

Fellows



Sophie Schasiepen

IFK_Junior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2016 bis 30. June 2017

Sophie Schasiepen

PROJECT TITLE

Repatriating Klaas and Trooi Pienaar's Remains to South Africa: An Intervention in Austrian Anthropological Collections

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2012 the Pienaar's remains were returned to South Africa and reinterred. In 1909 Rudolf Pöch, chair of the first professorship for anthropology and ethnography in Vienna, had the corpses exhumed and shipped to Vienna in order to use them for racist anthropological research. Many other human remains and artifacts, some of them acquired on the same expedition, can be found in Austria. This research project pursues the rationale for Pöch's grave robbing, and uncovers the networks that enabled it. His pursuit is analyzed as a case study of the colonial involvement of the Habsburg monarchy, and the contexts and possibilities for the act of repatriation are explored against this backdrop. What discourses take a position on such acts? How are questions of identity construction, nation, colonial responsibility, and the task of state-financed knowledge production negotiated? Can this repatriation be considered a contribution to decolonialization processes?

CV

Sophie Schasiepen completed her degree at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 2013 with the thesis *Schreiben über Dr. Rudolf Pöch's ‚Forschungsreisen‘. Postkoloniale Kritiken und die österreichische Rezeption eines k. u. k. Anthropologen*. In 2014 she was an assistant in the artistic research project "Utopian Pulse: Flares in the Darkroom" (FWF AR 183-G21). From in 2015-2016 she conducted dissertation research in South Africa on the repatriation of Klaas and Trooi Pienaar in the context of a Marietta Blau Scholarship. She worked as an editor at *MALMOE* (2009-15) and *Bildpunkt* (2012-15), the IGBildendekunst magazine.

Publications

„Autoritäten verschieben, festlegen, angreifen. Einige Fragen zu Repatriierungsverhandlungen“, in: *Bildpunkt*, Zeitschrift der IG Bildende Kunst, Sommer 2016, S. 8–9; „Did you try to find out where this comes from? Bericht zur Konferenz „Positioning Ethnological Museums in the 21st Century“ der Volkswagenstiftung und des Deutschen Museumsbundes, 21.6. – 23.6.15 in Hannover, in: progress online; „Out of the Salon. Female counterspaces, anticolonial struggles and transversal politics“, in: Ines Doujak, Oliver Ressler (Hg.): *Utopian Pulse – Flares in the Darkroom*, London 2015, S. 44–51; „Österreichische ethnographische und anthropologische Bildproduktion in Südafrika um 1900. Parameter einer kolonialrassistisch geprägten Perspektive am Beispiel von Rudolf Pöch“, in: Sabelo Mlangeni. *Postapart/heid Communities*, Ausstellungskatalog, Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, 2014, S. 80–87.