

We write this essay as the founding co-directors of the Association for Critical Race Art History, an organization formed in 2000. Critical race art history is a lens that makes visible the operations of race in art and visual culture. Race, as we know, is about organizing human beings according to notions of difference and creating hierarchical social relationships that enable those in power to hold dominion over the rest. The visual realm, including art, has been deployed to support the construction of racial paradigms. As we say on our website: «This critical approach asserts that notions of difference have always mattered in visual culture and that such concepts now consolidated under the rubric of race play a fundamental role in modern life. Critical race art history seeks to reveal how such concepts consolidated under the rubric of race are vectors of history and central in contemporary life. Critical race art historians study the ways that visual representation advances projects of racialization and attendant efforts to marshal power.»¹ In this essay, we map the origins of critical race art history inquiry and offer examples of how to bring this analysis to bear on artworks.

What does it mean to do critical race art history?² This question of method is one that we are attempting to establish, since not all discussions of race in art history and visual culture studies or of racism in the academy and in cultural institutions constitute critical race art history. Critical race art history is grounded in expanded comparative study. If institutional critique rightly calls out racist discrimination and white supremacy towards ending the former and undermining the latter, critical race art historians are concerned that a singular focus on the Black and white dyad naturalizes racial positions (rather than exposing their making). Studies that focus on the representations of racial differences in a plural sense are especially illuminating. How they compare and contrast these representations enables us to better see the process of racialization. Among these clear examples of critical race art history are Renée Ater's forthcoming essay on Daniel Chester French's *The Four Continents* (1907) which is a critical iconographical study of a public art project commissioned to assert the rise of America as a world power.³ In this scheme, allegorical figures communicate prevalent ideas: America is an athletic form ready to spring from her seat, Europe a matron reflecting on past glories, Asia an exotic mystic, and Africa a slumped bare-chested form. Discussing French's project of depicting as allegorical types—racial, continental, age—Ater throws into relief the sculptor's intent to make racial personalities evident with contrasting and distinct physiognomies, poses, and gestures, and cultural symbols. Ater's examination of *The Four Continents*

effectively demonstrates how an artwork can render race as concrete, unchanging, and natural—thereby reinforcing the spectators' expectations.

Critical race art history is interdisciplinary discourse analysis in which art and other aspects of visual culture are positioned as persuasive forms of communication. To interpret representation is to consider its uses, its claims to truthfulness, and its authority as uncontested knowledge, characteristics and qualities that can be leveraged to assert power. Discourse analysis is an approach to identifying and unpacking the evident language and structure of racialized imagery and to deep reading of art and visual culture in which race seems irrelevant or not to «be» there at all.⁴ Racial discourse—as a circulating construction with socio-cultural and political power—is a way of thinking that is advanced in the form, content, and materiality of art objects and in the reception of them. Paying attention to these matters, critical race art historians argue that, among art's outcomes, are visual statements and messages of subjectivity, collectivity, difference, and institutionality.

While critical race art history is a method still in the making, we can readily locate its origins, for they lie in twentieth-century studies of the representation of Black bodies. Freeman Henry Morris Murray's 1916 self-published book, *Emancipation and the Freed in American Sculpture: A Study in Interpretation*, is critical race art history avant la lettre, as it is concerned with then dominant visual constructions of people of African descent.⁵ In the study's preface, Murray offered stark questions for researchers to consider:

«Hence, when we look at a work of art, especially when «we» look at one in which Black Folk appear—or do not appear when they should,—we should ask: What does it mean? What does it suggest? What impression is it like to make on those who view it? What will be the effect on present-day problems, of its obvious and also of its insidious teachings?»⁶

In insisting on regarding works for the ideas that they convey, Murray was committed to a social history of art. In his reading of John Quincy Adams Ward's *Freedman* of 1863 that appears on the cover, he notes that the shackles and lack of clothing relate to the lack of the rights and freedoms that free men should have and goes on to connect the questionable concept of freedom articulated in the work to the context of the American Civil War that was raging as the piece was being conceived and produced. Levying a sharp critique of anti-Black and racist iconography that positioned the Black figure as «the other» who is meant to be subjugated, Murray persuasively argued for the power of art to shape viewers' minds.⁷

In the decades after Murray's intervention, focused research on art produced by Black people in the United States threw race into relief in two ways. First, it documented this heterogeneous production—historical and contemporary—and interpreted it. Among the most significant publications was *Modern Negro Art*, a survey account written by James Amos Porter and published in 1943.⁸ Second, Porter's text and those that were clearly inspired by it in the second half of the twentieth century, challenged the exclusionary narratives of U. S. art history, which situated the works of white American artists as the only ones that merited attention.⁹ Such projects, informed by critical theory, discourse analysis, feminism, institutional critique, and social art history, brought pressure on the influential canons and subjective assessments such as «the masterpiece» and «quality.»¹⁰

Critical race art history germinated within African American art history. Yet, it tackles different questions. When we embarked on advancing the notion of a critical race art history twenty-five years ago, it had become apparent that there was a need

to better understand how race itself operates. We are confident that the ideas of Black and white races as binary positions in the Americas and Europe as represented in art could be extrapolated to apply to differences in myriad forms. We assert that racialization is a pervasive phenomenon which manifests uniquely and with local particularities around the world and across time. Taking lessons from art historical studies of gender, class, or sexual orientation, we wanted to move beyond a focus on the way that a particular racial group has been represented in visual form and how racial oppression circumscribed the artistic production of that group. We were seeking to understand how race, thinking across all racial groups, undergirds a way of seeing. It is a universal human habit to differentiate and this predilection is carried into the endeavor of making art. Simply put, artworks communicate difference—time and time again—directing viewers' perceptions and shaping their interpretations of the world in which we all live.¹¹ Racial difference, as something produced in art, governs everyday social and political interactions—everywhere and all the time.

Kymberly Pinder's *Race-ing Art History: Critical Readings in Race and Art History* (2002) is a pioneering anthology that offers scholarship on the visual representation of ethno-racial difference, dating from Roman antiquity and the Italian Renaissance to the postmodernist practices of U. S. artists critiquing Orientalism and questioning racial essentialism in the 1990s.¹² To include a wide temporal and geographic scope that emphasized how race was constructed prior to the modern era and across the globe was crucial since the concepts of difference have a long history that informed the development of a racially-structured society and the discipline of art history. Subsequent anthologies like *Seeing Race Before Race: Visual Culture and the Racial Matrix in the Premodern World* (2023) have contributed to our understanding of the long history of race and its prominence in today's societies and artistic practices.¹³ Pinder laid this groundwork—albeit principally informed on a black-white binary—to investigate what has been before our eyes the whole time—that race is ideology.

Sociologist Stuart Hall states this plainly in *New Ethnicities* (1988), one of his many brilliant essays.¹⁴ In *New Ethnicities*, Hall writes «representation is possible only because enunciation is always produced with codes which have a history, a position within the discursive formations of a particular space and time.»¹⁵ Hall explains that race is not just a problem of discrimination for «the raced,» a problem that can be solved and sorted if we who are minorities in Western societies tap our essences. There are additional problems, among them the ongoing position of whiteness as neutral, and as a norm in societies and nations grounded in white supremacy. Another issue identified by Hall is cultural and racial essentialism. Writing in the 1980s in England, Hall saw the shift from the political position of Black—an activist term of solidarity among people of African, Asian, and Caribbean heritages who rejected the New Racism of the Thatcher years—to colored, minority cultural nationalisms readily absorbed into managed multiculturalism. Early to diagnose the pitfalls of symbolism and celebration, Hall counseled against «cultural innocence,» declaring that «there can [...] be no simple «return» or «recovery» of the ancestral past which is not re-experienced through the categories of the present: no base of creative enunciation in a simple reproduction of traditional forms which are not transformed by the technologies and the identities of the present.»¹⁶

One of the important consequences of the study of race is the restoration of its visibility within the dominant culture where it is often thought to apply solely to members of historically oppressed groups. Studies of whiteness, such as Richard

Dyer's *White* (1998) or Martin A. Berger's *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture* (2005) are important for making the racial character of whiteness, which often presents itself as the invisible norm, explicit and for demonstrating that race is in operation even when there are no human figures within the visual field.¹⁷ The discourse of whiteness—an invented category that is the container for certain described appearances and characteristics that are summoned to justify the superiority of actors who fit the bill—lies at the heart of art history, a discipline shaped during the European Enlightenment.¹⁸ Scholars of eighteenth century art and visual culture have tracked taxonomies of difference and interpretations of representation in the emergent field's key texts. In David Bindman's research on the discredited ideas of racial science and its hierarchies, he demonstrates how they shaped the very origins and foundations of Western art history and aesthetics.¹⁹ Working in France, Anne Lafont, a scholar of the Enlightenment, has also recently turned her attention to the construction of race within the art of this period with a transatlantic focus.²⁰ These reappraisals of art history show how the discipline's determination of what constitutes art is in effect a self-selecting of the artistic production of the dominant racial group as that which holds value and warrants study. The history of art is not naturally delimited to certain objects but a constructed exclusionary frame formed by ideology. Solely expanding that frame to include the cultural production of other cultures as art is not the answer to reform art history; the tenets of the discipline must themselves be interrogated. Critical race art history deploys the analytical tools developed by art history to approach the visual, cognizant that the discipline has blind spots.

The phrase 'critical race art history' is one that we see in more and more places. Scholars speak of themselves as critical race art historians, job positions and calls for conference papers state that critical race art historical approaches are sought. At times, we sense that critical race art history has been adopted as an up-to-date, more correct term for any kind of work—important work, for sure—that deals with racism and denigrating images of minoritized and racialized people and populations. This is research that may be taken up by scholars who describe their areas of study as African American art history, Asian American art history, Latin art history, or Indigenous American art history. Such scholarship seeks to fill in what was deliberately and persistently left out. As scholars who often contribute to the identitarian study of African American artists' production, we recognize such projects as important interventions that draw attention to both individual and self-selected group empowerment. Still, there are clear distinctions between the work we do as African Americanists and what we do as critical race art historians. Most saliently, in the latter guise, we view the articulations of difference in art and visual culture as historical and persistent phenomena that humans believe in. As critical race art historians we encourage the development of multiple scholarly voices that consider how race has taken shape across time and throughout the world.²¹

In our forthcoming publication, *Critical Race Art History: A Primer*, we read artworks as objects that demand intersectional readings, for race does not operate singularly in a vacuum. How our bodies are experienced, our structures of feeling, and our sense of belonging to a greater whole are all intertwined and contingent on the premise of racial difference. One cannot see race without acknowledging how the scaffold of the armature of identity relies upon how these various forms of power differentials work together to constitute and position subjects within society.

In each case, we present close readings of selected works of art that illustrate how race informs their meaning in an intersectional way. In what follows, we offer three examples that sketch out the kind of interpretation that we will feature in the book project. We've selected artworks from the contemporary and historical periods, realized in a variety of formats and mediums, and produced by celebrated artists as well as those who are lesser known.

The *Allegorical Figure Group of the Continent of Europe*, created by Johann Joachim Kaendler for the Meissen Porcelain Factory (c. 1760, fig. 1), reflects the tradition of rendering allegorical concepts such as nations as female personae. Feminist readings would interrogate why the idealized female figure was designated to embody the qualities and values attributed to a geographical territory—even though for most nations rulers and political actors were male and women were excluded from the body politic. From a critical race art history perspective, the salient aspect that emerges here is how Europe is literally imagined as white, where the skin of the figure is the color of the white material. The work portrays the nation as conceived in the time it was created in the eighteenth century; the figure wears contemporary dress and accessories like the beauty mark reflect the beauty standards



1 Meissen Porcelain Factory, modeled by Johann Joachim Kaendler, *Allegorical Figure Group of the Continent of Europe*, c. 1760, hard-paste porcelain, 26.9 × 28 × 22 cm, Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, inv. no. 1917.1295a, photo: Allen Phillips/Wadsworth Atheneum

of the period. This was a contemporary vision of the state of the world's geo-political structure. The woman sits on a globe wearing a crown signifying Europe's imperialist ambitions and dominion over the rest of the world. The development of the manufacture of porcelain in Europe was an outcome of European exploration and contact with Asia. The common appellation 'china' for this type of porcelain is testament to its origins in emulating Asian pottery and broadly drawn European characterizations of ornament and sovereign China.²² As noted by Marika Knowles, «a much-fetishized commodity, the preciousness and desirability of porcelain was intimately tied to its difficult-to-attain whiteness.» This also meant «that through porcelain, whiteness entered the European imagination as a trade secret that belonged to Asia, not Europe. whiteness as a crafted, luxury commodity from Asia came to co-exist alongside whiteness as the 'natural' color of European skin.»²³ Kaendler's figure of Europe could stand alone as an articulation of white identity, but—needless to say—the comparison with the other depicted continents reinforces the whiteness of this figure and its difference from racial others. For example, the skins of the figures of Africa, Asia and America are tinted with color to reflect the higher melanin content in the skins of people from those continents who have been viewed as people of color, nonwhite or both. The production of such tabletop figurines, meant to be displayed in the parlors of an appropriately designed home, brought the racial order of the world, usually conveyed through monuments, into the everyday domestic sphere. The pervasive presence of such objects normalizes the racialized perspective through which we see. Critical race art history aims to make such habits strange.

Distinct from the imaginative, symbolic projects of allegory, documentary (or work that takes its guise), though it asserts empirical fact and unassailable truth, similarly relies on racialized narratives. In the fifteen photos of Cindy Sherman's *Bus Riders* series of 1976, the artist—then twenty-two years old and a newly minted art school graduate—offered her interpretations of the subjectivities of public transportation users she observed in Buffalo, New York.²⁴ The series complicates the notion and status of documentary, advanced through parody and performance (including the use of costumes and the donning of theatrical stage make-up).²⁵ The medium of black-and-white photography suggests that the images seem truthful, authentic, and unmediated; for decades, black-and-white photos often convinced audiences that there was no camera operator and that the camera functioned as an autonomous machine, simply recording what was in front of it. In *Bus Riders*, and in Sherman's more famous *Untitled Film Stills* project, the artist decidedly skewers such notions. The visible shutter release cord makes clear that Sherman is both the sitter and the artist taking the photo. Yet, while she is the model in a portrait she composes, Sherman goes beyond reportage in *Bus Riders*. The pictured subjects exceed the parameters of naturalistic representation of her own body—and inarguably, any that she might have seen on the public buses in Buffalo. For each photo of the series, Sherman creates a clownish figure—some goofily cheerful, others pathetically sad—in a studio setting. These commuters, whether seated or standing and striking a straphanger gesture on a bus, are exaggerations surrounded by props that fill out the archetypal form. Wearing costumes that index the figure's age, race, and social niche, Sherman occupies these forms. For some of the portrayals, Sherman used blackface makeup and highly symbolic props—all are marshaled to overstate identity positions—gendered, classed, and raced. Yet, *Bus Riders* as a project lurches



2 Shan Goshorn, *Squaw*, 2018, Arches paper, ink, artificial sinew, copper, 56.52 × 41.28 × 26.67 cm, Richmond, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 2021.191, funds provided by Margaret A. and C. Boyd Clarke and Mareke Schiller, photo: David Stover © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

in several directions and presents questions about its maker's mindset as a young, white American woman.²⁶ The work was not shown until 2000. In 2016, Sherman said she had not been cognizant of the history of racist performances by minstrels in the Americas, Asia, and Europe. Instead, she asserted that she was utilizing her «limited knowledge of makeup at the time for showing difference» and was unaware of the «potential offense of these characters.»²⁷ The same scrutiny around racial representation in *Bus Riders* can be brought to the *Untitled Film Stills*: both projects warrant examination of the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality that Sherman composes and constructs with her body of white racial identities.

Eastern Band Cherokee artist Shan Goshorn highlights two persistent American cultural myths in her work, *Squaw* (2018, fig. 2), each of which bears racial implications. The work consists of a torso, whose pose is reminiscent of the *Venus de Milo*

(3rd quarter of the 2nd century BCE), a Greek sculpture that is thought to embody the Western feminine aesthetic ideal that American settlers brought with them to the North American continent. The high-mindedness associated with this beauty standard is contrasted with the stereotype denoted by the denigrating term «squaw.» This racist slur was applied to Indigenous women, and presumed that they were inherently lascivious and sexually available for the sport of white men. The reverence inspired by idealized form belies the grittier reality of the base desire for Indigenous women and the coercion (if not outright violence) exerted to possess them. The cultural ideal is literally hollow as the work sketches out the shape but gives no substance to the body delineated by the woven paper carapace. The shape conjures the white marble torso that embodies the Western beauty standard, while the dark-colored material attests to a grislier reality for women who are marked as different and do not conform to that ideal. The absent body registers the phenomenon of missing Indigenous women and holds space for them. The woven paper strips carry the names of three hundred and six missing Indigenous women on the interior, and historical records as well as statistics documenting this epidemic of strategic racialized, gendered and sexualized violence on the exterior.²⁸ Bearing witness through both Indigenous (storytelling) and U. S. American (police reports) forms of evidence, the text demands that the viewer acknowledge that this history of cross-cultural encounters entails a brutal legacy where racial oppression is effected through sexual aggression against women. Fabricated utilizing a traditional Cherokee basket weave pattern called «water», the work attests to the survival of Indigenous cultural heritage that persists despite concerted efforts to eradicate it. The tangible material presence of a living Indigenous tradition counters dominant cultural narratives of the «vanishing race» that, while affirmative, still upholds a notion of essentialized racial difference. Race remains everywhere even if it is deployed to different ends. Goshorn enables us to see how race operates but does not dispel a concept of difference. We maintain that race does not disappear when historically oppressed groups assert their culturally specific identities.

As these examples show, we are striving to highlight the ways that race finds expression through the visual. We draw upon the full range of methodological tools generated by the social history of art, feminist art history, queer art history, etc. to expound how this race-focused lens impacts the manner in which we see, perceive, and make sense of things and the world we live in. And it is important to stress that ever since the concept of race took irrevocable hold in the eighteenth century, it has been used not only by those who perpetuate racial hegemony but also by those who would challenge white racial domination. We are all beholden to the notion of racial difference even if we oppose racial regimes of power.

Critical Race Art History is a project that is in formation, one that is responsive to the complexity of ever-expanding visual fields awash with essentialist ideas and transhistorical accounts of race and culture. Ours is a critique that, on its own, will not end racial thinking nor solve the problems it brings to every doorstep. Racialization is a constant of social life everywhere, and we argue that our best approach is to acknowledge its persistence and consider what meanings we ascribe to it and the ways it is put to use in art and visual culture.

1 Jacqueline Francis and Camara Dia Holloway: About ACRAH, Association for Critical Race Art History, <https://acrah.org/>.

2 This question was the focus of the ACRAH-sponsored session at the recent College Art Association Annual Conference in February 2025. We brought together several scholars in a roundtable conversation about how a critical race art history approach is manifest in our work. The invited scholars—Lily Cho, Tatiana Flores, Elizabeth Hutchinson, Kymberly Pinder—have all published work that adopts approaches which inform our thinking about critical race art history. The conversation was guided by the questions presented in the conference abstract: What are the goals of critical race art history, and what are its methodologies and theoretical grounds? What are the conceptual parameters of this lens on art history—what does it mean to center an understanding that race structures how we see and shapes our reception of art? What tools and methods do we employ to make the operations of race visible? How do we move from American identity politics—that emphasizes a white/non-white binary and focuses on the identification of negative racial tropes and artistic rebuttals to the harm of such imagery—to a comprehensive unpacking of the systemic racialization in art—globally/internationally? What do we gain when we foreground how race informs the construction of the visual cultures that we inhabit? How do the insights of critical race art history become integrated into art history at large?

3 Renée Ater: Race, Representation, and Empire: *The Four Continents* for the U. S. Custom House in New York City, in: Louise Arizzoli/Maryanne Cline Horowitz/Marion Romberg (eds.): *Controversial Monuments: Personifying the Continents between the 18th and 21st Centuries*, Leiden: forthcoming. See also: Emily C. Burns et al.: *Casting Identities: Race, American Sculpture*, and Daniel Chester French, <https://eb-omekadev.oucreate.com/exhibits/show/castingidentities/introduction>, accessed May 19, 2025.

4 Gillian Rose's assessment of discourse analysis is indispensable. See: Gillian Rose: *Visual Culture: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 4th ed., London 2016 (London 2001), p. 186–252.

5 Freeman Henry Morris Murray: *Emancipation and the Freed in American Sculpture: A Study in Interpretation*, Washington, D. C. 1916. Born to a white Scottish American father and a mother of African, Irish, and Native American descent, Murray identified as Black and worked to advance civil rights in the U. S. See: James Smalls: *Freeman Murray and the Art of Social Justice*, in: Claire Parfait/Hélène Le Dantec-Lowry/Claire Bourhis-Mariotti (eds.): *Writing History from the Margins: African Americans and the Quest for Freedom*, New York 2017, p. 131–142.

6 Murray 1916 (as note 5), p. xix.

7 Critical study of the historical representation of people of African descent deemed Black was advanced in a number of subsequent publications, including Alain Locke: *The Negro in Art: A Pictorial Record of the Negro in Art and the Negro Theme*, Washington, D. C. 1940; David Bindman/Henry Louis Gates Jr. (eds.): *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From Pharaohs to the Fall of the Roman Empire*, Houston 1976; Albert Boime: *The Art of Exclusion: Representing Black in the Nineteenth Century*, New York 1990; and Jan Nederveen Pieterse: *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, New Haven 1992.

8 James Amos Porter: *Modern Negro Art*, New York 1943.

9 Porter's heirs and legatees include David Driskell: *Two Centuries of Black American Art*, Los Angeles 1976; Samella Lewis: *Art: African American*, New York 1978; Romare Bearden/Harry F. Henderson: *A History of African American Artists, From 1792 to the Present*, New York 1992; Richard J. Powell: *Black Art and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, New York 1997; and Sharon F. Patton: *African American Art*, New York 1998.

10 See David Driskell's catalogue for the exhibition of the same name: David Driskell (ed.): *African American Visual Aesthetics: A Postmodernist View*, Washington, D. C. 1995.

11 Here, we extend the persuasive argument of art historians Karen Lemmey, Tobias Wofford, and Grace Yasamura who assert that sculpture «is a vital medium to communicate ideas of race.» See: Introduction, in: Karen Lemmey/Tobias Wofford/Grace Yasamura (eds.): *The Shape of Power: Stories of Race and American Sculpture*, Washington, D. C. 2024, p. 15. We contend that it is not only sculpture that has the potential to communicate the constructions of race (and gender, sexuality, and nation), but every work of art.

12 Kymberly N. Pinder (ed.): *Race-ing Art History: Critical Readings in Race and Art History*, New York 2002.

13 Noémie Ndiaye/Lia Markey (eds.): *Seeing Race Before Race: Visual Culture and the Racial Matrix in the Premodern World*, Tempe, AZ 2023.

14 Stuart Hall: *New Ethnicities* (1988), in: Paul Gilroy/Ruth Wilson Gilmore (eds.): *Stuart Hall: Selected Writings on Race and Difference*, Durham 2021, p. 246–256.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 252.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 254.

17 Richard Dyer: *White*, London 1998; Martin A. Berger: *Sight Unseen: Whiteness and American Visual Culture*, Berkeley 2005.

18 Among the significant considerations of Whiteness are W. E. Burghardt Du Bois: *Of the Culture of White Folk*, in: *Journal of Race Development* 7, 1917, no. 4, p. 434–447; Nell Irvin Painter:

The History of White People, New York 2011; and Theodore Allen: The Invention of the White Race: Racial Oppression and Social Control, Vol. 1, New York 2012.

19 David Bindman: Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century, London 2002 and David Bindman: «Race is Everything»: Art and Human Difference, London 2023.

20 Anne Lafont: L'art et la race: L'Africain (tout) contre l'œil des Lumières, Dijon 2019.

21 For an example of scholarship that explores difference outside of Western contexts, see: Catherine Pluimer: Ephemeral: How Transitory Mediums Cemented «Permanent» Power in Colonial Korea, paper for the Bay Area Undergraduate Art History Research Symposium, San Francisco CA 2023.

22 See: Anne Cheng: Ornamentality, in: Critical Inquiry 44, Spring 2018, no. 3, p. 425. Writing about the 2015 exhibition *China: Through the Looking Glass*, mounted at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cheng argues: «the show reminds us that *China* (conflated through the show with Asia at large) equals *ornament*.»

23 Marika Takanishi Knowles: Making whiteness: Art, Luxury, and Race in Eighteenth-Century France, in: Journal18, Spring 2022, Issue 13 *Race*, <https://www.journal18.org/6214>, accessed June 16, 2025.

24 See: Early Work of Cindy Sherman, East Hampton, New York 2000.

25 For a reproduction of one of these works, see <https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/collection/artwork/untitled-368>, accessed May 19, 2025.

26 Priscilla Frank: Cindy Sherman's Early Blackface Photos and the Art World's Gaze, in: HuffPost, August 18, 2016, updated August 31, 2016, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cindy-shermans-early-blackface-photos-and-the-art-worlds-white-gaze_n_57b5abb5e4b0fd5a2f415daa, accessed June 16, 2025.

27 Cindy Sherman, quote from object label for *Untitled (Bus Riders)*, 1976/2000, *Cindy Sherman: Imitation of Life*, June 11–October 2, 2016, The Broad Museum, Los Angeles.

28 See: Elizabeth Hutchinson: Strength and Resistance in Native American Women's Sculpture, in: Karen Lemmey et al. 2024 (as note 11), p. 178. Hutchinson writes: «Indigenous women experience violence, abduction and murder more than any other demographic of women in the United States and Canada. In her description of the piece, Goshorn cited a Royal Canadian Mounted Police inquiry that reported 1,049 First Nations women had been killed in Canada between 1980 and 2012. [...] A related study of the United States, published in 2016, concluded that four in five Native women experience violence, and there remain legal and social barriers to prosecuting the perpetrators.»