

***Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts* Monthly Report #2**

Hello! My name is Mmabatho Thobejane. I am an independent curator, with a practice that centres black and decolonial feminisms. I am also the process leader and curator for *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts*, a three-year project undertaken by Grafikens Hus and supported by Kulturrådet. This monthly letter documents the project from my perspective and is one of the ways you, who are interested in the project, can follow its process.

22 December 2021

The past few weeks in *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts* saw the beginnings of a number of processes attached to the project. Amongst other things, we have officially kicked off the research-oriented artist residences, we had an internal workshop with various Konstfrämjandet offices and we began the process of working on the project's visual identity with multidisciplinary designer and artist Johnny Chang.

The artist residencies that form part of *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts*, will through artistic research, investigate printmaking collections as a means to understand, historically and contemporarily, collecting methods and to ascertain how institutions work with collections today. The artists-in-residence undertaking this task for the first year of the project are Afrang Nordlöf Malekian and Munish Wadhia. Afrang began his residency with looking into what remained of the Grafikens Hus collection after the 2014 fire in Mariefred. With our white cotton gloves on, it was quite awe inspiring to be leafing through the approximately 100 prints that had survived the fire seven years ago, each of prints holding the memory of the fire in different ways. Some had no visible signs illustrating that they may have survived a fire, while others had charred edges and the lingering scent of smoke.

Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts meets Munish Wadhia at a point where, in his own research, he is a interested in the ways in which Swedish missionaries are entangled with global colonial history. Munish combines this interest with his focus on visual print media and formations of nation states and national identity.. With the help of Michael Barrett, curator of the Africa collections at the National Museums of World Culture, Munish has begun with a look into digital and digitized archives of the National Museums of World Culture.

Embarking on conversations with Konstfrämjandet Folkrörelsernas, including Konstfrämjandet Skåne and Konstfrämjandet Bergslagen, resulted in a workshop that explored the state of the respective participants' print collections. The meeting allowed the exchange of experiences and knowledge around collections, particularly around strategies for reducing print collections and archives and ensuring that a public can meet

GRAFIKENS HUS

prints that have been stored and publicly unexhibited for years. Konstfrämjandet Skåne's *Grafikbanken Skåne* is perhaps instructive in this regard, as they digitally open up their print archive for browsing and purchase as a means to give the works stored within new life.

Lastly, it has been extremely generative to work process based with Johnny Chang on the visual identity for *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts*. Part of this process has been working through Sylvia Wynter's "Rethinking "Aesthetics": Notes Towards a Deciphering Practice" and Julietta Singh's "No Archive Will Restore You" as part of a study circle with Munish and Afrang. The collaborative reading and conversations therein have been generative for early imaginings regarding how a printmaking collection could take shape, especially with critiques of aesthetics and archives in view.

I look forward to inviting you to more public facing events and gatherings in the new year attached to *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts* but until then I wish you happy holidays and a happy new year. Thank you for reading.

Signed,

Mmabatho Thobejane

Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts Process leader and Curator