

00:00:00:03 - 00:00:23:04

Maia

I just was thinking so much while you guys were talking. And also just in terms of this letter and finding things that were written not by the colonizers, which is practically—even though there are essays by students, it's still happening in this American education classroom, which I was really interested in trying to find the books that they used at that time, the Thomasites used at that time.

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Maia

And Chad, who is an amazing, awesome, able-to-find-everything, helped me to find an essay by a Thomasite teacher that outlined a day—what a day at school looked like. And I thought that was really—I don't know, I just, that was a tiring part of it, to have to constantly look through this material. Like, I just feel like it's, you know, you talked about when we got here and it was like, oh, my gosh, there's so much.

00:00:52:04 - 00:01:19:07

Maia

But it's also like being confronted with either you're walking off the cliff into empire or like walking into a wall, you know, and there's and there's like no relief. But I will share some images because I find relief in some of the things that I see. Could we look at photo two? So in my work, you know, I, I looked at a lot of these photographs from the Philippine-American War.

00:01:19:07 - 00:01:43:05

Maia

And what I would notice and like my intention in looking at these was to look for things that kind of broke the purpose of these pictures. And so on the screen on the left is—it's a stack of lantern slides which are kind of like the 35 millimeter slides that you put in a carousel, but they're a little bit bigger and they're made of glass.

00:01:43:22 - 00:02:06:24

Maia

And so I just stacked a bunch of them on top of each other. And this, I think it was sort of an image that explains a lot or describes to me visually a lot of what this experience has been like. And and in fact, like the first night I was I think we talked about this a little bit, but just having all these flashes of like what we're seeing.

00:02:07:20 - 00:02:27:21

Maia

But at the same time, for me, just like experience of I mean, why am I continually interested in this material even though it's so hard to be in? And then the image on the right is from a postcard. It's a detail from the postcard. And I love these moments where, you know, her face is facing us, but it's also facing away from us.

00:02:27:21 - 00:02:43:22

Maia

And it's not totally legible, which I—those are the kinds of things that I kind of look for, and it kind of takes a little bit of time to look at these things. And so that's what I find interesting for me, which is where there's sort of the starting off point from where and then which I make my work.

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Maia

So the next slide would be photo three and just as an example of recent paintings. So that's kind of my process of looking at these photographs and then taking these figures and placing them into sort of a new context and a new narrative. That's that I mean, they're still of the colonial era, but they—I guess my impetus is to see them in a different light.

00:03:11:13 - 00:03:45:21

Maia

And then photo five—and I just thought this image was really kind of also telling of this experience where—so on the left is a detail of a postcard, and then on the right is a painting that I made in 2019 called A Thousand Arms Offered. And the care that you were talking about—and I think the thing for me about looking at these materials of colonization is this—I don't know,

00:03:45:21 - 00:04:07:00

Maia

I think for me as an artist, I, I really think about slowing down and just really, really slow looking and being with what I see. And in terms of all of the caption, like the manuscripts that come along with a lot of these images, especially in the Western collection, these huge volumes, like I just can't do it. Like I just, I don't want to read it.

00:04:07:07 - 00:04:29:13

Maia

I just don't. Yeah, yeah. Because it's so strong in what he's trying to say and what the, that point of view is. So I think for me is part of a lot of the things I'm looking for are—this could just look like a regular postcard, but zooming in on these little details where this hand gesture is like, it could be read so many different ways.

00:04:29:13 - 00:04:59:07

Maia

I mean, they could be, they're connecting. They're gently touching each other, but they could also be forming like a barrier, you know. And I just I think that that kind of multiple reading of images is what I find really interesting. And also the last thing I'll say is just—I want to say something about desire, like, I mean, I know that the library is open from like 10 to 5, or 10 to 4 or whatever,

00:04:59:07 - 00:05:25:05

Maia

and I'm just like there. But I do have this unrelenting desire to see this stuff. And, and I think that that's really important and especially in the work that I make, thinking about desire, because, you know, it wasn't something that I think maybe was attributed to the people that are in the photographs. And I just think a lot about that essay by Eve Tuck, *Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities*.

00:05:25:15 - 00:05:47:23

Maia

Anyway she talks about how damaging these photographs are. I mean this is the whole basis of this project of how things are framed and the language and valorizing you know, colonists and all that. So that's like the damage. But then the sort of salve to that or the other part of that or I mean, maybe reparative is the other part of that,

00:05:47:23 - 00:06:00:14

Maia

but there's like a third part, which is this idea of, of desire, which is something that I'm just that I feel. But I'm also I'm not sure if I can articulate it quite yet. But anyway, that's been coming up for me.

00:06:01:17 - 00:06:48:23

Deirdre

Well, I mean, maybe we can sit with this for a little bit, because I'm really interested in kind of a third, you know, especially with this project we think so much about remediation and repair as if there's kind of a solution. There's like the thing that you can do that will fix it, right? And one of the things that we're learning, and I think that you've all helped us realize, is that there's really no end to, really no terminus to all of this one, because the the damage is so immense, but also because there are all of these other kinds of affects or interpretations, readings that can come out of the material.

00:06:49:16 - 00:06:53:12

Deirdre

I don't know if this speaks to what you're saying, the desire aspect of it—

00:06:53:12 - 00:06:53:17

Maia

The thirding.

00:06:53:17 - 00:06:59:00

Deirdre

—which is, yeah, the thirding or the otherwising, as we were talking about very early on in the project.