

Celebrating Women in Photography Today

THE COLONIAL EYE

Becky Warnock

'you are not alive to please the aesthetic of the Colonised Eye'

This project, which quotes the Nigerian poet, Ijeoma Umebinyuo; is an exploration of my relationship to, and understanding of, the role of photographic images within the politics of representation. Using early images from my own practice as a photographer, NGO imagery and media sources, I attempt to unpick the political and ethical framework around modes of representation of Africa within a post-colonial context.

As a white, middle class, British woman, I believe my cultural identity has been shaped by a patriarchal, white dominant society seeking to oppress other perspectives and understandings, actively denying our colonial history. By using images taken by myself ten years ago as stimulus, I seek to reflect on my naivety and interrogate the internalised prejudices from my background. Through my work with charities and international development organisations, I have gained an increased understanding and critical awareness of the politics of representation. However, it is easy to reflect on an academic theory without considering its application in reality, particularly on a personal level. I want to critically consider my position within the complex concepts I was researching. This project is the unpicking of the images, influences and politics that contribute to my current understanding.

With an avid interest in authorship, Becky Warnock (b. 1988) works as an artist and organiser to raise questions about modern identities and the politics of representation. From launching a pop-up Women's museum as a statement of protest against the Jack the Ripper Museum to her project The Colonial Eye which interrogates the role of NGO imagery in the representation of Africa; she has dedicated her practice to furthering the dialogue around social justice. Both in the UK and internationally, she has led community engagement departments of Photovoice and Photofusion, and developed programmes for the Tate, Open Eye Gallery and Photoworks. A co-founder of the Art Council supported FORM collective, her work was shown at the Brighton Photo Fringe and Derby Photo Fringe.

MORE INFO

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