Susan Stockwell

Territory Dress 2019

A Film by Susan Stockwell

Territory Dress 2019 is a digital film by Susan Stockwell. The film explores the sculpture 'Territory Dress' and juxtaposes it with archival film of past seafaring imagery. It is as if the figure is remembering her history and making imaginary connections.
Concerned with claiming female territory, mapping the body and exploring memories, traces and stories of colonial and social histories both the film and sculpture are about our colonial past and its contemporary significance.

The paper and printed maps display the Dutch colonies that spanned the globe. A contemporary map of Netherlands forms the jacket with the roads and highways dripping down the sleeves like blood. A ship made from a Dutch Antillean banknote sails out from the centre of the abdomen, which forms an inner globe, lined with Dutch ports. Bar codes and computer wires hint at contemporary languages and codes.

The train construction references Suriname *angisas*, headscarves. Here and there dark flowers stand out against the blue seas, folded from a type of Batik, symbolizing Indonesia. All these symbols reference trade, borders and power relationships and speak of a legacy of a shared history that we must all deal with. The train creates a kind of movement, as if passing through time, pulling the weight of a brutal past whilst the hollow of the stomach questions the origins of bodily and national proprietary.

Directed by Susan Stockwell
Filmed and edited by Bevis Bowden
Music by Raphael Anton Irissari

Poem – 'A Coat' by W.B. Yeats
Sculpture **'Territory Dress'** (2018) originally commissioned by Museum van Wereldculturen, location Tropenmuseum, NL.
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The film 'Territory Dress' (2019) was screened alongside the sculpture 'Territory Dress' (2018), December 2019-March 2020 in the Tropenmuseum and will be screened in London 2020. It may also be screened in the exhibition 'Our Heritages' at the Tropenmuseum, October 2021-2023.
https://www.tropenmuseum.nl/nl/zien-en-doen/tentoonstellingen/territory-dress-nieuwe-aanwinst

Susan Stockwell *is an established international artist who works across sculpture, installation, collage and film. Her practice is concerned with examining social and colonial histories and engaging with questions of social justice, trade, cultural mapping and feminism. Her art employs the material culture of everyday domestic and industrial products, such as recycled computer components, maps and paper currency and she transforms these seemingly banal products into compelling artworks. In seeking to reconnect an object's past, its related history and materiality with contemporary issues, her practice underscores these materials urgent interconnection to collective memories, desires and ecological shortfalls; aspects that evoke, expose and challenge features of social, racial and gender inequality and injustice.*

Susan also develops work through participatory art practice and has worked with a range of groups including Prison inmates, Cuban refugees and Veteran soldiers in

rehabilitation. The project, Piece Makers was in collaboration with The National Army Museum, London (2012-2016). In 2013 she made Sail Away, an interactive installation in TATE Modern Turbine Hall. She was Artist in Residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company (2014/2015) in Stratford-upon-Avon where she made the exhibition SEA-MARKINGS.
In October 2020 she has a solo exhibition at Warrington Museum and Art Gallery, UK where she will be making artwork that re-frames and re-imagines their Ethnology Gallery.

Susan has exhibited extensively around the world, including; TATE Modern, and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, The National Museum of China, Beijing, The Katonah Museum of Art, and Children's Museum, New York, USA and Manchester City Art Gallery. Her work is in public and private collections around the world, including; The Victoria & Albert Museum, the London Transport Museum, Bedfordshire University, UK, The Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam NL, Black Rock Investments and Yale Centre for British Art, USA. She teaches part-time at the University of East London and is based in London.

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