

Norient Festival 2024

# Decolonial Flânerie: How to Decolonize the City Through Walking, Listening, and Storytelling

Academic panel curated and moderated by Carla J. Maier, Kwame Aidoo, Nicole Pearson and Suvani Suri

January 12, 3.00–5.00pm CET

PROGR, kleine Bühne (1.OG Ost), Weissenhausplatz 30, 3011 Bern



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3.00-5:00pm

PROGR Bern, kleine Bühne  
bubble 01, (1.OG Ost),  
Weisenhausplatz 30, 3011 Bern

Language: English

0.5 ECTS

Pflicht- oder Wahlpflicht-  
bereich ICS / Wahlpflicht-  
bereich GS, SLS, SINTA

Registration:

via KSL und E-Mail to  
[michael.togweiler@unibe.ch](mailto:michael.togweiler@unibe.ch)

Academic panel at the Norient Festival 2023 in collaboration  
with GSAH/ICS and THoR (Taking the Humanities on the Road)

**Curated and moderated by Carla J. Maier (Berlin),  
Kwame Aidoo (Accra), Nicole Pearson (Berlin), and  
Suvani Suri (Delhi, online)**

How to decolonize the city through walking, listening, and storytelling? One of the vantage points for this exploration is the public walk Decolonial Flânerie in Berlin, which is organized annually by the Amo Collective, a trans-academic collective of artists, researchers, and activists whom we invited to discuss their approaches and practices with us. The concept of being a flâneur, which originally denoted a 19<sup>th</sup>-century white, male, and bourgeois practice of strolling through the city (see, e.g., Walter Benjamin), is used subversively in decolonial flânerie to read colonialist, racist, and gendered inscriptions in the urban space «against the grain» – thus making space for excluded and silenced voices, bodies, and stories.

In this bubble, we want to open a dialogue between sonic, artistic, and political aspects of artistic and activist interventions in places like Ghana, Delhi, and Berlin. With concrete practices of walking, listening, and storytelling as collective, performative, and decolonizing methods, we ask: How does collective walking challenge the individualistic mode of strolling through the streets of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century flâneur? How does listening collectively change our perception of overlapping languages, rhythms, and architectures – what is audible, what is muted?

Pictures:

PROGR, Decolonial Flânerie, Berlin  
2023

**Partners:**

Norient Festival 2024 Bern, January 10-14, 2024  
THoR (taking the Humanities on the Road)



**Carla J. Maier** is researcher of multimodal anthropology at the Centre for Urban Studies at the Institute for European Ethnology. Prior to this she was Visiting Professor of cultural studies at the Department of English and American Studies (Potsdam University). Her focus is on sound and listening, particularly in relation to questions of decolonization in academic and artistic theory and practice. Follow her on Instagram.

**Kwame Aidoo**'s work engages with decolonial, environmental and societal themes and he has exhibited, published and performed at institutions and DIY spaces across Africa, Europe and Latin America. He founded Inkfluent (a multidisciplinary cultural project engaging with Pan-Africanism), the Nkabom Festival, Ngarin Weaving Village, Portals of Ghana and the Buzanga Books Library. Also a prolific author and poet, Aidoo lives and works in Ghana. Follow him on Instagram · [Linktree](#).

**Nicole Pearson** is a Berlin-based theater artist, writer, and activist of African descent. Her work centers on the reverberations of trans-Atlantic enslavement across space and time. She focuses on liberating, intersectional practices and intergenerational healing. She uses theater to ignite the imagination of historically marginalized groups, such as LGBTIQIA+ youth, incarcerated adults, and racialized communities, facilitating transformative experiences that nurture community and inspire action. Her latest theater piece «hand, breast, heart» explores how past colonial practices of enslavement and extraction have morphed into present-day Cold War militarism. Follow her on Instagram or X.

**Suvani Suri** is an artist and researcher based in New Delhi. She works with sound, text, and intermedia assemblages and has been exploring various modes of transmission such as podcasts, auditory texts, sonic environments, objects, installations, fictions, experimental workshops, and live interventions. Her research interests lie in the relational and speculative capacities of listening, voice, aural/oral histories, and the spectral dispositions of sound that can activate critical imaginations. Actively engaged in thinking through the techno-politics that listening is embedded in, her practice is informed by the processes of production, mediation, perception, and distribution of sound. Alongside, she composes sound for video and performance works and teaches at several universities and educational spaces where her pedagogical interests conflate with a sustained inquiry into the digital and sonic sensorium. Follow her on her Instagram, or [SoundCloud](#).

