

The past few weeks in the *Samlande tankar/Collecting Thoughts* project 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 are Afrang Nordlöf Malekian and Munish Wadhia. Afrang began his residency with looking at what remained of the Grafikens Hus collection after 2014 fire in Mariefred. White cotton gloves on, it was quite astonishing to be leafing through the approximately 100 prints that had survived the fire seven years ago. Some of the prints we looked through had no visible signs of this event, while some had charred edges and the lingering scent of smoke.

Munish Wadhia comes into his residency with a particular interest in the ways in which Swedish missionaries are entangled with colonial history intersected with his interest in how Benedict Anderson's notion of 'print capitalism' combines with the formation 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 began 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 exchanging of experiences and knowledge around collections, particularly around strategies for reducing print collections and archives and ensuring that a public can meet prints that have been stored and 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 new life.

Lastly, it has been really 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 Decipher-

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ing 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 conversations for how a printmaking collection could take shape, especially with critiques of aesthetics and archives in view.

I look forward to inviting you to more 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

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