

PLAYING THE ARCHIVE

DEPT. OF THE ARMY

RECORDS

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# cultivating an archive of one's own

on the occasion of the opening of the first public session of the programme 'Distant Islands, Spectral Cities', entitled 'Weaving a spiral of archives in London', presented at Senate House (University of London), as part of the 2023/24 Banister Fletcher Global Fellowship. It was followed by interventions from Eve Hayes de Kalaf, Adam Philogene Heron, Natalie Hyacinth, Carole Wright and Julian Henriques, accompanied by the music and poetry of the artist Annotate (Aka Liam Spencer).

Olivier Marboeuf

*History comes back to us in confusion, in gruesome  
film cuts and repetitions. There are no great writers  
but there is a DJ who massacres old refrains.*

thing that you have produced in different contexts,

*Un lieu à soi*

*De l'entretenir*

*from where*

*why      towards where*

a first place for the words of my guests and for your words. I'll get back to this in the course

I was born a little over fifty years ago in the outskirts of Paris, where I spent a large part of



not really the truth. Even if it is true that strictly speaking there are no places for Afro-



*tiers-lieux*] that had flourished on the sites of  
that would replace them. The beautiful machinery of gentrification had cleaned up what  
too Arab, too African. Formerly, because now everything was different. As had happened  
for this delicious hunt for the poor. Everything became beautiful and marvellous. Paris

confusing and hardly scientific manner. They too were gentrified. Veritable little kittens!  
Meow! The docile little creatures were celebrated, once the thick layer of filth had been  
cleaned of what we called skin, flesh, what we called the heart of the archives – their  
flow, their heartbeat, their inner conflicts. The way you clean a stolen mask, scraping of  
the cloth and secretions that covered and filled it so you could contemplate its empty and  
silent form in a glass case in a museum. The time of the Black archive had finally come!  
Accompanied by the reset to zero of the history that we knew so well, it was finally going to  
appear, shrouded with mystery, for a new first time. A new hurricane was going to scatter

of the self – what was going to become the great affair of the politics  
of diversity in art, fashion, advertising and all those who had finally amalgamated these  
*from*

*beneath*

enough of a remove to be able to reflect on what sort of trace our lives would leave behind  
with the urgency of finding a place to live and making ourselves invisible in the peacefully



within us, laying siege to our bodies. On this confused path to finding reasons to envisage an

figure of queer studies in France and member of a collective that itself aims to create an  
LGBTIQ+ archive in Paris. Bourcier's lively and uncompromising interventions confirmed my

*archivante*

levels where on Saturdays interurban RER train lines A and B crossed, and with this all the

published as 'Pousse, où tu peux, comme tu peux, pousse' in Kader  
*Les racines poussent aussi dans le béton*  
Editions Mac Val, 2018

[3] The question of an archive of one's own probably first

éditions AMOK, through which, with Yvan Alagbé, I published

of immigrants, solitude and the invention of dignified lives  
U@ f E *Nègres Jaunes* (Yvan Alagbé, 1992-95), *Les exilés*  
*histoires* (Kamel Khelif and Nabil Farès, 1999), *Algérie la couleur*  
*et le mal* *Une ville un mardi*  
*La Vérité*

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