. Through this research study I propose the performative act of walking and cultural aesthetic and philosophy of Afrofuturism allow for black women's subjective accounts, memories, to generate possibilities for counter-narratives. This chosen method of the walking interview combines observations and semi-structured recorded interviews which aimed to create a collaborative process between interviewee/interviewer, rather than a conventional face to face interview process. Interviews were carried out with Desirée Desmarattes, a German-Haitian artist who has lived in Portugal for three years. Desirée is an artist and researcher interested in colonial legacy that remains attached to different topographies with a focus on transnationalism and identity in visual and contemporary art. Lola Rodrigues, is a Brazilian musician, composer and curator who has been in Porto for two years. Lola co-founded DJ trio with two other black DJ's here, two Brazilians women, named Sound Preta, which intends to highlight the issues related to diaspora. Melissa Rodrigues, Cabo

² Whilst the Black Lives Matter movement existed well before the current pandemic, the death of African American George Floyd sparked global outcry and saw the challenging oppressive colonial legacies.

Verdean has been in Porto for six years, is a performer, art educator and activist working across several interdisciplinary projects relating to art, experimentation and activism.

I continue this introduction with my reflexive positioning investigation. The following section states my Methodological Groundings in (auto)ethnography (Art Based Research), Afrofuturism, and Intersectionality as a means of exploring the proposed methodology of walking as an artistic practice and method as a phenomenological tool can be used to create embodied, relational, and reflective of walking elicited memories for each woman. I also propose Afrofuturism is not only literary-based but can be theoretical, relational, sonic, performative, mapping, and archival practice.

Positioning: Motivations & Reflexivity

Conducting research is an active form of self-(re)creation, therefore it has been important to seek methods of research that best express the researcher's intentions and epistemological understanding, as a starting point to explore the aims outlined above. For that reason I begin by outlining my motivations for exploring this study, and how I have incorporated them into my reflexive positioning and the investigation as a whole.

When I first considered joining this masters programme back in late 2017, this was a time when my work and interests had begun to focus on the following: how we as people connect to our spaces, be it our physical homes, workplaces, social spaces etc; how they affect our mental health & wellbeing, socialisation and in some cases isolation; and how art/artists explore this within the communities in which we/they reside. I was particularly interested in the comparisons between rural and urban spaces, and how those from marginalised backgrounds experience these spaces. Furthermore, coming from a Caribbean migrant family myself, and growing up in a post-colonist country, I saw and felt strong parallels (and differences) between the UK and Portugal and this was something I hoped to explore. At the time, I was also exploring programmes focusing on Social and Cultural Anthropology, both in London and in Lisbon, with one course in particular at the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa. Although I now realise in hindsight, my leaning towards an arts based programme was an attempt to lean in to the artistic practices I had often been employed to frame as a producer, moving in to arts based practice felt like the right path in order to creatively explore a particular social phenomena drawing on artistic modes.

As an Arts & Cultural Producer, much of my work has focused on music, and large-scale performances, festivals and theatre through public funded projects and I have always done my best to ensure projects are accessible, anti-racist, open, and subsidised. However, it was my producer role with Dance artist Zinzi Minott back in 2017³ which initially sparked this process and research as it allowed me to reflect upon the realm of the Producer-Artist relationship and the process of developing artistic work, but in particular the relationship to this work, gender, and blackness.

Due to the nature of the public funding process in the UK, much of the work created often requires a quantitative evaluation or monitoring process, often inadvertently reducing both participants and artists to statistics. While this type of evidence is important, this project has given me the space to zoom in and assess from a qualitative framework and understand more personal & relational experiences and look at how this affects working practices.

I'm not a psychologist, historian, or geographer, however I draw on these disciplines as tools to explore this investigation, and perhaps make a case for interdisciplinary working. I realise as a Producer, perhaps this is what we are trained to do - work across disciplines, to co-create a whole. Therefore, using this research within an academic setting has provided me with the room to acknowledge my professional experience within a particular paradigm but attempt to critically engage with it as a researcher and art practitioner, rather than as an employee or colleague. As well as understanding the outlined phenomena above, a key aim of this study is to add to the discussion and scholarship to further develop the relatively new methodologies of arts-based research through (auto)ethnography and advance our understanding of the possible roles and uses of walking interviews and walking artistic practice in qualitative research.

When going through the process of conducting this research, I consider the words of Grada Kilomba who states in her book, *Plantation Memories*, 'I become the narrator and writer of my own reality, the author of and the authority of my own history. In this sense, I become the absolute opposite of what the colonial project has predetermined'. (Kilomba, 2019: 10). What Kilomba's words reinforce is that as a black woman, conducting this investigation it is a political

³ Zinzi Minott is a dancer whose work focuses on the relationship between dance, bodies and politics. Strongly identifying as a dancer, she seeks to complicate the boundaries of dance and the place of black female bodies within the form. Her work explores how dance is perceived through the prisms of race, queer culture, gender and class. In 2017, I co-produced her performance "*What Kind of Slave Would I be?*", a project in which during the making, we navigated difficult moments of racism

act in and of itself and a very small step forward and contribution to the work which already exists within this sphere. However, although my body and experience hold this political meaning, as asserted by Milton Bennett, 'there is also a danger that a strong experience, although potentially a valuable tool, can limit our consideration of different reactions to the same circumstances. For instance, some feminists seem to assume that all women do (or should) have the same reaction to being female in this culture' (Bennett, 1998: 93). This concern is also mirrored by black feminist thinker bell hooks⁴. hooks highlights⁵ that the black female experience has also been of attempting to survive life in diaspora (1992) however when critiquing fellow feminist thinker Audre Lorde, she asserts that:

"Never in Lorde's 5 essays does she address the issue of whether or not black women from different cultural backgrounds (Caribbean, Latina, etc) construct diverse identities. Do we all feel the same about womanhood? What about regional differences? What about those black women who have the good fortune to be raised in a politicized context where their identities were constructed by resistance and not passive acceptance?"

These have been important considerations in the methodological process of this work to ensure my own place of speech as a black woman who has moved to Porto, does not distort, nor provide a single reality model of work, but rather make space for those already reclaiming narratives, and allows room to explore how we might make space for our peers through this act of writing and investigation itself, and this is discussed further in my methods section. To keep track of reflexivity, I kept a diary of notes in both Google files, and a paper notebook tracking thoughts and reflections across the investigation, and specifically before and after each interview, these were useful to then incorporate new ideas and adjustments in the project, the relevance of this shown in the Methodological Groundings section to follow.

I would also like to be clear on my positioning on the key themes and definitions within this work - I do not endorse nor subscribe to the reduction of race to a Black/White paradigm, however this research focuses on black women from the African diaspora who have relocated to Porto from other diaspora countries, drawing on what Paul Gilroy describes as the Black Atlantic: the black diaspora of people connected through the transatlantic slave trade (Gilroy, 1993). This grounding is taken to be clear about the intersections of experience and historical frame of

⁴ The unconventional lowercasing of her name signifies what is most important is her works: the "substance of books, not who I am."

⁵ bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race & Representation*, Boston, MA: South End Press 1992, p43

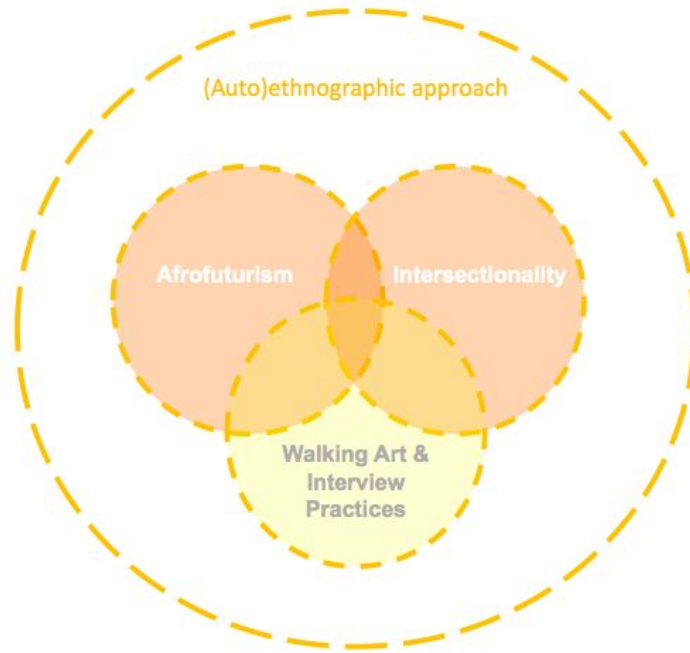
reference. I will discuss this further in the Intersectionality and Historical Cartographies sections included in this text. This is, of course, not say the 'black diaspora history' started with the slave trade, an important distinction to make, but I feel it is important to set the frame in which I will speak clearly. Furthermore, the focus on black women, specifically, rather than women of colour in general, is supported by Nirmal Puwar⁶ who states that "even though female and black bodies physically transgress traditional boundaries by occupying positions of reason and universality, they are still imagined bearing the traces of "other" scripts. Their presence in privileged positions in the public realm brings together mutually exclusive scripts (Puwar, 2004: 144), thus highlighting that while there are overlaps of experience, the intersections of experience create differing lived experiences.

Methodological Groundings

When I began this research investigation, I struggled to find the most appropriate methodologies to employ and knew I needed to find tools to be able to explore the complexity of the subject matter and clearly demonstrate the process of exploration. Research, pedagogy, and personal experience cannot be separated, but inform one another and intertwine so finding the appropriate methodology was essential. As the work stems from both personal lived experiences, expanding outwards, with curiosity to explore phenomena through the subjective experiences of women within the broader context of this work, searching for analytical and representational strategies that would enable me to increase self-reflexivity and honour my commitment, making space for subjective narratives.

This section explains how I arrived at the methodological framework to explore this investigation, and the disciplines that this theme crosses over.

⁶ Puwar, Nirmal. *Space Invaders: Race, Gender, and Bodies Out of Place*. Berg. (2004)



Methodological groundings diagram

The research process as a whole has been circular, as highlighted in the diagram above, with the aim for this to be open in order to incorporate new findings as the investigation progressed, particularly through the proposed walking interviews and the development projects. The research further develops the relatively new methodologies of arts-based inquiry and autoethnography, critical self-reflexive methods, and adds to the advancement our understanding of the possible roles and uses of walking art and Afrofuturism can be used in qualitative research.

Arts-based research: An (Auto)ethnographic Approach

This study is embedded in an arts-based research (ABR) approach which aims to; portray the complexity of lived experience (merging the specific to the universal), encouraging empathy and self-reflection, and disrupting ideologies or stereotypes (Leavy, 2014). This flexible and holistic approach encourages researchers to intuitively respond to new insights and unexpected data, in order to “propel cycles of returning to reanalyse data and/or revise aspects of the research design as needed” (Chilton & Leavy, 2014: 407). ABR “can be particularly useful for research goals that aim to describe, explore, or discover social, emotional, and other meta-cognitive experiences” (Chilton & Leavy, 2014: 407). The outcomes of such research can be emotionally

and politically poignant due to the power of relational work. “Narrative transmits knowledge not as information isolated from subjective experience (and therefore verifiable) but as embedded within the events in the story as part of a totality that involves affects, emotions, and associations” (Gilligan, 2012). These notions allowed me to situate the work within this approach, with the ABR methods and guided me to autoethnography as a way to explore this as a method.

Originally developed by anthropologists, ethnography is a method of research designed to study culture (Creswell, 1998: 48). Traditionally ethnography would involve a researcher outside the target group to undertake cultural research by applying the methods of direct observation, textual evidence and cultural artefact review, and in-depth interviewing; these methods are used to help this outsider gain an understanding of the group (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2005), however he illustrates this can lead to ‘*othering*.’

O’Byrne highlights, that classical (positivist) and critical (postpositivist) ethnographies view a particular group or culture through the societal lens of the dominant social group and as a result might further marginalise or “other” a particular culture and its practices by measuring differences as defined by the mainstream cultural norm instead of describing the significance ascribed to observed practices by the alternative culture itself (O’Byrne, 2007: 1381). I have incorporated what he describes as the postmodern (critical theory) perspective of ethnographic inquiry which provides a unique opportunity, as is it assumes researcher is the tool of the research and thus construct their findings, which, in turn, allows them to act in two different roles simultaneously (O’Byrne, 2007: 1382).

By comparison, Leavy states that autoethnography is practice led, and focussed on “personal interest and experience, rather than objective ‘disinterestedness’ motivates our research process.” (Leavy et.al, 2019: 153). Autoethnography requires that a researcher study (a) his or her own culture, (b) a culture into which he or she has been adopted and accepted completely, (c) the culture of the self, or (d) the culture of another as it relates to the self of the researcher (Ellis & Bochner, 2003).

Autoethnography incorporates personal (“auto”) experience to create a representation (“graphy”) of cultural (“ethno”) experiences, social expectations, shared beliefs, values and practices (Leavy et.al, 2019). The aim has been to use this autoethnographic approach to integrate both theory and practice and ‘process of inquiry situated in experience, and

autoethnography is practice led, in that “personal interest and experience, rather than objective ‘disinterestedness’ motivates our research processes’ (Leavy et.al, 2019: 153)

Furthermore, within the social science perspective, autoethnography is seen to view experiences that have their basis in, or are made possible by, being part of a culture and/or owning a specific cultural identity. Telling about the experiences must be accompanied by a critical reflection of the lived experience in order to conform to social science publishing conventions (Liamputtong et.al, 2019: 509).

Within this research the use of postmodern ethnographic (critical theory) and autoethnographic methods combined which I refer to as (auto)ethnography, have allowed me to explore the varied stages of the investigation through personal experience and understanding subjectivities of experience within a critical framework, rather than ‘othering,’ this thinking has also been informed by reflexivity & motivations highlighted above. The use of this (auto)ethnographic journey builds on what Leavey et.al, describe ‘the way to arrange life in ways that enable readers to enter into dialogue with our lives’ (Leavy, 2018: 147) within autoethnographic research and space in which, to tell ‘stories that reflect on past events, that take on difficult experiences’ and as a result potentially providing a reader with a ‘sense of movement and transformation’ (Leavy, 2018: 147)

The next section outlines the implementation of the philosophy and cultural aesthetic of Afrofuturism into the process of work as a way of viewing these subjective experiences.

Afrofuturism

Before Afrofuturism was named as such, it originally emerged as a counter movement to the avant-garde Futurist movement through European intellectuals and artists such as Isaac Asimov, Claude Shannon, Philip K. Dick and Bertrand de Jouvenel during and after World War 2 (R. Anderson & Charles E. Jones, 2016). During this time, this counter narrative emerged, beginning in the North American Black Arts movement. The term Afrofuturism was first employed by Mark Dery in his essay *Black to the Future* (1994) where he defined Afrofuturism as ‘speculative fiction that treats African-American themes and addresses African-American concerns ...signification that appropriates images of technology and a prosthetically enhanced future’ (Dery,1994: 180). As a result, the term went on to become a useful way to retrospectively

describe a host of artistic movements, outputs and artists; from African American 1940s experimental jazz musicians like Sun Ra (*Space is the Place*, 1974) and writer Octavia E Butler (*Kindred*, 1979) centre black womens subjectivities through storytelling.⁷ In the 21st century, the movement has grown globally, from Janelle Monae (*The Arch Android*, 2010), to big-budget films such as *Black Panther* (Marvel, 2018). In 2015, curator Gia Hamilton founded the *Afrofuturist Society* in New Orleans, USA, and sculpture artists such as Cyrus Kabiru⁸ from Nairobi, Liberian-British visual & performance artists Lina Iris Viktor⁹, and Kenyan film director & author Wanuri Kahiu¹⁰ have all incorporated cosmos or sci-fi into their works across artistic disciplines. In Brazil, Afrofuturism has been taken a step further by arts and cultural researcher Morena Mariah Couto who founded *Afrofuturo* (2018), a network & platform dedicated to using Afrofuturism as an education tool to support the futures of young people in Rio de Janeiro. Furthermore, Melissa Rodriguese, one of the co-researchers interviewed in this investigation, explored the aesthetic in response to the current climate¹¹. Afrofuturism already has a clear legacy for disrupting and reshaping dominant narratives relating to the transatlantic diaspora across music, literature, film and more far beyond its American roots.

Drawing together the threads of both intersectional and feminist theory, author Ytasha Womack¹², highlights the “highly intersectional” methods of observing possible futures or alternate realities through the gaze of a black cultural perspective. “It is non-linear, fluid and feminist; it uses the black imagination to consider mysticism, metaphysics, identity and liberation; and, despite offering black folks a way to see ourselves in a better future, Afrofuturism blends the future, the past and the present.” What she highlights here is that Afrofuturism seeks to disrupt the present moment by using references of the past to envision the future, and its infinite possibilities of exploration, compelled by those who imagine.

This notion is supported further by Grada Kilomba who in relation to the experience of black female subjectivities, states that ‘Remembering both the past and the present to have a chance at making plans for the future...Unexpectedly, the past comes to coincide with the present, and the present is experienced as if one were in that agonizing past’ (Kilomba, 2019: 11). Furthermore, Anderson and Jones believe there is this relationship between black feminism and

⁷ *Kindred* follows the story of her protagonist Dana. The book explores the idea of autonomy and having control over one's life/destiny. The book is not linear and jumps back and forth through time.

⁸ Cyrus Kabi, Kunstpodium T Gallery, Tilburg, Netherlands: 2011

⁹ *Black Exodus: Act I — Materia Prima*, Amar Gallery, London, United Kingdom: 2017

¹⁰ Pumzi, 2009

¹¹ CORONAS IN THE SKY, Not a Manifesto! an essay on Afrofuturism and Liberation, Video Poem, Berlin & Porto, 2020

¹² *Afrofuturism: the World of Black Sci-Fi Fantasy and Fantasy Culture* (2013)

Afrofuturism in that both have connections (feminism, science-fiction, technology) that were initially dominated by white patriarchal standards; however both are now vehicles that are being used as liberating voices to express public consciousness (2016: 93)

When I first came across the term Afrofuturism five years ago, my understanding and associations with its meaning and practice were linked to the fantastical and science fiction, as highlighted above by its current and past cultural actors. In the past, I have spent countless nights dancing away to the transporting sounds on SunRa with my peers and escaped through science fiction novels, but I had never made an attempt to ground the practice into “real life” so to speak. As I began exploring this investigation further, I came across authors Reynaldo Anderson and Charles E. Jones¹³ who cite cultural critic Martine Syms (2014) “*The Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto*” that Afrofuturism focuses too much on unexamined tropes, references to Egyptology, figures in popular culture, and needs to develop a new focus on black humanity and a critique on “true, vernacular reality.” In summary, what Syms pinpoints is Afrofuturism’s opportunity and possibility to be grounded into real life phenomena of lived experience. This is echoed by researcher De’Anna Monique Daniels who states her central concern being Afrofuturism needs to utilise the tools we currently have around us; a unique ability that has been passed down to black bodies from the middle passage experience.¹⁴

It is this combined critique and the stance of Womack, which have encouraged the exploration of trying to find new ways of grounding afrofuturism in to the “everyday” as well as drawing connections between past, present and the future that feel most relevant to how afrofuturism as a walking methodology could be described as both a method of recovering histories and futures, archiving and exploring lived embodied experiences.

Intersectionality

Over the last three decades, it has been asserted that as Black women, “race” and gender are aspects of our identity that are recognised as constantly visible, but the intersectional and fluid position of our identities also contributes to the diversity that is Black womanhood. (Chijioke

¹³ Afrofuturism 2.0: The Rise of Astro-Blackness (2016)

¹⁴ Imagineering Black (Im)Possibility: Unearthing Afrofuturist Materialist Interventions

Obasi, 2014: 1583). So then, when I speak of these experiences of black women specifically, the framework of intersectionality, it is important to understand that these experiences are neither singular nor homogeneous, but forever changing and situates itself (and this investigation) in black feminist thought. Intersectionality takes into consideration an individual or social groups overlapping identities and experiences, such as race, class, and gender and how this may effect discrimination or disadvantage.

The social-political feminist thinkers such as Audre Lorde (1980) and bell hooks (1990) have been key thinkers in this area. As Audre Lorde highlights, 'there is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.' (Lorde, 1982). From an intercultural relations perspective, this framework of intersectionality is grounded further by Milton Bennett's single reality vs multiple reality theory which sees multiple reality which highlights that this understanding of our differences and this communication based on the assumption of difference is empathy (Bennett, 1998: 92), so through this methodology of walking interviews, the aim has been to provide an intersectional lens and insight into the relational experience to Porto based on the subjectivity of each woman I have spoken to.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight here, that although there may be a range of ways for describing one's overlapping experiences, the choice to use this framework is important because the term 'intersectionality' emerged to reflect the experience of black women specifically during the black feminist movement of the United States. While hooks, Lorde and other black feminist thinkers spoke of themes within the intersectional theoretical framework a decade earlier, it was Kimberlé Crenshaw, a law professor and social theorist, who first coined the term 'intersectionality' (Crenshaw, 1989). Crenshaw states that:

"With Black women as the starting point, it becomes more apparent how dominant conceptions of discrimination condition us to think about subordination as disadvantage occurring along a single categorical axis. I want to suggest further that this single-axis framework erases Black women in the conceptualization, identification and remediation of race and sex discrimination by limiting inquiry to the experiences of otherwise-privileged members of the group. In other words, in race discrimination cases, discrimination tends to be viewed in terms of sex- or class-privileged Blacks; in sex discrimination cases, the focus is on race- and class-privileged women. This focus on the most privileged group members marginalizes those who are multiply-burdened and

obscures claims that cannot be understood as resulting from discrete sources of discrimination.” (Crenshaw, 1989: 149)¹⁵

In essence, what Crenshaw states is that what intersectionality does is to conceptualise a person, group of people or social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages. The importance of the framework is that it takes into account people’s overlapping and shifting identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of the prejudices they face. Within the context of this discussion I pull from my own experience as an example:

I am a black, mixed heritage, second-generation immigrant to a Jamaican father and French-Jewish mother. I’ve had the privilege of upward mobility which has now led to moving to another country to study, having grown up in London, shifting in socio-economic identity from the working-class roots of my parents. As a woman, I experience sexism, but as a black woman, I also experience racism. How would this experience differ for a white woman from a working-class background? Or a black woman who has darker skin? And what happens when this experience moves to another place? One may experience classism: prejudice based on social class depending on the space, place and possibly, time (Owen Jones, 2011). Whilst the experiences of black women also vary greatly too, when we consider an issue such as colourism: a type of prejudice or discrimination which some people can experience based on the social meanings attached to their skin (Trina Jones, 2001). Jones, speaking from within the frame of Public Law, states that:

“Although this terminology appears to be relatively new, colorism is not a recent invention. In the United States, this form of discrimination dates back at least as far as the colonial era. Yet, notwithstanding its long existence, colorism is often overshadowed by, or subsumed within, racism.” (Jones, 2001: 1489)

What Jones refers to here, is the long-standing legacy of colonisation on the black diaspora. It is well known that during this period, there was discrimination with regards to skin tone, ie slaves with darker skin having less privilege (Jones, 2001) and what is palatable amongst the white patriarchy.

¹⁵ Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics, (1989)

Black women visible in western popular culture often have fair skin and I wonder to what extent this is also present within the art world, how this relates to the women I have interviewed. Jones and Crenshaw, both law professors, raise these intersections within their own practice of law which to me, highlights the potential for an interdisciplinary exploration which is discussed further in a later chapter in this investigation.

Conversely, these examples do of course have limitations, but they just scratch the surface of how intersectionality helps us understand how different people experience the spaces around them, not just on an individual level, but also on a broader social level within the patriarchal system of late capitalism. Implementing this intersectional approach has allowed for an essential understanding of the context I'm approaching, but also as a way of being self-critical and reflective about my own position and how I make space for other voices and experiences.

Drawing together these threads, the next section discusses the walking in its various guises through outlining some of its key actors, and how I have used it within this investigation.

Walking as method: embodied experience

'Walking is a principal mode of perceiving and living, thereby embodying, urban spaces, which can be seen as an aesthetic and insightful act'

(Matos Wunderlich, F, 2008: 136)

Walking, is what I will call the vehicle for this investigation, an artistic practice and methodology in qualitative research which has been theorised through a range of approaches (Springgay & Truman, 2018). The practices of walking have been integrated into interdisciplinary methods of a number of associated fields in social sciences, geography and arts illustrating its applicability across fields and phenomena.

In the arts, walking has been described as both an individual aesthetic and a relational and socially engaged practice. An example of this is through the work of architect Francesco Careri, who in his book *Walkscapes* (2002), invites readers to view walking as a form of urban intervention, and proposes walking through the mode of "wasting time wandering aimlessly". Walking for the author must be a cognitive and creative instrument, capable of transforming

space in a symbolic and physical way. By comparison, Rebecca Solnit (2000) explores walking's relationship to culture and politics, studying poets, philosophers, revolutionaries, and women fighting for the right to wander and muse as men. In addition, according to Michel de Certeau who underlines the importance of space as a practiced place, "the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers". He posits that "...a space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables ... It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it". (Certeau, 1984: 117)

The term 'walking as art' coined by Hamish Fulton (in Solnit, 2001: 267) seems to describe a series of aesthetic and performative actions of later artists in the city. In the 20th Century, a range of artists have incorporated walking in to their practice including Serbian conceptual and performance artist Marina Abramović¹⁶ (1988), American performance and installation artist Vito Acconci¹⁷ (1969) with much of his work incorporating elements of bodily discomfort, exhibitionism and gender play,¹⁸ Belgian interdisciplinary artist Francis Alÿs (1995) who explores urban tensions and geopolitics¹⁹. Furthermore the last 20 years, Janet Cardiff²⁰ (2004) explores the sensory investigation of location, time, sound and physicality guided through audio walks.

In recent years walking has become a significant mode of practice and critique in relation to gendered and racialised exploration as a method both artistically and in research. Feminist scholars Deirdre Hedon and Cathy Turner assert that there is an absence of women within common ideological narratives attached to walking²¹. While Maggie O'Neil and Brian Roberts, suggest 'Walking is often positioned as inherently radical, and a tactic to subvert urban space, yet often ignores race, gender, and disability. Figures like the flaneur...have become common tropes, often assuming that all bodies move through space equally.' (O'Neil & Brian 2020: 06). From the perspective of geography, Tim Cresswell writes, 'ways of moving have quite specific characteristics depending on who is moving and the social and cultural space that is being moved through'. (Cresswell, 2006:197). All of these authors draw attention to the absence of a more representational understanding of experiences of walking, and this research has explored and countered this.

¹⁶ The Lovers – The Great Wall Walk (1988) China

¹⁷ Following Piece (1969) New York City,

¹⁸ Kennedy, Randy (April 28, 2017). *Vito Acconci, Performance Artist and Uncommon Architect, Dies at 77*, The New York Times

¹⁹ The Green Line (1995) Jerusalem

²⁰ Her Long Black Hair (2004) Central Park, New York City

²¹ Heddon, Deirdre & Turner, Cathy, *Walking Women: Shifting the Tales and Scales of Mobility*, Contemporary Theatre Review, 22:2, 224-236

I return to O'Neill and Roberts who suggest that beyond examples of its use as an artistic practice, there is room for further application of walking across disciplines and is a 'powerful way of means of understanding the lives and experiences of others' (O'Neill & Roberts, 2020: 04). Walking by its very nature incorporates an embodiment of knowing, where flux of movement connects the body and environment. Springgay & Truman (2019) suggest walking is generally explored and analysed through phenomenology in which lived experiences can be examined by both researchers and participants who together, examine what it means to move in a particular place. In addition, walking and mapping in particular have been used by a wide range of artists and combine this notion of embodiment.

Mapping in particular, combined with walking together can create a performance of place. It can create new possibilities by acknowledging simultaneously the multiple identities and multiple knowledge of a place (Senel, 2014). Walking as a way of mapping (or cartography) can incorporate hand drawn maps, sensory maps, psychogeography, narrative, writing, photography (Springgay & Truman. 2018). The practice allows us to develop multiple embodied critical experiences as counter cartography and with this combined view of walking as embodied experience offers a performance of place. Katherine McKittrick & Clyde Woods, (2007) state 'that mapping and normalised geographic understandings continue the erasure and segregation of black subjects. The racialisation of space, they argue, is often theorised as essentialised or detached from actual geographic places" (2020: 99) they suggest walking as counter-cartography as a way to challenge dominant norms of walking experience of place. This notion of walking as an act of counter-cartography is seen through the afrofuturist work of Canadian performance artist Camile Turner through her work *BlackGrange* (2018).



Camille Turner, BlackGrange, audio walking tour commissioned by WalkingLab, Toronto in March, 2018.

From the perspective of a fictional time traveler, BlackGrange is a self-guided walking tour that rethinks and re-imagines the present by illuminating histories of the African Diaspora in Toronto's Grange neighbourhood, through mapping and archiving and new narratives. The tour is not only an embodied performative collective act, but a way to re-map erased and forgotten histories into the urban space.

Adding to the various methodological uses across social science, O'Neill argues that through "walking biographies" and the visual representations walking, combined with tapping other sensorial experiences enable us to 'get in touch with our 'storied lives' in sensory and corporeal ways, that foster understanding and critical reflection performative approach that involves working in partnership with artists in the space between art and ethnography is one important way of doing biographical research. The notion then led me to explore these notions through walking interviews as a method. I return to this detail in Chapter three.

To conclude this introduction, much like the cultural philosophy of Afrofuturism I employ, as the above suggests, this process has not been linear; I dive backwards, forwards, in order to address the present moment. The investigation has been broken down into four parts:

Chapter One: *Transatlantic to Porto: the state of things* explores the broader historical context of the transatlantic initially through geographical and spatial relations discourse by geographer

Katherine McKittrick (2006), social-cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1980) and scholar Sara Ahmed (2003) who connect identity to the broader transatlantic. The chapter zooms into Portugal giving a brief history of the portuguese context and how the conversation about the outlined subject matter are being explored in Porto.

Chapter Two: *Subjectivities of Space*, explores the journey and development of the autoethnography process of this investigation through explorations of space in Porto. I talk through four projects which have guided my artistic and methodological thinking to arrive at using walking interviews as a central method for exploring the lived experiences black women arts practitioners in Porto. Through these projects I explore the gendering of space, historical mapping methods, all contributing to liveness and multitude of lived experiences.

Chapter three: *Walking interview Process and methods*, outlines my approach to the process of carrying out the interviews, from participant recruitment, to the use of walking interviews with the use of Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis, (IPA). The Walking interviews were conducted by me as a researcher, but also as the subject, and I walked together with each of the artists exploring *their* Porto, based on open-ended questions, and how these questions related to different places in the city. The walks were recorded and together, myself and each woman documented the journey, through images and other media forms based on their choice as a process of co-creation.

Chapter four, *Walking Acts of Subjectivity provides an analysis of the interviews carried out*, which used walking as a critical and artistic practice, and the gendering of space-related to their historical and present subjectivity. The questions outlined were created to allow the conversation to be expansive and unfold to explore a variation of themes, '*finding a space for repair*', '*searching for home*', '*finding security in collective working*', and experiences relating to each woman, whilst taking into consideration the broader context of the work.

I conclude this investigation by discussing the process of this investigation, its limitations and possible future.

1. Transatlantic to Porto: the State of Things

Historical Cartographies of the Black Diaspora

To build my understanding of the experience of black women within this particular diaspora, it was important to understand the broader narrative of Black diaspora connected to the transatlantic and historical context. Historian Paul Gilroy (1993), cultural geographer Katherine McKittrick (2006), social-cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1980) and scholar Sara Ahmed (2003) look at this specifically in their work and have helped me to understand this historical pathway further and how it sits within the context of this research. Through the walking interviews conducted, having this framework in mind helped to understand this relationship further.

The histories of colonisation and decolonisation are important to critically consider here. Caren Kaplan suggests, the 'emergence of terms of travel and displacement (as well as their oppositional counterparts, home and location) must be linked to the history of the production of colonial discourses' (1996). This notion highlights the varied histories of movement that were at the core imperial processes which are 'still lived and negotiated in the forming of spaces of inhabitants understood in terms of *home*' (Ahmed, 2003). Ahmed suggests the concept of diaspora has evolved and developed as a symbol of 'multi-locality, post nationality and non-linearity of both movement and time, the experience of diaspora is never fixed.' Therefore, here the idea of diaspora poses questions assimilation or inclusion assumed within national frames of reference. She suggests that this position which 'takes for granted a linear narrative of migration as disconnected from colonial, post colonial relations of power' (Ahmed, 2003: 08).

In terms of gendered experience McKittrick discusses the importance of asserting an interdisciplinary analysis of black women's geographies from the diaspora. She proposes there are opportunities and new avenues which black studies can explore when it intersects with human geography, but also what she describes as "the interplay between geographies of domination (such as the transatlantic slavery and racial-sexual displacement) and black women's geographies (such as their knowledge, negotiations, and experiences)" (McKittick, 2006). She goes on to say, 'while we all produce, know and negotiate space - albeit on different terms- geographies in the diaspora are accentuated by racist paradigms of the past and their ongoing hierarchical patterns.' (McKittick, 2006: 10)

Paul Gilroy, explores this further, within *The Black Atlantic* (1993), in which he makes space for analysis and critique of addressing blackness as a singular homogeneous experience. He explores this through the contemporary black arts movement, particularly within mediums of film, music, visual arts and theatre. Through this lens, I have been able to explore further this shifting experiences of the practitioners I have spoken to, but also through a range of artistic mediums.

Another key thinker who supports this notation further is Stuart Hall, stating the 'second sense of difference challenges the fixed binaries which stabilised meaning and representation and show how meaning is never finished or completed but keeps on moving to encompass other, additional or supplementary meanings, which, as he puts it elsewhere, disturb the classical economy of language and representation' (Hall, 1990: 229). Hall, in particular, highlights the ways in which one identity can shift and represent itself differently within various contexts, which is an essential theme to consider when thinking about how black women may experience another space, outside of a known context.

Adding to the above discussion of geography and historical context, and current context of Porto, I draw on the work of Doreen Massey *Space, Place, and Gender*, (1994) and Gillian Rose *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, (1994). Both writers not only explore the relationship between gender, place, race, class and sexuality, but also the shifting range of subjectivities and spatial differentiation experienced by women at any given time (Rose, 1994).

Rose focusses on this female-gendered experience within the framework of a post-colonial structure of western society. Massey, in particular, highlights that in certain 'cultural quarters, the mobility of women does indeed seem to pose a threat to a settled patriarchal order.' (1994). This particular point raises the important question as to whether there is the restricted movement of women, and in this case, black women, benefits and upholds the patriarchal system, both in terms of gendered expectations and the historical context of different women.

Both have nuanced perspectives on understanding the female experience, but specifically the black female experience within a range of moving spatial terms and geographical, power structures, and interrelations. Furthermore, through the outlined walking interviews above, and

the lense of Afrofuturism, outlines a new spatial narrative, as we move through Porto together as black female bodies.

I continue by exploring the trans-atlantic diasporic cartography on a micro level in Portugal. My aim here is not to provide a full history or critique of Portugal's colonialism, for it is far too complex for the remit of this thesis, however it is important to return to McKittrick who highlights here the intersectional experience for those within the black diaspora, specifically, women and through looking at a brief context of Portugal, and my (auto)ethnographic experience of Porto.

A brief Portuguese Context

Taking this exploration further, what I would like to consider is the difference of experience for women within this diaspora, particularly when looking at two cities in which I relate to: Porto and London in terms of geographical movement. Both cities are located within countries which participated greatly in the transatlantic slave trade, with their colonialism reaching across much of Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas, and importantly, not forgetting across many eastern parts of the globe. Both countries, enforced language, religion, culture, and more, so what is the ripple effect of those experiences? And why is it important to explore these experiences?

Between both countries decolonisation has been an extremely long process and Portugal in particular has only recently begun to deconstruct dominant discourses of the post-colonial.²² Paul White and Ana Paula Beja Horta (2008) cite the second world war as a period of interconnected phenomena in Europe: the break down of colonial empires, and the arrival of larger numbers of migrants to increase the European labour force²³. Portugal shares with the UK and other EU countries the fact that immigrant flows over the past four decades have taken place in a context of lingering post-colonial relationships with significant potential migrant source areas. The last thirty years have seen the beginning of large-scale migrant flows into Portugal: the admission of Portugal to the European Union in 1986 was of key importance for the future of Portuguese society, allowing for movement of across EU state countries, and therefore diaspora connected to these countries having freedom of movement.

²² Polanah, Paulo S. "The Zenith of our National History!" *National identity, colonial empire, and the promotion of the Portuguese Discoveries: Portugal 1930s*, e-journal of Portuguese History (2011)

²³ Horta, Ana Paula Beja & White, Paul, *Post-colonial migration and citizenship regimes: a comparison of Portugal and the United Kingdom*

Following this EU admission, almost a decade later saw the creation of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) founded in 1996 in Lisbon by Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, and São Tomé and Príncipe, nearly two decades after the beginning of the decolonization of the Portuguese Empire. CPLP is a multilateral forum created to deepen cultural, economic, and political cooperation, although the formation of CPLP has received much critique to suggest a leaning towards recreating a Portuguese Empire power.

²⁴ With this flux of immigration, it is important to consider then, with the “doors open” how we find ourselves here in Portugal, and more specifically, Porto? What is the relationship of black women's bodies in these spaces? How are black women's bodies viewed? And who is doing the viewing?

Again, our gaze backwards to look at Portugal's colonial history. Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar who served as Prime Minister of Portugal from 1932 to 1968, was responsible for the Estado Novo ('New State'), the corporatist authoritarian government that ruled Portugal until the revolution in 1974. During his regime, a new official discourse on the overseas possessions emerged during this period. Filipa Lowndes Vicente²⁵ highlights The Colonial exhibition of 1934 in Palacio de Cristal²⁶ as a key moment for the reformation of dominant narratives around black women's bodies. The exhibition served as propaganda at the beginning of the Salazar dictatorship. The exhibition publicly displayed indigenous populations, with men, women and children visiting the exhibition as a form of family entertainment. In the article the author said the pervasiveness of images of black women's bodies in Portugal, in photographic postcards, colonial propaganda leaflets, colonial exhibition newspapers and magazines - demonstrated the gendered and racialised bodies of (unnamed) woman was a power trope of colonial hegemony. Even now, 85 year after the exhibition, these images still circulate in Portugal and within official archives.²⁷ Vicente goes on to suggest with this presence of black women's bodies within the Portuguese colonial archives, there is an “enduring persistence in the present of the racism and violence of the past,” (2017: 20) . What role do they now have in the present Portuguese context and the dominant narratives they project about black women's bodies? This is further supported by Nirmal Puwar even though female and black bodies

²⁴ Lopes, P. *Portugal: Holograma da Mobilidade Humana*, Lisbon: Editora Rei Livros (1999)

²⁵ Vicente, F. L. *Black Women's Bodies in the Portuguese Colonial Visual Archive (1900-1975)*, Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies 30/31, 16-67. Special Issue: Transnational Africa: Visual, Material and Sonic Cultures of Lusophone Africa (2017)

²⁶ 'where more than 300 people from Cabo Verde, Guinea, Angola, Mozambique, India, Macau, and Timor became the most popular - epitomised a new kind of colonial project'.

²⁷ Through the development of her archive, Filipa Lowndes Vicente, evidences numerous images of examples of postcards, photographs and magazines from the time. Originally I had included an image in this section, however I have chosen not to include an example of these images as I question whether I would be complicit in replicating this representation of black women's bodies.

physically transgress traditional boundaries by occupying positions of reason and universality, they are still imagined bearing the traces of “other” scripts. (Nirmal Puwar, 2004: 144)

Within the Portuguese context, there have been a number of actions and interventions to tackle this subject of dislocating dominant narratives, namely the formation of the *Instituto da Mulher Negra em Portugal*, which translates as the “Black Women’s Institute in Portugal,” in July 2018 also highlights the current conversation around black womens experiences in Portugal and the exploration of grounding an intersectional collective experience and the national need “to place the black feminist agenda in the Portuguese anti-racist movement and in the national feminist movement itself,” according to INMUNE member, Joacine Katar Moreira (Huckmag, 2018). Moreira goes on to say, “Some of us were born in Portugal, children of African immigrants, others came to Portugal with their parents in their first years of life,” “We intend to work closely with other structures, not only at a national level but also at an international one, due to the increasingly globalised nature of all these issues,” explains INMUNE member Angela Graca. The collective focussing on black and Afrocentric feminism and the other focussed on black identities in Portugal. (Huke mag, 2018)

Furthermore, within the artistic field there are a number of black women artists exploring these topics, the representation of the black body in Portugal, and the centering of these subjectivities as a counter as a counter movement. Grada Kilomba is a key presence in the conversation and in shaping this work. In *Plantation Memories: Episodes of Everyday Racism* (2008) where she explores the day-to-day racism and their psychological effects of living within a post-colonial context. However, Kilomba started off her training in Lisbon in psychoanalysis where she worked at a psychiatry department with war survivors from Angola and Mozambique allowing her to explore and centre lived experiences of war and colonisation which prompted Kilomba to initiate various artistic and therapeutic projects on trauma and memory.²⁸ Adding to this breadth of work, performance artists and actresses Cleo Tavares, Isabél Zuua and Nádia Yracema contest the invisibilisation of black bodies in the performing arts in Portugal through their recent work, *Aurora Negra* (2020).²⁹ Artists such as Portuguese poet and arts researcher Raquel Lima³⁰, and Brazilian born performer Maíra Zenún³¹ add to the discussion and sense of urgency

²⁸ Goodman Gallery Johannesburg, South Africa. Artwork: Speaking the Unspeakable (2018). Kilombas exhibition interrupts ‘white cube’ to create a space that announces the emergence of silenced voices and explores the relationship between speaking, silencing and listening.

²⁹ The theatre performance explored how Black bodies are systematically denied access to the construction of their own narratives and are either absent from mainstream culture, or present in ways that reinforce stereotypes and prejudice.

³⁰ *Ingenuidade. Inocência Ignorância*, 2019

³¹ *Ciclo Mulheres Negras e os Novos Cinemas Negros*, Rampa Porto, 2019

of these subjects and centering of the black women's frame of reference across disciplines. Furthermore, all three women I have interviewed address the colonial legacy question in their work, along with the visibility of black women's bodies.

Experiencing Porto

A substantial part of developing this investigation has been through my own (auto)ethnographic experience of Porto. The weight of the colonial past and its presence laid out above, highlight the possible macro factors which linger within Portuguese context. Through this proceeding section, I discuss personal interactions, and experiences; attending a number of artistic events and interventions, have allowed me to explore the proposed themes and understand how they manifest artistically in the city, and highlighting again, the expansive approach of ABR and the embodied act of walking around the city.

As a recent immigrant in Portugal, I brought with me a particular frame of reference from the UK. One memorable encounter in Porto was my first interaction with the brand, Conguitos.³²

INTERSTRUCT COLLECTIVE

[BLOG](#)[FEATURE](#)[EXHIBITIONS](#)[OPEN CALL](#)[ABOUT US](#)[PT](#)[FOLLOW US](#)

An open letter to Marta Cuartero (Branding Manager for Conguitos at Lacasa Chocolates)

January 9, 2020 · Claire Sivier · 0

One month ago, I entered a café in Porto, Portugal. As I sat down at a table, and faced the payment counter, my heart sank and my mouth dropped as [...]

*An open letter to Marta Cuartero (Branding Manager for Conguitos at Lacasa Chocolates,
InterStruct Collective, January 2020*

On a visit to a cafe new to me in my local neighbourhood, I came across the brand for the first time. Whilst I'm aware of the various brands that still distort and provide characteratures of the black

³² Conguitos is a brand of chocolate products from Lacasa, Spain, causing much controversy

subject, it had been many years since I had come across such this type of image. ‘Pickaninnies’, ‘minstrels’, ‘mammy figures’, ‘golliwogs’, are all representations of black bodies are all racist imagery, and this felt now different. My discomfort was its confident position within “everyday life. When I asked the women behind the counter why the café chose to sell the Conguitos chocolate, she said “tradition”....tradition? Although a singular response, and not representative of the Portuguese whole Portuguese population, this response suggested the normalisation of such images within the city. Within my reflexive diary (appendix) I kept reflections, drew connections and personal concerns all of which aided the development of this work. I detailed the account in an open letter published on the InterStruct Collective website, can be found in the appendix.

Forum do Futuro: Crossings/Travessias (2019), an annual programme of debates and performances held in Porto whose main objective is to invite guests from different disciplines and cultural backgrounds to discuss key issues facing contemporary societies, with *Crossings/Travessias* focused on the five hundredth anniversary of the first circumnavigation of the world by Fernão de Magalhães³³, with conferences rethinking the journey and its global effects at a historical, political, and cultural level. Although I attended many of the events in the programme, it was writer and scholar Christina Sharpe who ignited reflections seeing repetitions of the trauma formed on slave ships during the transatlantic within the current context as we witness overcrowded ships of migrants which often sink before reaching Europe. Her assertions helped me consider how these colonial legacies work on both a transatlantic and globalised level.

Attending the InterStruct³⁴ curated exhibition *Unearthing Memories* (2019) formed a huge part of directing the context of this research. The parallel program of talks, performances, film screenings, and walking tour allowed me to place my body in situ as a participant embodying the experience of moving across sites and monuments with the collective of artists and researchers who explored the presence of the colonial relics across the city, and through the walking tour in Palacio de Cristal³⁵ I was able to discover the embedded legacy of the first Portuguese Colonial Exhibition in 1934. Having known I would conduct interviews with different women, it was this embodied experience which led me to think about interviews on the move.

³³ Portuguese explorer who organised the Spanish expedition to the East Indies from 1519 to 1522, resulting in the first circumnavigation of the Earth

³⁴ InterStruct aims to foster a dialogue around interculturalism, providing a discursive platform where people from different cultural backgrounds can collaborate. The collective was created in 2018 and has organised exhibitions, international artist residencies, film screenings, talks, guided tours and workshops

³⁵ English translation: Crystal Palace



Attending *Unearthing Memories Tour*, Palacio de Cristal Porto, Dec 2019. Photo Miguel Ferreira

*Os Filhos do Colonialismo*³⁶ (2020) a documentary theatre performance by *Hotel Europa* an artist duo from Portugal and the Czech Republic, Andre Amalio and Tereza Havlickova. The show investigates what relationship the generations that were born after April 25, 1974 have with Portuguese colonialism and what memories were transmitted to them from that same past.



Os Filhos do Colonialismo, Hotel Europa. theatre documentary, Campo Alegre Auditório, 2020

³⁶ English translation: *The Children of Colonisation*

Across their work, *Hotel Europa* overlay of autobiographical material, family histories, national histories, testimonies, interviews, historiography research, creating a complex web of references of popular and classical culture that reflects on cultures, times and genres. Attending this performance not only broadened my understanding of how post-colonial histories were being explored artistically, but also how a wide range of discipline informed the development of the work.

2. Subjectivities of Space

'I could recall walking along the narrow dirt road that ran past the Weylin House and seeing the house, shadowy in twilight. Boxy and familiar.....I could recall feeling relief at seeing the house. Feeling that I had come home. And having to stop and correct myself remind myself that I was in an alien dangerous place'

(Octavia E Butler, *Kindred* 1979:p219)

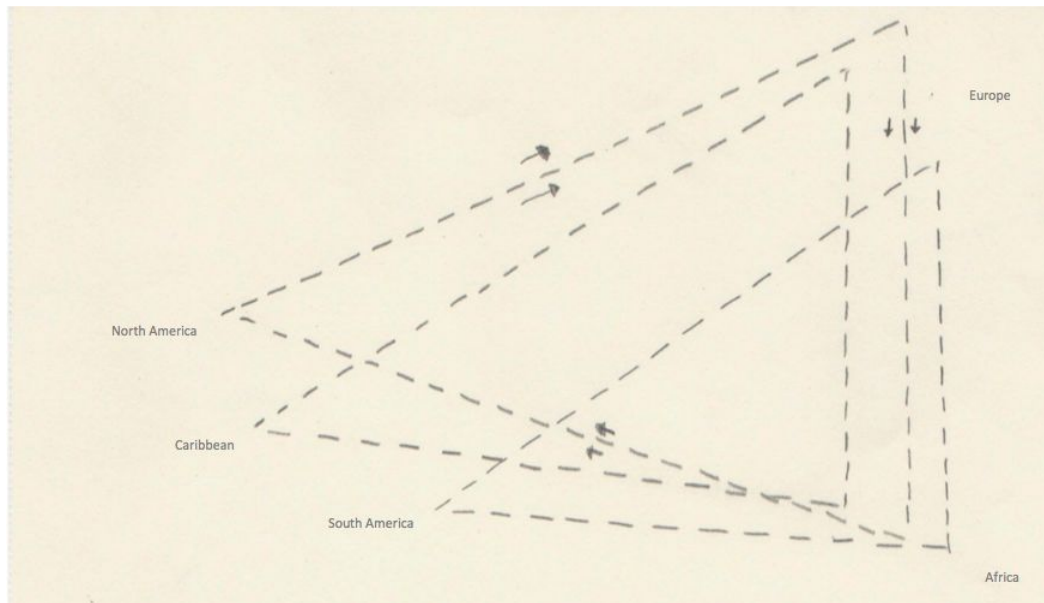
This chapter outlines the journey and development of the autoethnography process of this investigation through explorations of space in Porto. The participation in the production of public space has been illustrated by Lefebvre who argues that ‘bodies themselves generate spaces’ (Lefebvre, 1991: 216), in this chapter this notion is explored through the recalling of lived experiences and how they inform and produce space, whilst the relationship between identity and place, as supported by Deirdre Heddon, who argues that places, like the bodies located in them, are embedded within and produced by historical, cultural and political vectors. (Heddon 2008: 112).

I now go through the practical steps of this investigation, a series of individual and collaborative projects realised between December 2018 and April 2020. I explore the above notions drawing on the broader historical narrative laid in the previous chapter. Here walking as an artistic practice, embodied experience, counter-cartography are explored. Each project draws on the past as a way of addressing the current moment, allowing me to further this grounding of Afrofuturism within the everyday, and in how we create and negotiate space, using tools accessible to myself and the women involved in each project.

Cartographies of the Self

The first exploration began with a drawing and location survey to visually explore this broader context and research, and as a starting point, I drew from my own historical frame of reference: from Jamaica, UK, to Portugal. This was initially sparked by interactions and observations I was making in my day to day life in Porto and coming across brands and iconography which illustrated the colonial legacy was very much present. I then went on to consider, what does it mean when we consider the historical movement of our bodies, and in particular, its economic function during this transatlantic period? How can researching these spatial histories help us understand present day geographic organisation and how quickly has it changed? These are some core questions this project tried to visually consider. I began by looking at my chosen space for analysis – the transatlantic slave routes between the 1400-1800s. I chose to keep the focus on three core routes of the time: from Europe to Africa, and then to, the Caribbean (destination for 42% of slaves), Brazil (destination for 38% of slaves), and the United States of

America (destination for 5% of slaves) – in total approximately 6million Africans were transported in to slavery during this time³⁷.



Mapping main trans atlantic slave routes, drawing and location survey, Porto, 2019

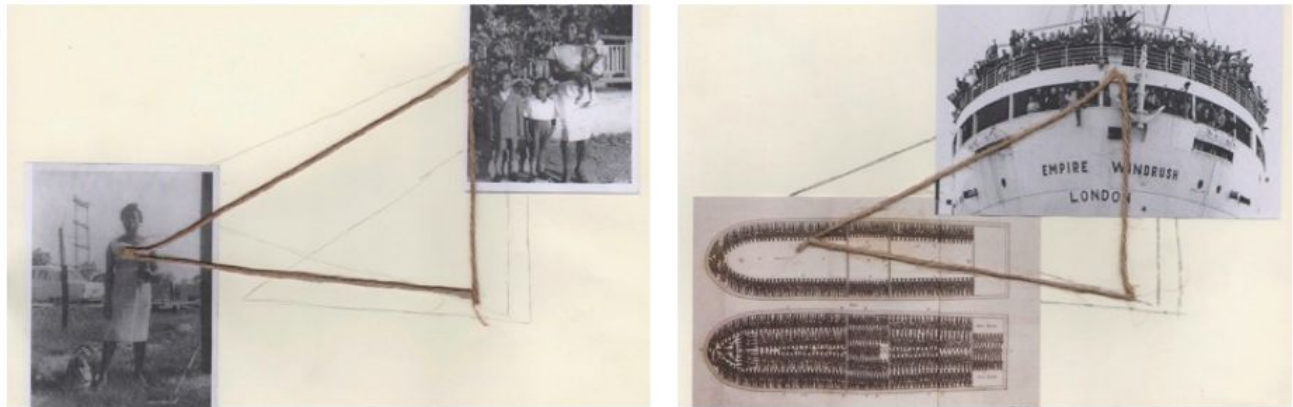
Drawing the triangular routes, they overlap and collide as they identify the maps and modes of movement of the black bodies during this time, but also I began to consider looking at how these have changed for those from the diaspora since this time.

In the second stage, I began to consider historical cartography and movement of my grandmother, and then myself as an example, through the Caribbean transatlantic route. I aimed to highlight how these modes of movement have changed; from our ancestors experiencing an unthinkable confined journey of 2-3 months across the Atlantic, to my grandmother's 6 weeks journey as a member of the Windrush generation.³⁸ I was able to locate images in my own family archive on the day my grandmother left Jamaica, and another on the day she arrived in the UK, then creating a collage to visually illustrate her journey and map her cartography. Through this process I thought about forced migration vs freedom of movement;

³⁷ BBC World Service, *The Story of Africa: African History from the dawn of time*
https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/1624_story_of_africa/page53.shtml

³⁸ The Windrush generation were nearly half a million Caribbean immigrants who moved from the Caribbean to Britain, which in 1948 faced severe labour shortages in the wake of the Second World War.

who chooses to move? Who moves and has no choice? Then, and now? Whilst the answers to these questions still linger, I used them as a starting point to explore this investigation further.



Exploring my historical movement, collage, Porto, 2019

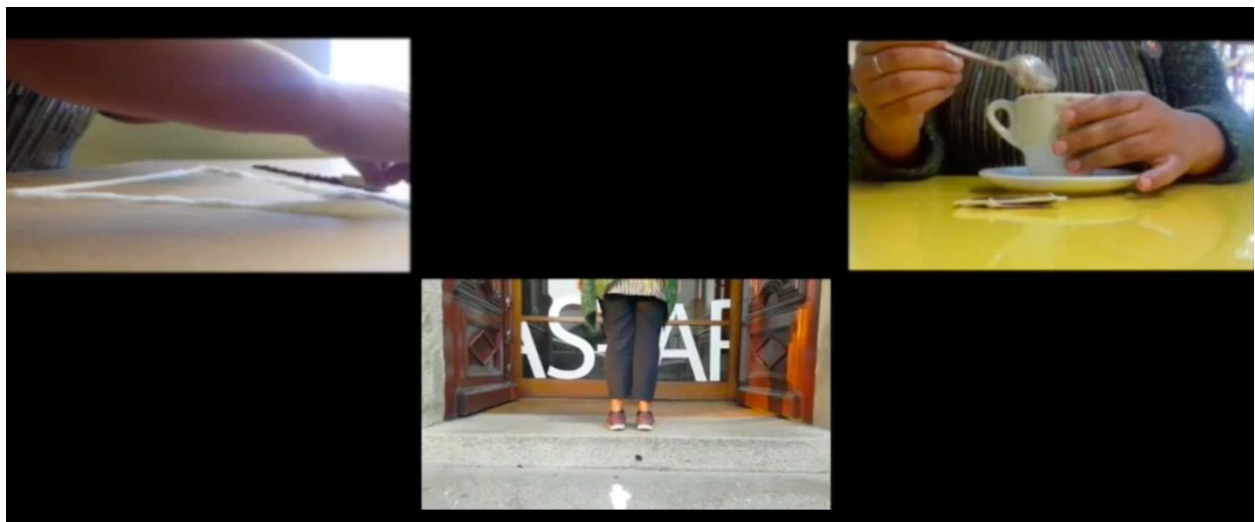
In addition, through archive research I've been able to establish the types of labour female slaves would have carried out and the core purpose for the transportation of their bodies during this historical period. I came across a number of slave auction posters produced at the time in the Caribbean to fuel the sugar, tobacco and coffee trades – three industries thriving today with many companies having these initial economies established during this time.

I go further to consider, and use my own historical cartography from Africa, to the Caribbean, to the UK, and now in Porto: what does it now mean for my body to consume these products within this time? The result of these questions resulted in a short film used to reflect on this within the context of Porto and Belas Artes – an arts and cultural institution.



Notebook explorations, sugar, coffee and tobacco Porto, 2019

The film capturing my body consuming sugar, coffee and tobacco, seeks to bring this issue to the forefront of our considerations of consumptions and understanding of historical cartographies, polarising the colonial scene in the present day context. When looking back at these images, I consider what it means for me to create this scene; do I reclaim this story, am I complicit in participating in the scene?



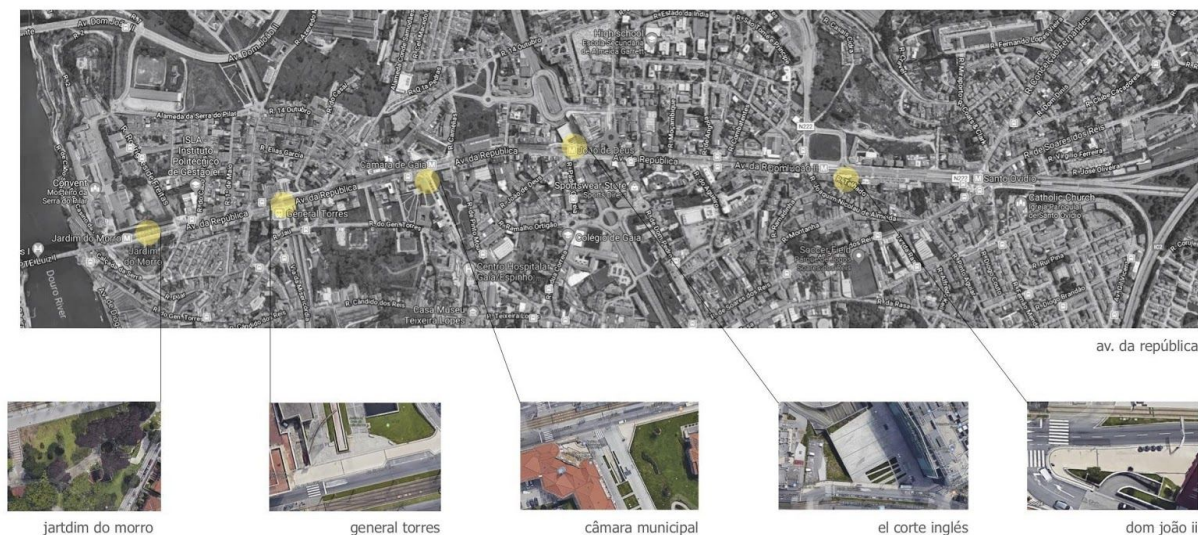
Cartographies of the Black female body, film, Porto, 2019

This aided the development of critical and creative reflection and tools to explore the topic

Só de Noite: Shadow (Portrait) Series

During the first semester of the MADEP course, one of our first assignments was to develop a project in response to our assessment of Avenida da República, Gaia and was the beginning of developing my ideas around womens subjectivities. When I first visited Gaia outside of our academic group, it was at night, and although my given task was to explore the performative nature of the space, it was my experience of fear walking the avenue at night, which probed me to question my relationship to the space and those of other women. I recognised discomfort in the space, stemming from my experience in the past in London, which now manifested itself in the present context.

I considered, as women, how does moving through our neighbourhoods, those public spaces familiar to us, affect our sense of self, social mobility and safety at night compared to the day time? Looking over your shoulder, stepping into the light to avoid shadows, are regular strategies used to deal with a sense of insecurity or uneasiness. And if there was this unease, what would be a way to collectively counter this? The proposal then, was to map and write stories in to the avenue itself, both bringing to light these feelings of discomfort the proposal visual proposal below illustrated the positions in which each



Só de Noite, Proposed map of installation, Avenida da República, Gaia, 2018

I suggested five locations across the avenue with the means to interrupt different sections of area and with each woman distributing these experiences across areas of different flux in

movement due to its normalised purpose of use. For example , Jardim do Morro being a place more engaged by tourists, whilst corte ingles being used by those living locally.



So de Noite, test intervention, Chalk, Avenida da República, Gaia, 2018

I was able to test the intervention with one woman, sharing her story within General Torres. Together we co-produced a large shadow drawing which was also documented as a short film.

Purga

As part of the collective Apartamento4B³⁹ we developed the project, Purga – an urban intervention of performative character, conceived to expose the question of harassment experienced by Women for the Porto Feminist Festival 2019 and to highlight the variation of relational experiences through an artistic means in the public space. The project took a relational and qualitative standpoint and the action was developed through the common experience between us as women, but allowing for the subjectivities of women living in Porto I to share their own narrative and how this relates to the space we all occupy. In addition, the collective itself, which was formed by two architects, an interior designer and myself as Producer for allowing for an interdisciplinary method of working to emerge.

³⁹ A collective of women with a focus on public space and artistic interventions formed by Claire Sivier, Izabel Barboni, Fernanda Zotovici and Rayan Merhy from Brazil, Lebanon and England working across architecture, design and parts and cultural production

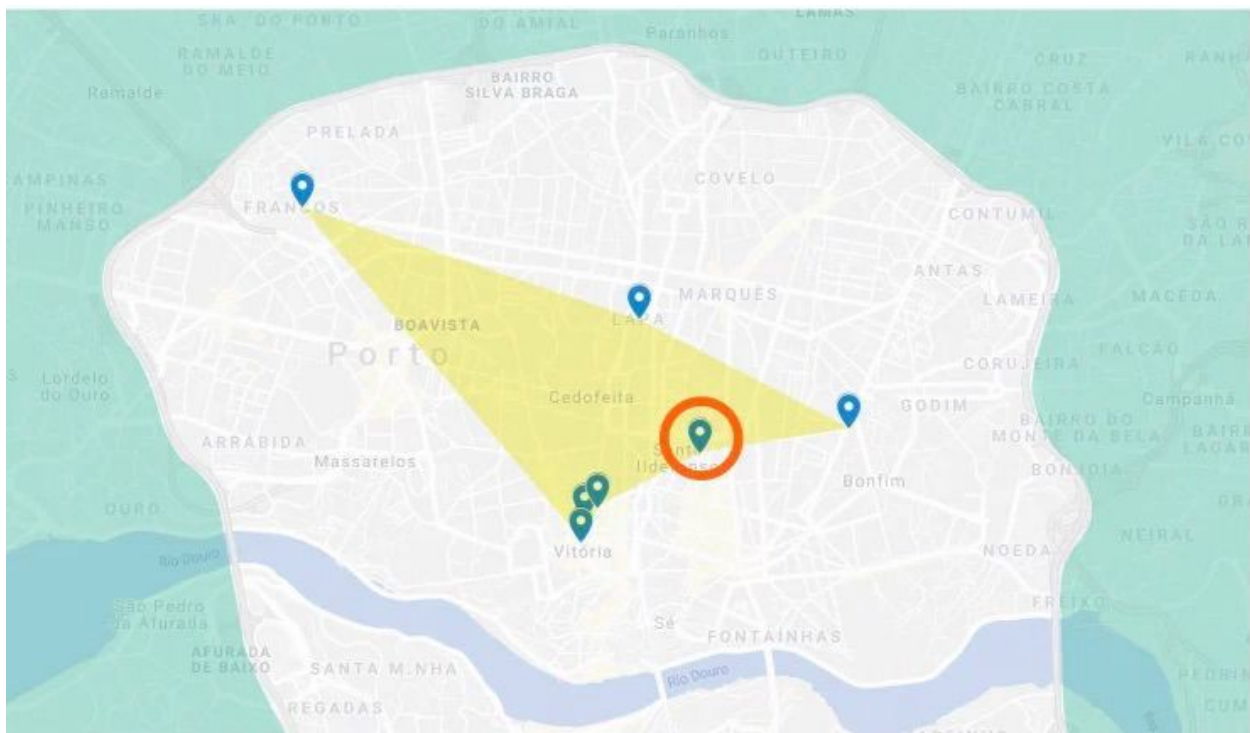
The action invited women to participate in an experience divided in three moments:

1. Workshop - invited to either divide, to share, to unburden stories or memories that involve any type of harassment whether structurally within the workplace, or on the street. Each woman is invited to bring an object that represents the symbol of its history: a piece of clothing, a watch, a book, a shoe, or any other object symbolically associated with a narrative of history. Women will then be encouraged to write a short text, or some words to be attached to the object.
2. Urban drift - All the women walk in a group along the street, taking a collective urban drift. The act of walking symbolizes the woman's moment of empowerment.
3. Open installation - The women leave the object and its attached story made during the workshop, in a public space, creating an installation of objects. The installation of objects aims to share a set of harassment narratives, and in a more personal and poetic way, for a woman, the act of leaving the object functions as a ritual of abandonment and liberation. It is a project that seeks to explore through experimentation between the exchange of stories, collective drift and spontaneous installation in a public space.



Purga, Apartamento4B, Workshop, Urban Draft & Open installation Porto Feminist Festival 2019

As women who have our homelands outside of Portugal, this process allowed us to explore and develop a project within the context of Porto and assessed the process of artistic production in a context new to us as a collective. In addition, the project allowed for the process of co-creation, not just as a collective, but through the co-creation of experience from participants across all three elements of the project through narrative storytelling. Furthermore, there was a clear line drawing on the past, and taking ownership of an uncomfortable past. Through my participation, I was able to keep an overview on ensuring these elements were connected and as clear as possible, as well as exploring the potential to expand the project further and I set up a short evaluation for the project to gain a better understanding for the women involved felt about the process, to gain their thoughts and insights into the project. This process was helpful to explore not only their own experience of the project, but also, how Apartamento4b can work together more in the future.



Purga, Map of alternative Object Placement, Porto, 2019

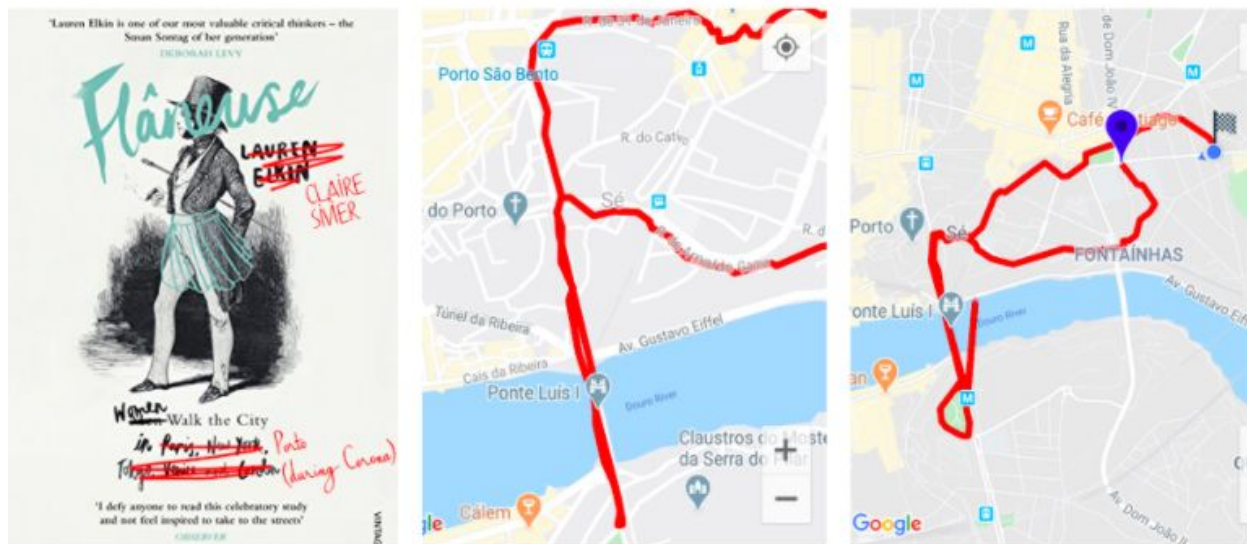
Although we were able to create impact through collectively placing the objects together, this small evaluation provided us with the possibility to create a map of future possibilities, whilst

providing each woman involved the opportunity to consider their objects in other parts of the city more personally related to their own experiences.

Flaneuse: Women Walking the City During Corona

Between March 2020 - May 2020, like most cities across the globe, Porto was in a state of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Having already conducted one of my walking interviews with Melissa prior to this, my initial planned interviews were on hold. Like many my world has suddenly become smaller. During this time I initiated a series of personal walks, around Porto to counter the isolation I was feeling, as well providing me with the space to develop new ways of documenting walking experiences. I repetitively walked exposing myself to the various changes to the city during this time, and my relationship to them.

Taking inspiration from the Lauren Elkin⁴⁰, through this performative action I began to explore different forms of walking art documentation and methodologies, using my own body and tools such as GPS mapping, photos and drawings, allowing me to trace my relational experience to the city of Porto, my body as a woman, and creativity during a time of confinement and difficulty in the period of lockdown.



Flaneuse: Women Walking the City During Corona, Walking Practice, Porto, 2020

⁴⁰ ELKIN, Lauren. *Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice and London*. London: Penguin Random House, 2016

Between March and April 2020, documented 32 walks each lasting between approximately 1-2.5 hours. Each day I would take photos and document my experience in the city noting reflections of the different fluxes of movement, and documenting key signifiers of our state in the city at the time. Sometimes I would take the same routes, sometimes diverting depending on the number of people on the streets, creating a different type of fear I had experienced in So de Noite. The mapping of the experience allowed me to assess how my movements were changing each day, whilst adding to the archive of my movement across the city.

Visually, I was able to capture either highlighting the repetitive nature of the experience, which at the time provided comfort, but also signifiers of time past, closure of spaces often used for public interaction, and artistic interventions others took agency with during this time.



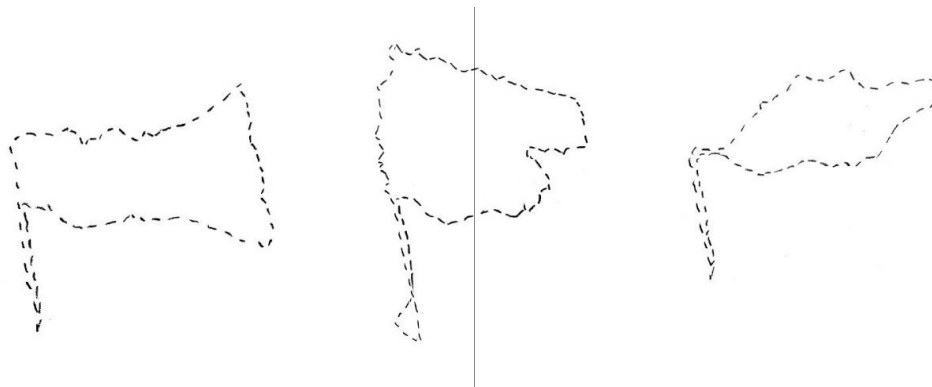
Photographic documentation from the archive created walking regular walks.

Capturing the daily build up of post, signifying time past , Porto, 2020



Photographic documentation from the archive created walking regular walks. 'We will go in to the future'
(free translation), Porto, 2020

Following the walks, I was then able to re-configure the GPS maps by creating new cartographic lines of movement resulting in 32 maps, representing a calendar of movement across the during time.



Examples of mapping calendar, pencil, Porto, 2020

Through the development of these works a shift in my personal art practices and methods emerged; from walking alone to walking as a collective in order to explore the process of intersectional subjective narratives of different women in the city. All of these experiences laid the foundations for exploring the walking as embodiment, qualitative research, subjective storytelling, recalling the past to address a sense of self in the present moment, and counter-cartography. The next chapter illustrates the symphysis of these experiences, through walking interviews.

3.Walking Interview Process & Methods

As highlighted in the introduction of this investigation, walking interviews are a relatively new and innovative qualitative method, with roots in ethnography, anthropology, and geography, which can effectively explore lived experience through the embodied act of walking, whilst avoiding perceived limitations of more traditional, stationary sit-down interviews (Liamputtong et.al, 2019:1271). The aim of this method was to understand how each woman relates and associates to the neighbourhood(s) here in Porto.

This chosen method of the walking interview combines observations and semi-structured recorded interviews which aims to create a collaborative process between interviewee/interviewer, rather than a conventional face to face interview process. It has been argued that studies which utilise stationery interviews miss visual-spatial cues as the participant is not prompted by cues they would see if they were interviewed moving through the environment, whilst allowing for a process of collaboration and co-creation between the interviewing and interviewee. (Garcia et al., 2012).

The act of walking through the city together aimed to allow each person to recall, examine and capture their own ideas of identity, mobility, how this relates to each woman in relation to their artistic practice and life in the city, and to explore how we relate to each other. Again, this walking methodology acts as a tool to explore our intercultural relationship between us, as black women, and challenge my own place of speech.

Furthermore, it was clear to me that through my previous experiments, the method brings together this philosophy of Afrofuturism by using our gendered bodies to take ownership of our

own narrative through the use of bodies in the city, but also as Rebecca Solnit suggests, 'walking shares with making and working that crucial element of engagement of the body and the mind with the world, of knowing the world through the body and the body through the world.' (Solnit, 2000: p29).

Participant Recruitment

Recruitment for the project was supported through the InterStruct Collective⁴¹ who have connections to a network of artists across Porto. I had a short meeting with the core team members to detail the project, allowing for them to make recommendations. Initially I was interested in speaking to four women, however at the time focussing on a smaller group of three felt like a good starting point for this initial study. Participants need to be selected on the basis that they can allow access to the phenomenon under consideration (Smith et.al. 2009).

Interview Schedule

I had originally planned for all interviews to take place in March 2020, with an inviosined 5 months to analyse the data generated, however, with the current COVID 19 pandemic I reformed my plan and schedule. Melissa's interview took place four days before the Portuguese lockdown, Desirée took place in May, as restrictions began to be released and, Lolas took place in September. As mentioned in the previous chapter, at this stage, I had become more reflective about the process and the intersectional element of the project, questioning, who gets to walk in the public space? And what would it mean if this project took place in another place? Therefore with Lola a more collaborative process was tested, where we modified key locations she would either answer her questions, or reflect upon by telling me about them through a drawing (see appendix). This allowed for a more intersection approach to be applied, whilst leaning in to other ways of mapping experience visually.

⁴¹ An interdiscipinaty network and collective of artists and researchers based in Porto. I arranged a meeting with two members of the team in January 2020 to inform them about the project and to ask if they could recommend artists for me to interview in Porto which resulted in three women I interviewed.

Interview Protocol

To be as clear and transparent as possible about the process of the interviews, the context of the work and how the work will be used, I had conversations and conversations with each woman to discuss the process and to build an understanding. I produced an interview proposal see to share with them which can be found in the appendix.

The protocol for the walking interviews is partly the same as a traditional interview but I included the following components:

1. Develop the general interview schedule for the topic and ensuring each woman was aware of the general nature of the interview and context
2. Asking each woman to consider when she would like to start her interview and having a budget to cover the cost of transport in case transport might be needed for freshness, as one part of the final interview took place in a restaurant. This makes the interview place-responsive.
3. Security - I discussed with each woman whether the interviews would be anonymous or not. As part of this is to also promote the visibility of black women arts, all agreed to be named, however, some key locations and personal data have been omitted from the transcribed interviews for safety of each woman.
4. Being clear about what tools are available for each woman to capture parts of the route, including pens, paper, using of recording photos on their own mobile phone
5. Consider the length of the route, the terrain to be covered, safety aspects, the health, fitness and age of the participant and the interviewer; the likelihood of noise on the route which has an impact on the quality of recordings
6. Selecting suitable recording equipment, preferably something that reduces the impact of surrounding noise as moving continually with the microphone may distract participants.
I found it helpful to speak to each woman at the beginning and needed to explain how we must speak into the microphone.

The important point to raise here is that implementing the above meant each interview was very different, as the result was based on providing women with the space to form a route and modes of communication relative to them.

Interpretative Phenomenology Analysis (IPA)

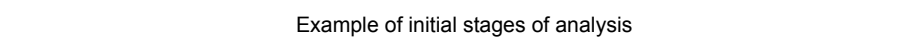
When considering which method I would use to analyse the interviews, I immediately understood it would be important to utilise a method which would be adaptive, and would provide me with a framework within which I would counter and manage my own bias as much as possible. This process has been a subjective endeavour and as a researcher, there should not be an attempt to develop an objective, truthful reality about an experience, rather there “*an appreciation that experiences are ‘meaning-full’ for a person*” (Wilde and Murray, 2010, page 59).

The aim of IPA is to explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world, and the main currency for an IPA study is the meanings of particular experiences (phenomena). Smith et al note that IPA is a creative process; therefore there is not one rulebook as such, therefore it felt that my ABR approach through walking would be a good fit with IPA in a way that it complements its practices, of exploring a particular phenomena. As well as this, I found a number of IPA studies⁴² which analysed experiences related to was shown by the examples of the projects. As a result, there appeared to be scope for implementing IPA and integrating its procedural protocol with ABR in order to enhance my interpretative capacity, as well as to facilitate conditions where these interpretations can take forms that are alternatives to written text such as mapping, drawings and photographs.

A key advantage to using IPA is that it is recognised that there is a double hermeneutic. The participant is attempting to make sense of their experiences once asked questions, and then by extension the interviewer is trying to make sense of what the participant is trying to make sense of. When the material is analysed, it is this interpretation that is being presented, so if the interviewer has a more direct experience of the topic of the interview, and in the case of this investigation, the use of walking interviews, it may be possible to may develop a more nuanced and sensitive understanding of what a participant has said, and in doing produces a more detailed understanding of a lived experience. (IPA; Smith, et al., 2009). This process goes beyond what is just said, and questions what words mean in the broader context of experience.

Furthermore, it seemed to me that IPA had the clear potential to be integrated with my investigations aim of not only exploring these lived experiences, but also grounding Afrofuturism

⁴² Rochelle Woollacott - Doctorate in Counselling Psychology, *Walking with farmers and talking about suicidal feelings: An interpretative phenomenological analysis*, 2020



The first stage of analysis was to read through the first interview to familiarise myself with the data and then in the right hand column, by hand I identified themes and patterns in the transcript keeping the key research aims in mind ('phenomena'). This was done in order to immerse myself within the transcript. At this initial stage, Smith et al. (2009, p.82) argue, it is critical in order "to ensure the participant becomes the focus of analysis."

The second stage was to closely examine my notes in the right hand column of this first transcript initial note taking (including descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments). The third phase was to begin to cluster and develop emergent themes. The fourth phase was to search for connections across emergent themes. Phase five was to look for patterns across all three interviews.

Qualitative Validity

I have been guided by Smith et al recommendations as an overarching approach to evaluating validity as this has been the dominant method used in analysis from start to finish. Therefore criteria for validity and reliability should be flexibly applied (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2013). They recommend following Lucy Yardley's four broad based principled approach for assessing the quality for IPA research which are listed below along with how this research has considered each principle:

Sensitivity to context: Discussing your lived experiences can be sensitive. I accounted for this by ensuring each woman was aware of how their interview would be treated, and building a rapport to show the value of their lived experience through listening, empathy and checking in regularly. As interviews were carried out over a 7 month period I felt it was important to provide updates on how the work was taking shape. In the analysis, the narrative was first constructed by picking out the key texts which aligned with themes from the IPA process to ensure it was the women's voices that were at the core of the narrative. In this case, I also shared the analysis parts of the transcripts I planned to use with each woman to ensure transparency and clarification of meaning, as I was aware for two of the participants, the interviews were being carried out in their second language. For Lola, I shared the full transcript and translation to ensure they accurately represented our conversation.

Commitment and rigour: Before each interview commenced it was important that each woman felt they could trust me as a person and my intentions that their experiences are contributing to a broader project to understand and centre frame of reference for black female voices. I also aimed to ensure the analysis method was rigorous by following the same steps for each interview once I felt comfortable with a suitable approach. I also made reflections on how the interviewing approach could be improved.

Transparency and coherence: I have aimed to be clear on the methodology and how I combined two methods for the analysis and develop a coherent interpretation in written form.

Impact and importance: In line with a context-sensitive approach to planning, the lived experiences provide a unique, inclusive and empowered citizen perspective regarding the subjective lived experiences of three black women living in Porto.

There is no single, prescribed method for dealing with data in a study using IPA. The approach is better described as focusing on each participant's attempts to make sense of their experiences; a flexible process or cycle that is both iterative and inductive (Smith et al. 2009). As such, I made the choice to analyse their interviews separately and to share reflections of some of the prominent themes, and the following chapter outlines this.

4. Walking Acts of Subjectivity

The walking interview and walking practice outlined above, has helped understand the subjective lived experiences in Porto. The questions outlined were created to allow the conversation to be expansive and unfold to explore a variation of themes, '*finding a space for repair*', '*searching for home*', '*finding security in collective working*', and experiences relating to each woman, whilst taking into consideration the broader context of the work.

In addition to the documentation, each walk was mapped through GPS allowing each woman to create her own trace and new cartography, and by extension a new narrative across and around Porto. This act of walking allowed us to look at how this form of mobility offers a valuable perspective on the world and a particular place, and how new technologies such as GPS can help capture and represent those perspectives (Evans and Jones, 2011), and also enabled a way of creating a visual counter-mapp and narrative with our bodies. Appendix illustrates the individual maps created from the process.

Below I have provided excerpts from the most prominent themes highlighted in the interviews. A full analysis of each interview can be found in the appendix. The writeup was combined with narrative storytelling to provide a more immersive reading, proving the foundations for the next stage of the project to create a website as the beginning of a new archive of stories.

Melissa: Transformation through time and place & searching for home

Recurring throughout the interview, was Melissa's perception of her sense of self and how her sense of identity has changed from her time in Cabo Verde, to Lisboa, to Porto, and in particular, an experience in Brazil which changed how she perceived both her identity as a woman, and more specifically as a black woman, and how this has informed the focus of her work. Early in the interview, she recollects her personal transformation connected to this experience:

'so it was like, THE change. The first thing, the first cut. I had a lot of other cuts in my life that er, pushed me to think of myself as a black person of course, but I was

not thinking of myself like a black person, I was thinking of myself, like a mulatto, or like a mixed...I was in that privileged place, then brasil it was really strong and important for me to have this connection with the black movement, and for me it was incredible, ..."it's that its that...they can understand me!"



Melissa Rodrigues, Walking interview documentation, Porto 2020

The above suggests her understanding of identity beyond gender and having a heightened sense of her ethnicity as well as feeling a sense of connection and feeling understood through these relations. Although she expressed her understanding of her politics of her body earlier in life, this experience reinforced her identification with the black movement, and how this may align more with her sense and experiences within Portuguese society. She also draws attention to her intersectional understanding of her perceived black need based on skin tone, through the mention of “mulatto” and mixed.”

Desiree: Developing home and work through collectivity

I met Desiree in late May 2020, just shortly after the lockdown restrictions in Portugal began to lift. With this being my second interview, two months after I had completed the first, I had time to reflect upon the process. Desirée and I spoke about how she wanted the interview in advance, and by doing so, helped to keep things more contained in terms of time, and I felt more relaxed about the process, so I could focus more on providing a comfortable environment for her to speak. In total, we spent 1.5 hours together. Her chosen spot to meet was near her studio and she had a clear idea of where she wanted to take me from the outset.

We began walking down a long stretch of road in a busy area in Porto, to begin, daily life busying itself around us, having not been around many people in a while, it almost felt like 'normal life' again. We continued our journey..



Lola: Embodying the bigger picture

Lola is conscious of her cultural identity as a Brazilian and a black woman and it's position within the colonial context of Portugal, and more specifically Europe, and finds comfort being

with people that are like her due to the difficulty of traumatic interactions in Porto, carrying them forward into her ongoing interactions and exceptions finding refuge and security in a more specific community of people on which she feels she has room for growth:

'That's why i have brazilian friends and another friends, like black friends and them we can manage our work, and then we work in the house.'

'So I think the search I have here is the search for a repair, even if I think it is a place that I don't know if it has to do with my ancestry or not, I am looking to recover something that was previously taken from me, you know?'

'So my idea is really to be strong in these difficult times, for a while, to be here working, studying, living together, doing our militancy, doing art, doing many things, wait until I can get this request in, then see what will be. But I think my biggest motivation for being in Portugal is the possibility of being a European citizen. Not that I want to be European, I want to know how it is simply, being born in Europe, to be able to enjoy so many privileges that have been denied to people like me or coming from colonized countries. The possibility of making it easier to achieve well-being in socio-economic, political and social aspects just because you are European'

Here, Lola expresses her internal conflict dealing with the dichotomy between dealing with the conflict of being in Europe as a potential european citizen and the possibilities it might provide, whilst seeking to understand the remains of its colonial history. By doing so there is a search for *repair*, emphasis on self growth, self change and independence from the experience and weight of this colonial history.

Reflections & Discussion

Above and in the attached appendix, I have presented my interpretations of the meanings of each interview and now I present a short overview of the key finding through a discussion and reflection.

Through the neighbourhoods, each woman recalled a range of experiences showing their richness and complexity. This complexity strongly relates to the intersectionality of each of their lived experiences. Walking around with each woman gave me the opportunity to understand their relationship to the city and how past experiences have informed their current choices. All women cite particular moments outside of Porto, and Portugal in relation to either places, or identity shifts, creating moments of intersubjectivity as being with each woman in places important to them, bringing attention to their locality and connecting to their past in the global. Doreen Massey's work resonates here (1994), as the local and global intertwined; all three women made reference experiences and histories across continents to connect to their current local context. The findings were consistent with a broader review of the existing literature, all interviews, touched on differentiated histories still lived and negotiated in the forming of spaces of inhabitants understood in terms of home. The theme of "violence" however two of the themes 'searching for home' and 'fear of gentrification' require and deserve more investigation leaves room for further research and reflection, demonstrating the scope of the method. In addition, it was evident that nature, outdoors, and green environments also provide a sense of place and calm, recovery, leisure and wellbeing of the river, atlantic, parks and graveyards which also builds on a sense of belonging to place. All participants spoke of the colonial legacy of the city and how it has impacted them personally, and their artistic work and "collective working" highlighted across all three interviews demonstrated the need for not only comfort in others, but as a means of working together. The analysis also highlights negative emotions and experiences problematising the 'European Centric' centering of experience, highlighting that while Portugal foreign policy through the CPLP, may be at odds with the colonial history which lingers in the present scene. The themes of "shifting identity" and exploring self perceptions are prominent. To add to this picture, I return to Hall, who offers an insightful comment on such process of becoming:

'Cultural identity ... is a matter of "becoming" as well as "being." It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history, and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. (Hall, 1990: 225)

In this sense, the participants' experiences need to be understood in the context of a particular time and place: concerning when and where they were and how they continue to change based on experiences.

5. Conclusion Notes

Afrofuturism and the Present considered existing historical narratives brought together in Porto and addresses how a historical identity can relate to day to day experience in a city with a colonial background and how researching these spatial histories can help us understand present day geographic organisation and how quickly it has changed. This research makes it clear that contemporaneous subjective identities have a historical context that are intertwined with day-to-day interpersonal relations. Colonial structures built through the transatlantic legacies mould their formation, especially when taking into consideration the experiences of black women. Visual signifiers around Porto's urban scene, can polarise these positions, and also reveal how these identities shift in relation to them. I acknowledge there is scope to explore this beyond the european context as a way of decentralising its point of view and explore other global colonial diasporic histories.

Afrofuturism and intersectionality were classified as theoretical frameworks in which to explore these subjective positions through walking art practices and walking as a qualitative arts based research tool, and walking interviews and practice generated rich data through relationships to the city. Afrofuturism guided the research, and elicited a recollection of past perspectives and events which addressed the present moment, thus influencing the direction of the work through analysis of the broader colonial histories explored and individual women's phenomena and considering the gendering of space. I would like this investigation to be a stepping-stone for establishing a more grounded exploration of its use as I believe there would be possibilities to explore the sonic elements of this work which could not be explored fully within the remit of this current investigation. However, the rich archive generated through mapping, narrative accounts, and photography act as a starting point.

Combined with intersectionality the research was able to centre these subjectivities of experience resulting in explorations of four central projects, and three walking interviews with black women artists. The use of (auto)ethnography through ABR has been essential for establishing this as an interdisciplinary investigation, highlighting the potential need for

collaborative working across complex subject matters, which may be relevant to a host of topics. Furthermore, it enabled me to engage with the complexity of the subject matter creatively, whilst allowing for a critical reflection of my own position in the research.

Limitations of Interview Process

As I drew attention to in the introduction my reflexive understanding and positioning of my own often subjective experience and presence across this investigation had the potential to provide both possibilities and limitations. For example, through the process IPA I drew on my expertise as a producer and researcher and utilised it to stimulate and enhance the corresponding processes. It is therefore possible these sensitivities unique to me have influenced the research findings. There are two important implications, the being that the written stories within the appendix represent my own subjective perspectives and metaphorical readings in regards to the phenomena in question. This eliminates the possibility of any quantitative generalisations as an outcome of this investigation, however, this does not subtract from its value when it comes to the transparency and coherence of the research and by extension enhances rather than depreciates the investigations legitimacy and credibility.

I also feel verbal language can provide a barrier, I am a native English speaker and Portuguese and German were the native language of the three women I interviewed. This means there was potential for meaning to be lost both during the interview and during the transcribing phase. Having shared the results of the analysis with Melissa seven months after her interview, in hindsight, she felt a frustration with not being able to completely articulate the complexity of her feelings or emotions as she would have liked. Melissa also reflected on the places she took me stating one in particular now holds another meaning, and if we were to conduct the interview now, she would take me somewhere else. This point again, highlights the complexity of the method, the feelings they can elicit and that the process successfully captures the present moment, and as Hall suggests, these experiences need to be understood in the context of a particular time and place, and perhaps provide a clearer avenue for how afrofuturism can be enabled in the process.

Next Steps

This investigation has now set the foundations for a larger ongoing project building on the ABR methods developed within this work. In November 2020, the project will be shared at the *Shared*

Narratives Conference: Supporting Work by Performing Arts Researchers of Colour organised by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance based in the UK. This supports the aim of contributing to the understanding the experience of black women within the arts & cultural professional sphere and ABR methods, taking the work beyond the realm of Porto, and Portugal. It will aid further collaborations around the topics centred in this research. The next stage will be to build on the archive already developed across the project through the walking interview process and to create an online archive, images and audio stories adding to the counter movement of representation of black diasporic narratives, specifically those of women. Furthermore, I would like to expand this work and adapt the current methodology for a PhD which will allow for a timeframe and parameters much more well suited for this type of primary research, and to explore these subjects and methods more thoroughly.

Bringing this investigation to a close, I realise it is the beginning rather than the end. It has been a complicated one. Taking the (auto)ethnographic approach, being critical and self-reflective can create doubt and an emotional weight, which can not be separated from research, but incorporated as a tool. As I have already indicated above, this project has been influential and has pushed my practices as a researcher, producer, and dare I say it...artist into more socio-cultural directions, where theory and practice are merged, and where the practices of making and writing are used to enhance each other. I conclude this investigation with an affirmation towards future research avenues and those of anyone reading this work; I return to Gary Younge....

“The propensity to despair is strong, but should not be indulged. Sing yourself up. Imagine a world in which you might thrive, for which there is no evidence. And then fight for it.”

Bibliographic References

- ADRIAN, Clyde & MCKITTRICK, Katherine. *Black geographies and the politics of place*, Toronto: Between the Lines ; Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 2007
- ANDERSON, Reynaldo & JONES, Charles E. *Afrofuturism 2.0: the rise of astro-blackness*. Lexington: Books, 2015
- AHMED, Sara. Castaneda, Claudia. Fortier, Anne-Marie, Sheller. (ed) *Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*. Oxford, Berg Publishers, 2003
- BACHMAN, Leonard & BACHMAN, Christine. *Intersectionality, Oppression and Opportunity in Architecture: Claiming The Social Complex*. Texas, University of Houston 2017
- BALLANTYNE, Tony & BURTON, Antoinette. *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005
- BECKER, Danielle. *Afrofuturism and decolonisation: using Black Panther as methodology Image & Text: a Journal for Design*, Volume 33 Number 1, 2019
- BLUNT, Alison, ROSE, Gillian. *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*. New York: Guilford Press, 1994
- BORDA, Joan. *Towards A Politics of Location: Rethinking Marginality. Canadian Woman Studies*, V.11, No.1 cws.journals.yorku.ca 1990
- BOCHNER, Arthur & ELLIS, Carolyn. *Evocative Autoethnography: Writing Lives and Telling Stories*. Routledge, 2016
- BUTLER, Octavia E. *Kindred*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003
- CARERI, Francesco. *Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice*. Barcelona: GG, 2004
- CERTEAU, Michael de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984
- CHILTON, Gioia, & LEAVY, Patricia. *Arts-Based Research Practice: Merging Social Research and the Creative Arts*. Oxford press, 2014
- CRESSWELL, Tim. *On The Move: Mobility in the modern western world*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2006.

CRESWELL, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative & Mixed Method Approaches*. The University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 2014

---- *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Alberta: Sage Publications, Inc, 2007

DERY, Mark. *"Black to the Future" in Flame Wars: a Discourse of Cyberculture*. Durham and London, Duke University Press, 1994

ELKIN, Lauren. *Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice and London*. London: Penguin Random House, 2016

EVANE, James & JONES, Phil. *The walking interview: methodology, mobility and place*. *Applied Geography*, 31(2), 849-858, 2011

GILROY, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993

HEDDON, Deirdre. *Autobiography and Performance*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008

HEDDON, Deirdre & TURNER Cathy. *Walking Women: Shifting the Tales and Scales of Mobility, Contemporary*. *Theatre Review*, 2012, 22:2, 224-236

HOOKS, Bell. *Black Looks: Race & Representation*. Boston: South End Press, 1992

JACKSON, Peter. *Maps of Meaning: an introduction to cultural geography*. London: Unwin Hyman [1989] 2005

HORTA, Ana Paula Beja e WHITE, Paul. *"Post-colonial migration and citizenship regimes: a comparison of Portugal and the United Kingdom"*, in *Revista Migrações*, n.º 4, Lisboa: ACIDI, pp. 33-57, 2008

JONES, Owen. *Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class*. Verso, London, 2011

KILOMBA, Grada. *Plantation Memories: Episodes of Everyday Racism*. Auflage, 2019

LEFEBVRE, Henri, *The Production of Space*, Oxford, UK, Blackwell Publishing, [1991] 2005

LEAVY, Patricia. *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 1st ed. Oxford University Press, 2014.

LIAMPUTTONG, Pranee (ed.) *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences*. Penrith: School of Science and Health Western Sydney University, 2009

LOPES, Policarpo. *Portugal: Holograma da Mobilidade Humana*, Lisbon: Editora Rei Livros (1999)

MCKITTRICK, Katherine. *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*. University of Minnesota Press, 2006

MASSEY, Doreen. *Space, Place and Gender*. Polity Press, in association with Blackwell Publishers, 1994

MATOS WUNDERLICH, Filipa. *Walking and Rhythmicity: Sensing Urban Space*. Journal of Urban Design, 2008, p136

O'BYRNE, Patrick. *The Advantages and Disadvantages of Mixing Methods: An Analysis of Combining Traditional and Autoethnographic Approaches*, Qualitative Health Research 1, 2008

O'NEILL, Maggie & ROBERTS, Brian. *Walking Methods Research on the Move*, Routledge, 2020

POLANAH, Paulo S. "*The Zenith of our National History!*" *National identity, colonial empire, and the promotion of the Portuguese Discoveries: Portugal 1930s*, e-journal of Portuguese History 2011

PUWAR, Nirmal. *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Berg. 2004

RIESSMA, Catherine K. *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion* CA: Sage Publications.

SMITH, Jonathan, LARKIN, Michael & FLOWERS, Paul. *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. London: Sage, 2009

SOLNIT, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York: Viking, 2000.

SPRINGGAY, Stephanie & TRUMAN, Sarah E. *Walking methodologies in a more-than-human world: Walking lab*. London: Routledge, 2019.

TALWAR, Savneet. *An Intersectional Framework for Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in Art Therapy*. Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 2011

WOMACK, Ytasha. *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2013.

VICENTE, Filipa Lowndes. *Black Women's Bodies in the Portuguese Colonial Visual Archive (1900-1975)*, Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies 30/31, 16-67. Special Issue: Transnational Africas: Visual, Material and Sonic Cultures of Lusophone Africa, 2017

Electronic:

BBC World Service, *The Story of Africa: African History from the dawn of time*
https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/1624_story_of_africa/page53.shtml

CRENSHAW, Kimberle. *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*. University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8. Available at:
<http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>

DANIELS, DeAnna M., *Imagineering Black (Im)Possibility: Unearthing Afrofuturist Materialist Interventions*. Theses and Dissertations. 2563. 2016
<https://preserve.lehigh.edu/etd/2563>

GILLIGAN, Melanie. *Subjects of Finance: Melanie Gilligan. Interviewed by Tom Holert*. Grey Room, Inc. and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Winter 2012: 84–99. https://www.academia.edu/26092243/Subjects_of_Finance_Melanie_Gilligan_Interviewed_by_Tom_Holert

HALL, Stuart. *Cultural identity and diaspora in Jonathan Rutherford* (ed.) *Identity: community, culture, difference*, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990, p222-237

JONES, Trina. *Shades of Brown: The Law of Skin Color*. Duke Law Journal. 49 (1487).
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=233850 p136

OBASI, Chijioke. *Negotiating the insider/outsider continua: a Black female hearing perspective on research with Deaf women and Black women*, SAGE, 2012

SENEL, Aslihan. *Mapping as Performing Place, disClosure: A Journal of Social Theory*: Vol. 23, Article 8, 2014.

YOUNG, Gary. *In these bleak times, imagine a world where you can thrive*, Guardian, 2020
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/10/bleak-times-thrive-last-column-guardian?CMP=share_btn_tw&fbclid=IwAR3aLigzBN_o-FDrgoP__FTiHsgB9vPAXV_rrq9fDo_X5hG9hGVwv6j09aM

APPENDIX

1. Walking Interview proposal
2. Full Interview Analysis Write Up
3. Extract Example from Reflective Interview Diary
4. Walking interview Maps
5. Lola interview map
6. Final version Só de noite - Project proposal