

KARA WALKER MORE & LESS



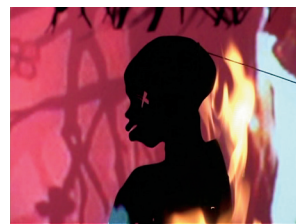
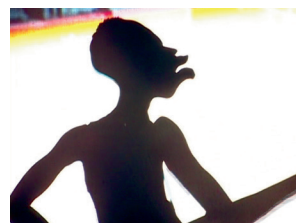
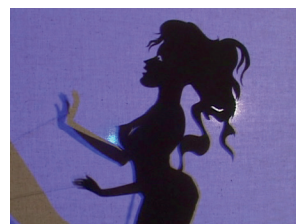
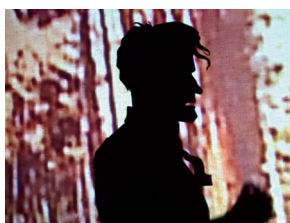
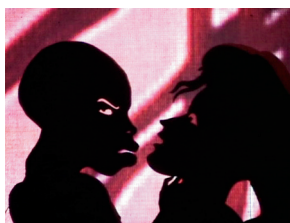
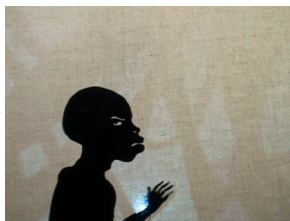
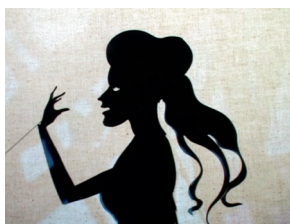
Speak for Your Self: Kara Walker's Emancipated Language

Kara Walker's apparitional cut paper silhouettes have become symbols of the artist's revolutionary revisualization of race in American history and culture. The silhouettes present us with "the eloquence of the very thing that is silent, the capacity to exhibit signs written on a body," pushing signification to the edges of form within an expansive spatial experience.¹ Around the silhouettes' mute figuration, Walker works in declamatory forms – interjecting language and sound into pictorial space using music, dramaturgy, appropriated text, and poetry. These works shout, implore, and interrogate, confronting the dilemmas and failures of representation that haunt the solemnity of the silhouettes, but with a performative intensity – animating, amplifying, and transmitting the artist's voice and physical presence. "Writing – which half the time is just letting the sound of the typewriter accompany the voice in my head – is often the first step to making drawings."²

In experimental puppet-based films; text-laden prints and collages that appropriate historical images from the antebellum South and the Civil War; diaristic gouache paintings; and an ongoing writing practice begun in her twenties, the artist weighs the nature and complications of her subjectivity against representation. Inside a 1997 painting of a tree Walker writes: "So, I ask, What is a positive black image besides a contradiction in terms?"³ Walker questions whether any imperative to create appropriately "positive" black images corrupts the possibilities of authentic black self-expression into mania. Her work exhibits the hysteria and schizophrenia of this problem. "To achieve success as an African American, one must spill out one's guts constantly. Like the old sharecropper in Ellison's *Invisible Man*, who raped his daughter and kept telling his horrible story over and over, and the white people in town gave him things."⁴

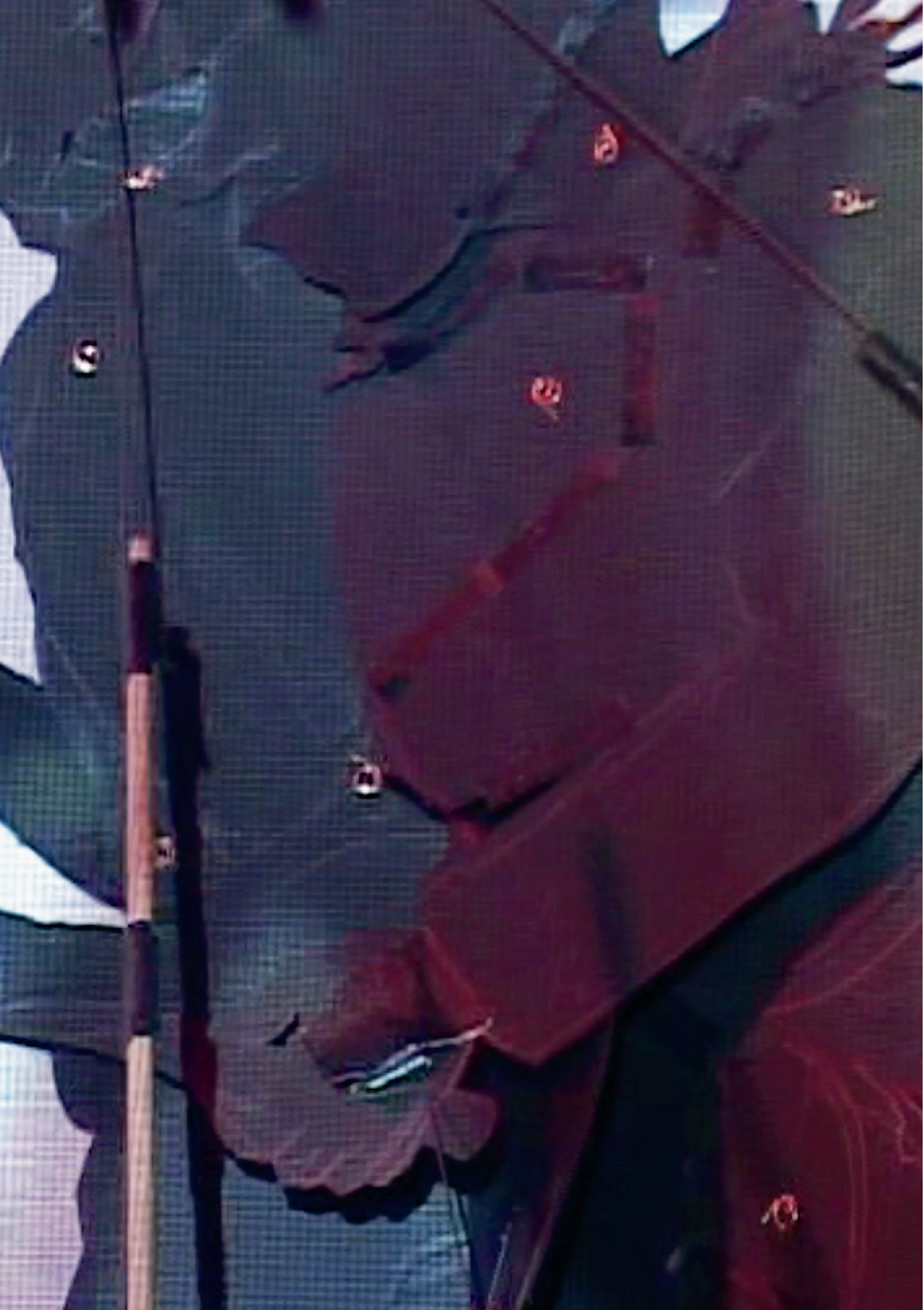
Walker captures and sifts through her own spillage, and the inescapable result, as art historian Gwendolyn Dubois Shaw states, is "... an artistic body that is fêted and then fed upon."⁵ We encounter Walker's speech in modes of address that are simultaneously learned, effusive, sullen, and lyrical; her words dramatize and mock America's perverse reverence for images of historicized racial oppression, and sometimes they *just flow* – across the pages of her diaries and boldly, in her newest multimedia puppet drama, *Fall Frum Grace, Miss Pippi's Blue Tale*.

In *Miss Pippi*, Walker presents a psychedelic miscegenation tale set in Jim Crow America that becomes



above and cover: (stills) *Fall Frum Grace, Miss Pippi's Blue Tale*, 2011
DVD video (color, audio)
17 min.

Courtesy of the artist and Sikkema
Jenkins & Co., New York



progressively heartbreaking as it unwinds. To tell the story, Walker has created a cast of intricate shadow puppets. As in *Gone with the Wind* (and nineteenth-century minstrel shows that focused on plantation life) *Miss Pippi*'s episodic narrative is punctuated by musical interludes and an intermission.⁶ While the film clearly draws from minstrelsy and vaudeville, Walker describes it as a "lament, like the Blues, about forbidden love and devastating, inevitable loss."⁷ These lamentations do not segregate past from present. In the same 2011 exhibition that debuted *Miss Pippi*, Walker presented work divulging her fears about the possible assassination of President Obama (*He Will be Executed by a Mob*, 2010). Walker envisioned Obama's murder as a lynching. Theologian James Cone (with whom Walker held a moving public conversation in May 2012 at Union Theological Seminary) describes lynching as "the most potent symbol of the trouble nobody knows that blacks have seen but do not talk about because the pain of remembering – visions of black bodies dangling from southern trees, surrounded by jeering white mobs – is almost too excruciating to recall."⁸ In Jim Crow America, images of lynching were their own source of psychological trauma; both reformers and perpetrators printed illustrations and circulated photographs of mangled, charred bodies. Walker inserts one such period photograph into *Miss Pippi* (and adorns the film's white seductress with a hoop skirt comprised of tree roots). The image of white men surrounding the immobilized remains of a man ("arms" bent to the sky in an aberrant masculine gesture) appears at a terrifying point in the action, shortly after a young black laborer has been castrated and murdered. As the youth is violated, Walker flips the puppets around, exposing their innards. We see the tape and wire of their assembly, and most shockingly, we see the fine white lines of Walker's drawing, and the word "penis" delicately written in cursive on the puppet's corresponding part. The pathos of the story shifts into a startling and somewhat grotesque revelation of the work's *techné*. Here Walker breaks Platonic illusionism, revealing the world of forms, and implicating us as insiders to her authorship.

Despite its tragic intensity, *Miss Pippi* is comic and raunchy in keeping with the history of puppet minstrelsy. "*Punch and Judy* influenced the [American] minstrel marionette tradition, therefore, by 'associating the blackface puppet with the dancer/singer, exotic other, and object of ridicule, all functional essences of blackface puppetry.'"⁹ Throughout the Civil War, puppeteers traveled minstrel reviews across the country. In the print series based on the 1866 compendium *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War*, Walker deploys

puppet-like character figures that occupy, defile, and retard the landscapes of the magazine's grandiose pictorialization of American heroism and grace under fire. In the print *An Army Train*, a black figure lies prone across the foreground, the word "soul" ascending from its body in a gaseous mist. Walker's irreverent "soul train" satirizes Civil War nostalgia, but it also ruminates upon the inseparable relationship between nostalgia, the birth of illustrated journalism in the 1850s, and the dissemination (and dissipation) of the black body in American popular culture.

Without hesitation, Walker suggests that we may project ourselves into historical representation, deploy our avatars, and converse with those we meet. That we too, if we're willing, may mutter and crawl through history. The stark figures in Walker's *Harper's Pictorial* series are more credible and alive than the scenes they inhabit. In part, because they speak colloquially, outshining the heavy slab-serif typefaces of the Civil War prints; but also because Walker has dispatched them like scouts to record their observations and explore the reconstruction of indigenous forms, like the "Mississippian mound builder" in Foote's *Gun-Boats Ascending to Attack Fort Henry*. Is he trapped or sheltered by the mass that surrounds him? Hiding in, or escaping from this strange space? We must accept the possibility that Walker's expanded historical stage ultimately symbolizes an unwelcoming home, and the figures remain refugees of history.

Stephanie Snyder

John and Anne Hauberg Curator and Director
Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery

NOTES

- 1 Jacques Rancière, *The Future of the Image* (London: Verso, 2007).
- 2 Steel Stillman in conversation with the artist, *Art in America*, May 2011.
- 3 Kara Walker, quoted in Gwendolyn Dubois Shaw, *Seeing the Unspeakable: The Art of Kara Walker* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Gwendolyn Dubois Shaw, *Seeing the Unspeakable: The Art of Kara Walker* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
- 6 *Gone with the Wind* opens with a row of black slaves hoeing a field in tattered rags and the rolling text: "... here in this pretty world Gallantry took its last bow ... Here was the last ever to be seen of Knights and their ladies Fair, of Master and of Slave ... Look for it only in books, for it is no more than a dream remembered." Hattie McDaniel, the first African American to receive an Oscar for her role as "Mammy," was not allowed to attend the film's premiere in Atlanta, and the NAACP publicly criticized her for portraying the character.
- 7 Steel Stillman in conversation with the artist, *Art in America*, May 2011.
- 8 James Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (New York: Orbis Books, 2011).
- 9 Benjamin Fisler, "The Phenomenology of Racism: Blackface Puppetry in American Theatre, 1872–1939," (Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2005).



FOOTE'S GUN-BOATS ASCENDING TO ATTACK FORT HENRY.



from: Kara Walker, *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)*, 2005

top: (detail) **Footes Gun-Boats Ascending to Attack Fort Henry**

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.

Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

left: **Scene of McPherson's Death**

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
53 x 39 in.

Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

right: **An Army Train**

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.

Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Endurance: Kara Walker, *Fall From Grace*, *Miss Pippi's Blue Tale*

KRIS COHEN

Art critics and art historians, when our idealism wanes, often stretch to locate, or even invent, some actual social impact for the works that we love. In Kara Walker's case, no such reaching is necessary. Whatever one thinks of the work, its *impact* is always seductively at hand. And not just because of the quantity of attention that Walker's work has received, but because the work has elicited exactly the kinds of attention that people want from assessments of "actual" impact: heated arguments, supercharged renunciations, subtle and unsubtle defenses, calls for censorship (and the denouncement of such calls), and, overall, a heightened awareness of the subjects that the work most visibly addresses.¹ Race is the most obvious of these subjects. But Walker's work is both more precise and more expansive, treating variously: racial desire and ambivalence; the crossings of race and sexuality in both racist and racial imaginaries; complicity and shame within and across racial lines; the processes by which history becomes ossified and, sometimes, fragily re-animated – the list is long.

If we survey the actual conversations that Walker's work has provoked (and for the moment look past the work's formal claims, the claims the work makes on us as a form), we hear the same question again and again: are Walker's re-circulations of *difficult* imagery – of debased genres and gross racial stereotypes – an opening to something new, or the perpetuation of something old and ugly; do they produce difference, or a closed, hopeless loop of repetition? Walker's work re-circulates racial stereotypes of both white and black subjects, set within fantastical (but never un-real) landscapes of the antebellum South, while giving no clear indication of where to lay blame or of whose side the artist is on. In the face of these strategies, the question persists: does Walker's work exacerbate the harms of historical and institutional racism, or does it open avenues to a reparative good: a re-animation of history, a de-suturing of the insidious image (the stereotype) from the body of those made to bear it – a lightening of the burden born by racialized bodies? Commentators come down on both sides.

Confronting *Fall From Grace*, *Miss Pippi's Blue Tale* (2011), one can see why the debate over Walker's work has split along these lines. Within the

modulations of the artist's distinctive procedures, where cutting is mark-making and the juxtaposition of flat layers produces space, there is much about the film that nonetheless feels repeated more than invented, re-circulated more than created. The genre of the plantation romance sets the frame – the loose, episodically-fractured envelope of plot. The characters are all likewise familiar. The film's white male lead, his hair and tie frozen in the dishevelment of angst, is jealous and murderous. His young, bucktoothed and cowl-necked charge is complicit and callous, consolidating racial privilege and hatred through a voyeuristic pedagogy. The white woman, both sexualized and sexualizing, is a classic sentimental figure: a site for projections of various kinds and, ultimately, an invitation to *right feeling* in the face of political wrong. This, while she also plays the *femme fatale*. When we see these familiar figures, fucking and fighting inside the familiar story structure, we might feel that we are perpetually blocked from the capacious pleasures of seeing for the first time, that we are only ever tiresomely seeing again.

Thus the seductiveness, the almost natural occurrence of the question: harm or good, capitulation or subversion? Walker's work has often provoked not careful attention so much as what seems to be a forced choice, a taking of sides. The intention of Betye Saar's infamous letter-writing campaign against Kara Walker was never to guide our viewing of Walker's work, never to generate critical opposition. Saar's avowed intent was to *prevent* institutions from exhibiting the work in the first place.²

And now here you are, facing Walker's work. As predicted by the controversy that precedes it, the work is demanding, queasy, dispossessing. Even if one leaves feeling that one likes the work, what exactly is being endorsed or enjoyed? Far more than Walker's silhouettes, *Miss Pippi's Blue Tale* seems designed to attack the grounds of pleasure: the filmmaking is rough-hewn, the puppeteering is clumsy, the sound track comes and goes (sometimes receding into ambience and narrative afterthought, other times miked intimately and naturalistically). The story the film tells – of sex, maybe even love between a white woman and a black laborer, of the murderous jealousy of a white man whose privilege is to assume the love of the white woman as a matter of racial and sexual possession, of the final, ineluctable emasculation, lynching and burning – is both familiar and

execrable. Queasier still, the shadow puppets and the unrefined puppeteering evoke a sense of play, a child's fantasy. The effect is both alluring and apotropaic. Considered as a mode of address, play is mimetic: it doesn't just want spectators, it wants to transform spectators into participants. To refuse the invitation is to choose the position of the voyeur. Where do we stand, then, when we stand here in the gallery, attending to the film?

There is a paternalism common among modern art historians: it says that discomfiting art is good for us. It defamiliarizes or subverts, it pries us from our comforting habits. Maybe we fall apart in the face of the antagonistic artwork. Maybe the process of pulling ourselves back together, of remaking our ordinary relationship to the world, results in some good, some improvement. Or maybe we remain disturbed, the disturbance spreads and we amass with others, galvanized by our new discontent. These are aesthetic ideals, but they are common in the art world, even definitive of the modernist project and its postmodernist revisions. This line of thinking is the product of a time when the modernist problem was thought by the various critics of capitalism to be too much comfort – a diagnosis that tended to equate comfort with complacency. Modern art is therefore said to attack comfort. And certainly there are traces of this strategy in Walker's work. But while complacency might still be a problem, we might wonder if complacency is caused by too much comfort, or too little. The obesity epidemic in the United States and its prevalence among the poor is a case in point.³ So is the conversation about race. See, for instance: the confusion over whether we're beyond race, or still living badly and unequally on this side of it. See: any mention of racism on the public stage and the immediate and all-too-effective counter-accusations of "playing the race card." See: any white person claiming that they have been the victim of racial bias. Is the possibility of claiming white victimhood a product of too much comfort, an effect of privilege, or of too little, a toxic side effect of economic and social precarity?

Kara Walker's complex racial politics have found form in this time, in the dim and always distorting light of slavery and reconstruction viewed as by-gone eras, as well as in the immediate afterglow of racial pride, of "black is beautiful," of large and successful civil rights protests. This is a period where it is possible to see blackness as a site of continued racist inscription and, for some white

citizens experiencing structural discomfort for the first time, as a form of privilege, even an advantage. This confusion is absurd, insulting, and itself a form of violence. But as a matter of public discourse, it has attained legibility and so assumed a shoddy kind of credibility. In the face of such confusion, the easiest and most agreeable forms of racial politics present us with ready enemies, guilty parties to guarantee our own good racial politics. Kara Walker's work refuses to do so. In this, it may seem less of this world than a kind of flight from it. But it is clear that "the world" is precisely what we do not agree on, neither its present conditions nor the history of those conditions, neither the nature of the problems nor the means to address them. So, what is the relation of *Miss Pipi's* world to ours? How is it, like ours, pinned between past and present? How does it, like ours, confuse the desire for change with the desire to know things as they are? These questions are Walker's, precisely. If we decided not to settle these questions in advance, but to let their interrogative tone persist throughout our viewing of the film, then there might be no other recourse than to pay attention to the particular encounter the film stages between ourselves and its own specific forms.

How, then, do we attend to the work, remain focused on what it presents as well as on the what and why of its re-presentations? How do we endure its form? This is the question that the debate over Walker's work has too often occluded. This debate has tended to see Walker's work as representational rather than durational, an image more than a performance, something situated elsewhere and merely projected here rather than something that wants to immerse us in the same present-tense confusion and violence that the work also, necessarily, inhabits. But Walker's work is less a stable image than a contradictory and convoluted event, its means heterodox and un-masterful. Within Walker's oeuvre, this has never been more the case than in *Miss Pipi's Blue Tale*. What the film offers is not answers or tactics, and not even recognizable questions, but *affects* induced by a kind of unflinching decision not to sanitize a single thing, neither in Walker's own racial-historical consciousness, nor in what she imagines to be the world's.

Like us, then, the film seems to improvise its moment-to-moment existence, even while we know that intention or will or ambition or agency – those powerful, wishful forms of personhood – play a role, somehow, in both the film, and in life outside the

film. *Miss Pippi* affects no elegance, no reassuring poise, only an honest kind of slapstick relation to its materials: the puppets, for instance, un-adroitly perform actions for which they appear ill-suited; the puppets' shadows blur and disperse whenever the puppets float away from the screen; the heads and hands of the puppeteers repeatedly appear in the lower frame, unabashedly going about their work, campily throwing their voices into the unmoving mouths of the puppets. This is a risky gambit in the face of the most serious and persistent of problems. Playful improvisation can so easily look glib or juvenile. Material quoted from racist sources with no evident distancing tone can suggest complicity or capitulation. The literature on Walker provides ample evidence of these risks.

Let's start simply then, and proceed slowly. *Miss Pippi's Blue Tale* is seventeen minutes long, minutes that are fractioned and distended by the work's episodic structure, a broken rhythm of discontinuous scenes. There's an intermission, vestige of both the filmic and theatrical histories that the work quotes, but not one that offers much relief (it only lasts 23 seconds). The interpolated minstrel acts are longer, more of a respite from the brutality and ineluctable death march of the story. But if there's pleasure in Walker's minstrelsy, and there probably isn't, it's a tortured pleasure. And what if, despite the discomforts, our foot taps to the often astonishing, spectral music? What if we find ourselves later humming one of the work's melodies? Where, in that event, has our body been divided against itself, with pleasure on one side and a more conscientious rectitude on the other? This split in us also resides in the film: spend time watching the mouths of the puppets, articulated in negative, by the light that shines through them. More than expressive, their freeze-frame rictus projects a deeply-incised racialization, one that responds to new scenic contexts, to movements within the frame, but never itself changes. Those mouths are at once antic and motionless. Similarly, track the wisp or curl of hair, the squint of eye. These are sites where the medium of puppetry (manually animated) and the medium of video (automatically animated) interfere with one another. Such cross-mediations chart the beginnings of a description of how Walker's cut-out puppets inherit the formal and scenographic lineaments of her silhouettes, along with the authorial position those works imply, while moving beyond them into less stable territory. Kara Walker's frequent appearance

in the frame evidences the broader shift to a more implicated, more improvisatory form of authorship. The sound too, in its mixed quality, is often more like ordinary hearing (or overhearing) than focused filmic sound design, and so makes its hearers less recipients, than people who inhabit the same space and time as the characters – whatever our relationship to them becomes over the course of the film.

How can we do more than merely notice such formal elements? If they remain sites of isolated fascination (see the relieved commentary all over the Walker literature about the beautiful, masterful quality of her silhouettes), they remain merely beguiling, a defense against the form of the film, and ultimately, against the film itself. How can we do more than perceive slavery, the plantation love story, the minstrel acts, the lynching, the stereotypes, and all the nauseous citations of the film as things of the past? How can we do more than reject their extreme manifestations in the film as precisely extreme, as exceptions to the rule of history, now safely in the rear view mirror of progress? How can we see the coarse and familiar as well as the delicate, authorial, and beautiful without excusing or exceptionalizing either mode? These questions – and more specifically, the parallelism they invoke between living through *Miss Pippi's Blue Tale* and living through the present tense – suggest why this work is not subversive or reparative, not avant-garde or traditionalist. The film will provide little satisfaction when held to those standards. *Miss Pippi*, in short, does not sit outside of its subjects, commenting on them. It is instead – although we'll cringe to hear it – a kind of realism.⁴ Whether we like it or hate it, ignore it or patiently attend to it, the film engages us as intimately and unflinchingly as it can in the jagged process of *experiencing* – not just living through – the grotesque *contemporaneity* of race, which is depressing and buoyant, violent and tender, elegant and slapstick all at once. And this engagement, this encounter, cannot be sidestepped or transcended; it can only be endured with more or less generosity.

KRIS COHEN is Assistant Professor of Art and Humanities at Reed College. He teaches and writes about the historical relationships between art, economy, and media technologies, focusing especially on the aesthetics of collective life. His current project, entitled *Never Alone, Except for Now*, addresses these concerns in the context of electronic networks.

NOTES

1 The quotes here foreshadow a suggestion to come: to love the “actual” less, and the formal more, to endure the film more than assess it.

2 And it’s worth noting, for people who don’t know the incident, that this was a conversation that occurred primarily within racial lines. Saar and others quite self-consciously, tactically even, took up the position of older black artists speaking to a younger black artist – a younger artist who was made to seem both uppity and callow by the form of the address.

3 Lauren Berlant, “Slow Death (Sovereignty, Obesity, Lateral Agency),” *Critical Inquiry* 33, no. 4 (2007).

4 Which is emphatically not to say that the film is realistic.

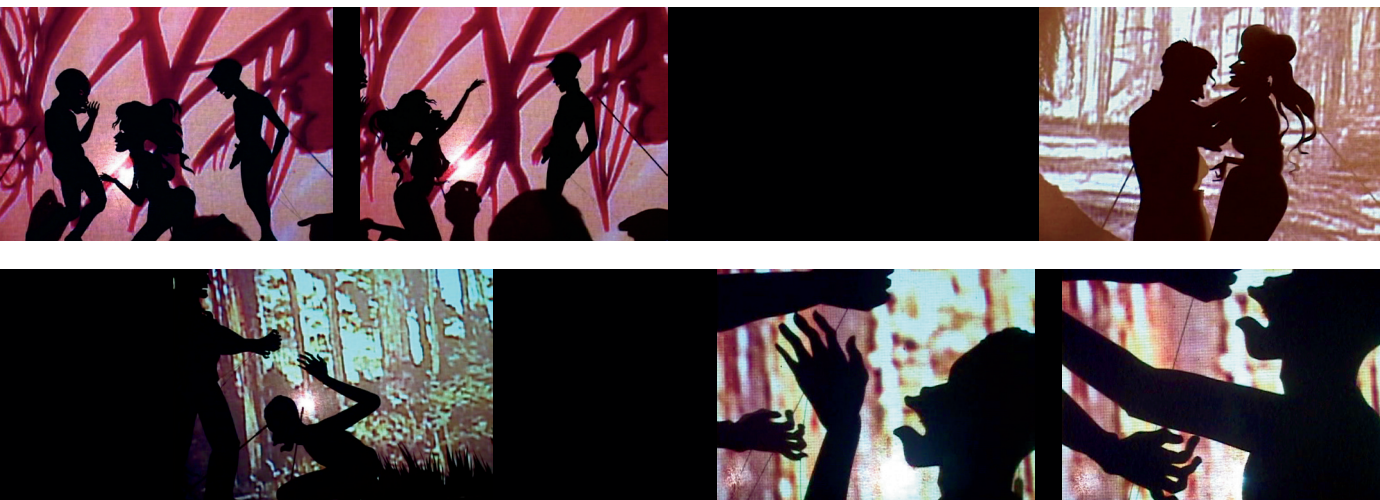
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Berlant, Lauren. “Slow Death (Sovereignty, Obesity, Lateral Agency).” *Critical Inquiry* 33, no. 4 (2007).

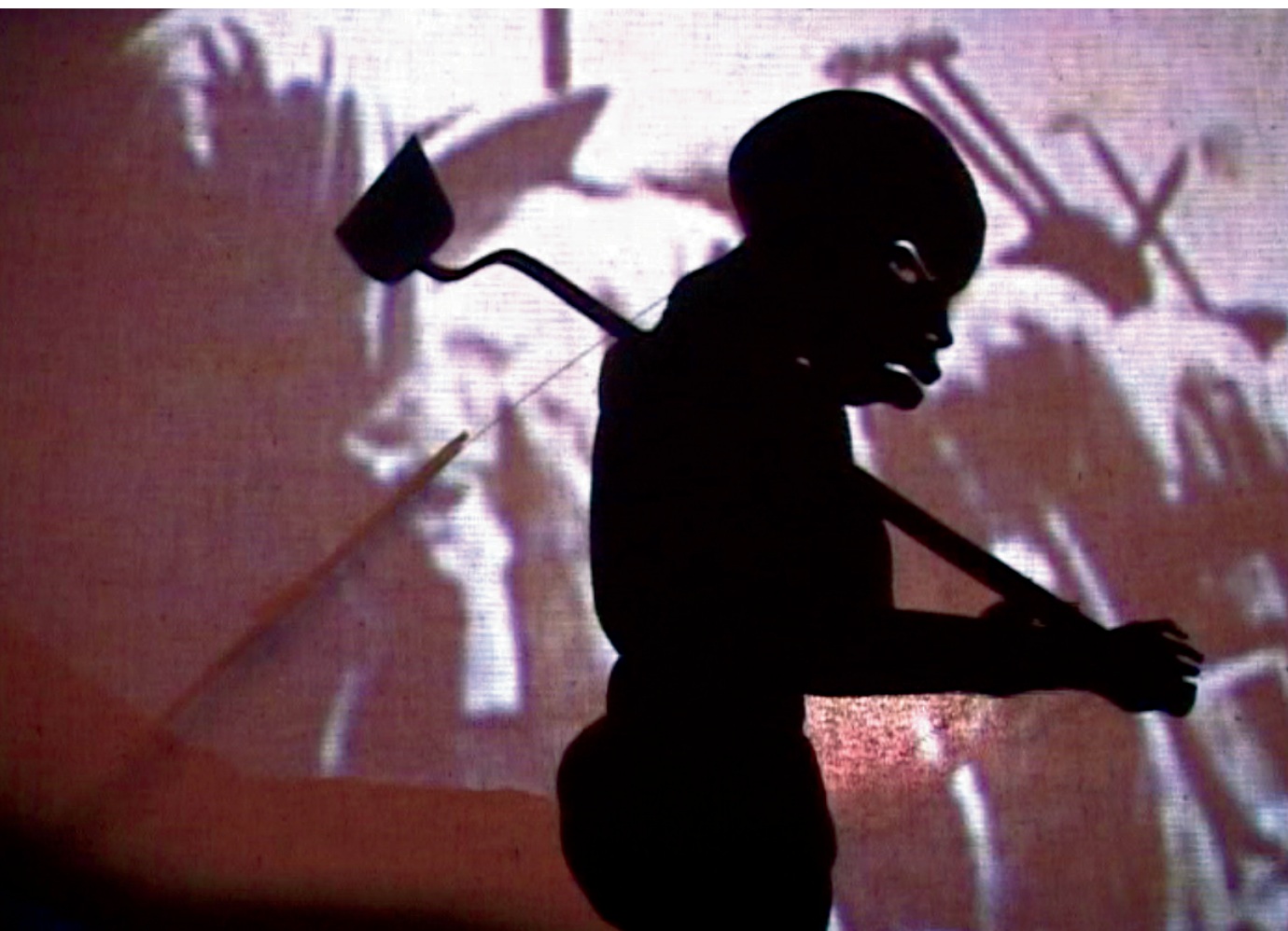
Scott, Joan W. “The Evidence of Experience.” *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (1991).

Kara Walker was born in Stockton, California in 1969 and grew up in Atlanta, Georgia. She graduated from the Atlanta College of Art in 1991 and received her MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1994. She is known for her candid investigation of race, gender, sexuality, and violence through silhouetted figures that have appeared in numerous exhibitions worldwide. Her major survey show, *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, premiered at the The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN in February 2007 before traveling to ARC/Musée d’Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, France; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; and the Museum of Modern Art, Fort Worth. Other recent solo exhibitions have taken place at Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland (2011); CAC Málaga, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Spain and Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens in Deurle (MDD), Belgium (both 2008). She participated in the 52nd Venice International Biennale in 2007 and was the United States representative to the 25th International São Paulo Biennial in Brazil in 2002.

Walker is the recipient of many awards including: the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Achievement Award in 1997; the Deutsche Bank Prize in 2000; and the United States Artists Eileen Harris Norton Fellowship in 2008. Her work is included in numerous museums and public collections including: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Tate Gallery, London; the Centro Nazionale per le Arti Contemporanee, Rome; and Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt. She lives and works in New York City.



above and overleaf: (stills) **Fall From Grace, Miss Pipi's Blue Tale**, 2011
 DVD video (color, audio)
 17 min.
 Courtesy of the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York



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KARA WALKER MORE & LESS

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WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Fall From Grace, Miss Pipi's Blue Tale, 2011

DVD video (color, audio), 17 min.
Courtesy of the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York

An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters: Buoy, 2010

Etching with aquatint, sugar-lift, spit-bite, and dry-point, edition 19/30
27 x 35.5 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters: Dread, 2010

Etching with aquatint, sugar-lift, spit-bite, and dry-point, edition 19/30
27 x 15 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters: The Secret Sharer, 2010

Etching with aquatint, sugar-lift, spit-bite, and dry-point, edition 19/30
27 x 27 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters: Beacon, 2010

Etching with aquatint, sugar-lift, spit-bite, and dry-point, edition 19/30
27 x 11 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters: No World, 2010

Etching with aquatint, sugar-lift, spit-bite, and dry-point, edition 19/30
27 x 39 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

An Unpeopled Land in Uncharted Waters: Savant, 2010

Etching with aquatint, sugar-lift, spit-bite, and dry-point, edition 19/30
27 x 17 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Burning African Village Play Set with Big House and Lynching, 2006

Painted laser cut steel, edition 4/20
Dimensions variable
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Alabama Loyalists Greeting the Federal Gun-Boats, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): An Army Train, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Banks's Army Leaving Simmsport, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Buzzard's Roost Pass, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
53 x 39 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Confederate Prisoners Being Conducted from Jonesborough, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Deadbrook after the Battle of Ezra's Church, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Foote's Gun-Boats Ascending to Attack Fort Henry, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Lost Mountain at Sunrise, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Occupation of Alexandria, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
39 x 53 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Pack-Mules in the Mountains, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
53 x 39 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Scene of McPherson's Death, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
53 x 39 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated): Signal Station, Summit of Maryland Heights, 2005

Offset lithography and silkscreen, edition 21/35
53 x 39 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

The Bush, Skinny, De-boning, 2002

Stainless steel cut-outs painted matte black, edition 53/100
6.5 x 5.5 x .75 in.,
5.75 x 6 x .75 in.,
4.5 x 4.13 x .75 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

African/American, 1998

Linocut, edition 22/40
46.25 x 60.5 in.
Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

Cotton, 1997

Etching with aquatint, edition 27/35
18 x 15 in.
Collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation

Li'l Patch of Woods, 1997

Etching with aquatint, edition 27/35
18 x 15 in.
Collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation

Untitled (John Brown), 1997

Etching with aquatint, edition 27/35
18 x 15 in.
Collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation

Vanishing Act, 1997

Etching with aquatint, edition 27/35
18 x 15 in.
Collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation

Freedom, A Fable: A Curious Interpretation of the Wit of a Negress in Troubled Times, 1997

Bound volume of offset lithographs and pop-up silhouettes on wove paper
9.38 x 8.38 in.
Reed College Art Collection
Gift of the Peter Norton Family

KARA WALKER comes to Reed as a Stephen E. Ostrow Distinguished Visitor in the Arts. This program was established by a generous 1988 gift to Reed from longtime friends of the college Edward and Sue Cooley and John and Betty Gray, in support of art history and its place in the humanities. The mission of the program is to bring to campus creative people who are distinguished in connection with the visual arts and who provide "a forum for conceptual exploration, challenge, and discovery." Kara Walker's visit is organized by Kris Cohen, Assistant Professor of Art and Humanities. Publication design and concept by Heather Watkins.

The mission of the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery is to enhance the academic life of Reed College with a diverse range of scholarly exhibitions, lectures, and publications.

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