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**Thesis presented to OCAD University in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Fine Arts in Criticism and Curatorial Practice
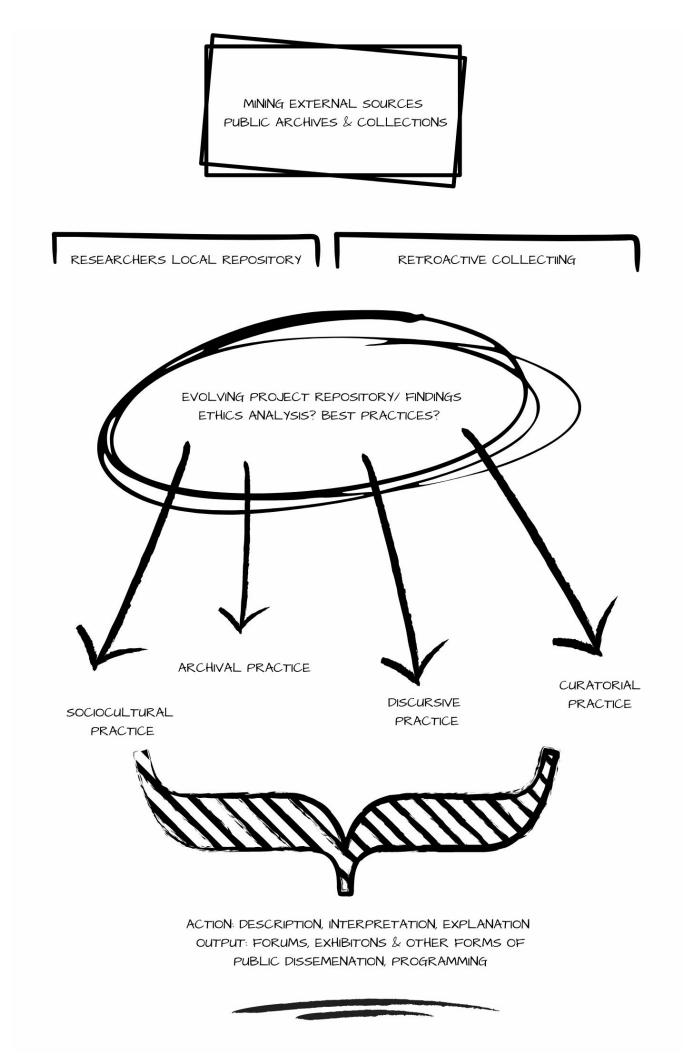Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2022**

An Insufficient Record// *Exploring the photo-ethics of preserving Black Vancouver*

visual interposition//

ABSTRACT

An Insufficient Record: The Photo Ethics of preserving Black Vancouver theorizes the afterlife of the City of Vancouver photographic archive, concerning the history of insufficient representation of Black Vancouverites and their lives in public space. A conduit for dialogical and collaborative collecting methodologies, the proposed exhibit intervenes with the archive, outlining a curatorial approach that identifies, contextualizes, and makes accessible reflections of the multiplicity of Blackness in Vancouver. Re-presenting and re-positioning 17 gelatin mugshots acquired from the City of Vancouver archive, *An Insufficient Record* malleablizes the varying vital relationship between the image and its object of representation, assessing the photographic constructions of race, the politics of human rights, identity formations, national narratives, and cultural memory. Juxtaposed within a new and speculatively valuable resource, the mugshots are presented with 50 portraits of Black and African self-identifying people, taken with clear subject autonomy. The archival images are assembled from official municipal holdings, provincial holdings, public arts and culture organizations, and special collections. Challenging the insufficient depository of knowledge contributing to the historical trajectory of restricting representations of Blackness to caricature, ethnographic object, or criminal, the proposed exhibit takes on a kind of cultural translation, examining the possibilities and structural limitations of transforming penal spectatorship to a participatory re-shaping and reading of the carceral images. *An Insufficient Record* exposes the strategic erasure of nuanced Black representation, which enables the City of Vancouver's insufficient fonds to exist without question or complication. Speculating the role of curation and documentation in supporting collective movements beyond the public archive, the proposed exhibit visualizes and reinforces Black personal, political, and social presence. The curatorial space-making gesture imagines a system of photographic presentation and organization that engages Black Vancouver communities in the re-representation of their histories, and responds to demands to participate in national discourses of belonging to Canada's past and present, readdressing historiographical challenges and their impact on archival record.

MINING EXTERNAL SOURCES
PUBLIC ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS

RESEARCHERS LOCAL REPOSITORY

RETROACTIVE COLLECTIING

EVOLVING PROJECT REPOSITORY/ FINDINGS
ETHICS ANALYSIS? BEST PRACTICES?

SOCIOCULTURAL
PRACTICE

ARCHIVAL PRACTICE

DISCURSIVE
PRACTICE

CURATORIAL
PRACTICE

ACTION: DESCRIPTION, INTERPRETATION, EXPLANATION
OUTPUT: FORUMS, EXHIBITONS & OTHER FORMS OF
PUBLIC DISSEMENATION, PROGRAMMING

contents//

"the image is being read, in part, against what isn't there"

STUART HALL , "REPRESENTATION & THE MEDIA"
OPEN UNIVERSITY 1997

introduction//
EXHIBITION PROPOSAL

The thesis serves as an exhibition outline for *An Insufficient Record: The Photo Ethics of preserving Black[1] Vancouver*. The proposed exhibition examines seventeen images of booked Black Canadians in Vancouver, British Colombia 1898-1912, acquired from the City of Vancouver public holdings, labeled "'Incarcerates Persons' Blacks, First Name - Last Name and alias" (with a note linking the photograph to an unarchived, unavailable arrest book). Concerning the history of insufficient representation of Black Vancouverites and their lives in public space, *An Insufficient Record* acts as a conduit for dialogical and collaborative collecting methodologies that introduce interventions into the photographic archive, re-presenting and re-positioning the mugshots within a new and speculatively valuable resource, which I refer to as "Active Archiving".

I began this research hoping to intervene with the existing holdings through Black image-making; photographs created by Black artists and cultural practitioners, as a means of asserting agency over our representations, responding to the absences of public documentation. At the center of my inquiry, vernacular Black portraiture in public record, particularly images representing Black agency on both sides of the camera. The lack of findings raised additional questions concerning Black subjectivity, and forced me to ground this research in the social, political, economic realities of anti-Black racism post emancipation. I consider the act of protection, maintenance, care, safeguarding, preservation as a justifiable response to the strategic erasure of Black histories

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1   The use of the term Black in the text refers to both Black as a cultural identifier and phenotype, as well as a marker of African diasporic heritage. I acknowledge the use of this term does not encompass the plurality of Blackness as it exists in Canada, including but not limited to settler African people from continental migration, Afro-Caribbean, Black Canadians, and African Americans living in Canada.

and communities in Vancouver facing certain marginalization. In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, I was particularly interested in how a city steeped in anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism might continue to plead ignorance during a global call for accountability, and what Vancouver's historical engagement with Blackness and Black people might reveal. *An Insufficient Record* invites viewers to collaboratively examine the ways we make and re-make meanings from images. Malleablizing the varying vital relationship between the image and its object of representation, the exhibit proposes a different story of Blackness, containing a multiplicity of dimensions of human representation, beginning the process of collectively marking absent historical narratives, and together revealing the conditions of Black cultural life in the aftermath of colonial displacement.

Section 2, Social and Aesthetic context, critically engages the social, political, and economic realities crucial to understanding the cultural entities and practices that have impacted Black Vancouver residents' ability to claim presence. This research positions the City of Vancouver Archives and its presentation of carceral photography within a framework of anti-Black racism, historiographical inadequacy, and institutional influence concerning archival record. Section 3, Mugshots as Portraiture, historicizes the use of photography in policing concerning marginalized communities and introduces the 17 acquired mugshots from the Vancouver Police Department. Sections 4 and 5, Literature Review and Methodology, contextualize a lineage of counter archiving taken up by marginalized communities that serves to recover and reclaim. Here I propose a methodology and outline for visual presentation that uses collectivity to speculate curatorial practices' role in mediating and culturally translating oppressive images. Lastly, sections 6 and 7, Exhibition Review and Exhibition Making, inquire into future uses for the proposed theory, outlining collection practices and proposed exhibit design for grunt gallery[2], and placing *An Insufficient Record* in conversation with other exhibits and scholars that take up counter-archiving as a curatorial space-making gesture to cultivate nuanced self-representations.

CURATORIAL FRAMEWORK AND RATIONALE

The proposed exhibition interrogates the essentialization of Black representation by consciously reviewing placement, contents, and accessibility—collectively shaping the narrative of the histories documented. The structural and systemic problems of under-representation cannot be addressed in their entirety through a project such as this. While the exhibit provides insight into a particular demographic, it may never truly reflect the entire cross-section of Black communities in Vancouver; however, we may begin to carefully contend with images intended to degrade Black bodies in pursuit of a curatorial approach that contextualizes, identifies, and makes accessible reflections of the multiplicity of Blackness in Vancouver.

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2   The grunt gallery is a Canadian artist-run center, founded in 1984 and located in Vancouver, British Columbia. It is the proposed gallery space for *An Insufficient Record.*

I also must clarify my intentions for mining and collecting from public archives. To illustrate the ways that Blackness in the Canadian imagination proliferates, I map existing public collections as sites of widespread conceptualization and dissemination, challenging the fetishistic perpetuation of Black suppression. As it exists, the insufficient depository of knowledge continues the historical trajectory of restricting representations of Blackness to caricature, ethnographic object or, in this case, criminal.

In research practice, I consider the importance of the ethics od manipulating archives within my own curatorial vision or benefit. I believe it is my responsibility to approach archiving as an extension of my curatorial gesture and to question the material, making visible the correlation between the portrayal of history and the assumptions that surround the documentation and presentation of Black histories. My hope is to contribute to the evolving dicourse concerning classification, moving towards an activity that functions like a continuous writing of personal living, deconfining curatorial engagement of the Black subject. For communities in flux—from Black Canadian Pioneers and settlers of the mid-1800s through to the artistically, academically, and politically engaged communities of American, Caribbean, and British migrants in the late 1970s—scarce are the representations of Black existence.

Limiting images to predominantly criminal documentation undermines Black peoples' impact and contributions in Vancouver and British Columbia. Images produced, maintained, and distributed by non-confidential holdings reinforce incontestable enactments of surveillance, white supremacist gaze, and—within the archive—an archival gaze, birthed within an observational power dynamic, intending to document, make permanent, and mediate history. In effect, the public archive fails to uphold the ethical responsibilities of a democratic collection, further illustrating cultural inscription that inherently normalizes cultural assumptions, posturing as an unspoken universal language based on empirical truths. Enforcing seemingly concrete ideas, normative conventions, expectations, or signifying practices of cultural bodies of knowledge and its people directly correlates to the implications of record-keeping used on marginalized communities, rooted in the criticisms of ethnographic and colonial anthropological documentation. Therefore, we must make a concerted effort to counter importing methods of data collection and organization established by colonial knowledge-making systems, in favor of excavating formally undesirable Black histories. Given the identified representational insufficiency, how does curatorial practice make a concerted effort to situate Blackness and Black history? And where existent, how do these dissemination methods inform how we read or redeem oppressive images?

social and aesthetic context//
RACE & REPRESENTATION

In the summer of 2020, the world suspended in astonishment as a Black death spectacle made its way through our living rooms and handheld devices. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, anti-Blackness created a global state of emergency. At its crux, the whistleblowers: police brutality, carceral punishment, and the disproportionate engagement rate between Black people and the penal state. It is, again, a point of undeniable reckoning. Consequently, across the 49th parallel, Canada's façade of multiculturalism and tolerance was stripped away, revealing the living legacy of state-sanctioned surveillance, criminalization, racial profiling, law enforcement violence, incarceration, immigration detention, and punishment of Black lives. Canadian scholarship from Black theorists like Rinaldo Walcott, Dionne Brand, Syrus Marcus Ware, and Robyn Maynard produce a timely reflection on the violent impacts of policing Black Canadian communities. Walcott (2021) writes, "By and large, in both the city and the nation, Black appeals for social justice remain unheard by those in authority, and this is largely due to the continuing ambivalent place of Black peoples in the national imagination" . Walcott comprehensively outlines Canada's dangerous history of placing Blackness outside what is deemed Canadian. The risk for Black people living in the imagination of a historically genocidal state is the silent permission to dehumanize and marginalize. At stake is the politics of representivity[3], its impact on the visuality[4] of Blackness, and the consequent perpetuation of an ecosystem of unexamined objectification and rigorous decontextualization.

> *From the time of the first arrivals in the nineteenth century, BC's black history has been one of continuous exodus, immigration, settlement, exploration, integration, segregation, agitation, uprooting and re-rooting and re-routing. In other words, it has been a population and history always in flux. Much of the first black population of the nineteenth century left after being here for seven years; blacks arrive here from the US, Caribbean, Africa, and other parts of Canada daily. Black B.C. has never been a single monolithic population. It does not locate its roots in an easily discernible common origin, nor has it ceased*

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3   Representivity: commonly used in the field of statistics, found in the Corpus of Contemporary American English, meaning who is represented and how.

4   Visuality: the quality or state of being visible. In relation to Black diaspora, visuality also means the visualization of history. In the *Right to Look*, Mirzoeff refers to visuality as an imaginary practice, because what is being visualized is too substantial for any one person to see and is created from information, images, and ideas. This ability to assemble a visualization manifests the authority of the visualizer. Visualities first domains were the slave plantations, monitored by the surveillance of the overseer operating as the surrogate of the sovereign. Visuality supplemented the violence of authority and its separations, forming a complex that came to seem natural by virtue of its investment in history. In *A Black Gaze*, theorist Campt also defines visuality as a mechanism sought to present authority as self-evident, creating a division of the sensible whereby domination imposes the 'sensible' evidence of its legitimacy.

figure 1 FRANZ LINDER COURTESY OF VANESSA RICHARDS
figure 2 COURTESY OF "THE PEAK" SFU ARCHIVES

to shift and transform today. It is a population that has never truly arrived,
and as such, has remained less fiercely demarcated than others. If there is a
unifying characteristic of black identity in this province, it is surely the talent
for reinvention and for pioneering new versions of traditional identities that
such conditions demand.
Wayde Compton, *Bluesprint* (2001)

While a comprehensive history of Black BC and image-making remains to be written, critical texts like Wayde Compton's *Bluesprint* (2001) serve as pivotal archive of published Black BC, creating an invaluable research resource, artistically tracing Black subject and subjectivity. Virtual archives from the BC Black History Awareness Society[5] also do the vital work of making visible the imaged histories of Black pioneers, most of which centers Victoria, BC pre- and post-confederation. Later, media like Daphne Marlatt's *Opening Doors: Vancouver's East End* (1979), Andrea Fatona and Corneilia Wyngaarden's *Hogan's Alley*[6] (1994), Selwyn Jacob's *The Road Taken* (1996), Michelle Lee Williams' "The Afro News: The Voice of Black Community"[7] and "The Talking Drum" (1986), and Peter Hudson's *Diaspora*[8] (1994) contribute to the visual historical documentation of Black people in Vancouver. In 1858, Black populations en masse migrated from California to Vancouver, not only for economic relief but to fulfill their dreams of full citizenship and equality under British law. Prompted by an invitation from then governor of BC, British Guyana-born James Douglas, they moved in hopes of gold findings in the interior, and diminished racial persecution. After the American Civil war, more than half of the BC Black population returned to the United States. The first Black population dwindled to 500 according to the 1871 census. "In the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Blacks continued to come to BC from the United States, Britain, the Caribbean, Africa, and other parts of Canada. The Blacks who came here in the early- to mid-twentieth seem to have arrived as individuals from their respective homelands rather than as part of larger exoduses but have at least formed a community here at one historical point." (Compton 2001,)

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5   The British Columbia Black History Awareness Society (BCBHAS) celebrates the achievements of Black people in British Columbia by creating an awareness of the history of Blacks in BC, stimulating interest in the contributions of persons of African ancestry to BC and Canada today, and celebrating historical and contemporary achievements in the arts, education, government, sports, science etc. The non-profit society was formed in February 1994. Since March 2019, the society is a charity registered with the Canada Revenue Agency.

6   This video documents the previously unrecorded history of Vancouver's Black community, specifically Hogan's Alley, between 1930 and the late 1960s. The tape examines the lives of three Black women. Thelma Gibson is an African-Caribbean dance teacher who recalls the era with nostalgia. Pearl Brown is a well-known local jazz singer who speaks about working in the chicken houses flanking Hogan's Alley. Leah Curtis is a lesbian in her mid-forties, whose history as an abused child is interconnected with her experience as a child worker in the gambling houses of Papa White.The videotape investigates the identities of these women, as well as the identities of a disappeared community.

7   Afro News was the official newsletter of the African Canadian Association of British Columbia. The publication dissolved in 1994.

8   Diaspora founded in 1994, was a magazine of Black consciousness and culture, which showcased new writing, criticism, and artist's pages from Vancouver's Black community.

By 1910, Black people began settling in the East Side neighbourhood of Strathcona in Vancouver, creating an active and distinctive community. At its height in the 1930s and 1940s, the Black population in the Strathcona neighbourhood of Vancouver numbered approximately 800, including churches, businesses, restaurants, and entertainment venues. Black settlement in Vancouver was primarily due to Strathcona's proximity to the Great Northern Railway station, where many of the men in the community worked as railway porters. In 1958, the Vancouver City council approved a redevelopment plan that called for the demolition of the multicultural Strathcona communities. (Society 1994) By the 1960s and 1970s, nearly half of Hogan's Alley was destroyed to build the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaduct. The destruction of Hogan's Alley was a part of a wave of "urban renewal" efforts across Canada and the United States that often targeted Black communities, challenging the ability to lay down and maintain roots, creating distinct cultural spaces, and representations of Black presence in Vancouver. In 2018, The City of Vancouver—with support from BC Housing and Hogan's Alley Society—released a proposal for a major development plan that included the removal of the Georgia and Dunsmuir viaduct, the revitalizing of the False Creek areas, 1800-units of affordable housing, and a commitment to building Vancouver's first city-funded Black cultural center. Since its release (and public re-release in 2020), there has been no movement in policy or construction towards reparations. Anchoring this exhibit is the urgent assessment of City of Vancouver's holdings, and their conventions of colonialism regarding the control and dissemination of these historical narratives. Despite the transience, Black people document some 150-year presence in BC—110 years since the formal use of photography—including multiple waves of Black migration from British colonized countries between 1950-1970, national transplant communities of Black writers, artists, curators, politically engaged beings, self-defining Afrocentrism in the 1980s and 1990s, and an increasing refugee population from West and East Africa. Black cultural practitioners Deanna Bowen, Bertha Clarke,[9] Khari McClelland,[10] Vanessa Richards,[11] and Stan Douglas[12] have supported the growing field of research on Vancouver's historic Black communities, re/presenting and re-imagining the physical landscape of Black life within Black Strathcona, Hogan's Alley and beyond. *An Insufficient Record* responds to the gap of visual documentation in publicly accessible records by curatorially re-presenting the mugshots within a detailed study of commonality, marking the multiplicity of Black existence.

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9   Bertha Clarke (Adelene da soul poet) born in San Francisco and raised in Vancouver, is a direct descendant of BC's black pioneers, who settled on Salt Spring Island and Victoria in the mid-1800s, and the granddaughter of Vie of Vie's Chicken and Steaks, a restaurant on Vancouver's Union Street that operated from the early 1940s to the late 1970s.

10   Khari McClelland is an American musician, music historian, and member of the gospel trio the Sojourners.

11   Vanessa Richards is a 2nd generation British Columbian, an artist and facilitator. Her work focuses on creativity and participatory culture as central in the civic imagination and positive social transformations.

12   Stan Douglas is a Vancouver born artist whose work to the investigates the image, the technologies of their making, their aesthetic languages, and their dynamics of power, through photo, film and video installation, television, theatre, mobile applications and many other digital media technologies.

(top- down) figure 3, 4 IMAGES COURTESY OF CITY VANCOUVER ARCHIVES

ARCHIVE INADEQUACY: BLACKNESS IN THE CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVE

Over the past four years, I have been researching and writing about the ongoing efforts to document and preserve historic Black Vancouver. The City of Vancouver's public photographic archive has been the center of my inquiry, particularly its catalog of images from the early 1900s, organized under the headings of: 'Blacks—Canada,' 'Negroes—Canada' (Archives 2014). The collection is accompanied by two pages of references. Of these references, newspaper clippings document segregation, racial tensions, civil cases, labor union rallies, nightlife, and entertainment. Private studio documentation, street photography images, and collections from Vancouver's first archivist J.S Matthews[13] capture Black athletes, musicians, stage presenters, Seaman Institutes, churches, and Mason lodges; often nameless, without title, date, or context. Notably, the largest selection of "portraits" and the only references that included full names and contextual documentation were donated from the Vancouver Police Department. Seventeen gel print mugshots were presented as part of the Blacks—Canada reference. To my knowledge, there has not been any artistic, curatorial, or academic interaction with the seventeen proposed archival images, nor any engagement of mugshots from the Vancouver Archives. This elusion should be considered as a site of investigation within the conditions of Black life and the dissolution of Black presence in Vancouver.

To adequately address the insufficient reflection of Black life within the City of Vancouver Archives and the misrepresented Black bodies in mugshots, the legacies of Canadian slavery, segregation, travelers, homesteads, and Black settler communities must be substantially addressed. Archives shallowly punctuated with the communities' social and economic realities inadequately frame institutional memory, practices, and the notion of what may constitute a comprehensive Black Vancouver archive. Critical to any analyses of the photographs are the social circumstances under which they were commissioned, consumed, and collected. Therefore, images were taken by arresting officers of the Vancouver Police Department, subject to the analysis of the colonial judicial system, the impact of anti-Black racism, and issues of unequal power and authority over Black persons.

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13   J.S Matthews refers to Major James Skitt Matthews, who was the City of Vancouver's first archivist and an early historian and chronicler of the city.

figure 5// PNE EXPO COURTESY OF VANESSA RICHARDS

mugshots
as portraiture//

CONTENT WARNING

This exhibit contains carceral photography of Black persons, otherwise knows as mugshots. Courtesy of the City of Vancouver archive, the images have been aquired and reproduced for resarch and discussion purposes only. 17 gel photographs have been resized and contrast adjusted for printing accessibility. Access to original images is restricted by City of Vancouver Archive.

Where available, names, aliases, and ages of subjects have been provided. Please note that images were not collected with arrest book, or documentation of offence. The images presented are not indicative of a guilty or not guilty verdict, but rather a snapshot of the harsh realities of colonial institutionalization.

The intent of this thesis is to speculate the possibility of mediating harmful representations. While challenging, the proposed exhibtion contains discourse concerning racism, white supremacy, and criminilazation. Please engage with care, the curator priotizes the well being of all audiences, especially self-identifying Black communities.

figure 6//UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN 1912
glass negative

figure 7// B. H. CHANDLER - ALIAS BLACK CHANDLER, DEC 6 1912
glass negative

AN INSUFFICIENT RECORD

figure 8//IDA BROWN - ALIAS MRS. FRANK JOHNSON, 1900, glass negative

figure 9// GERTRUDE LANDERWAY, OCT 19 1912, glass negative
figure 10// GERTRUDE SMITH, DEC 5 1912, glass negative

AN INSUFFICIENT RECORD

figure 11// FRANCIS R. KENNEDY, DEC 6 1912, glass negative
figure 12// REBECCA CAMPBELL - ALIAS CORRY, BIRDIE CAMPBELL,
OCT. 19, 1912, glass negative

figure 13//TULBY THORNE, 1900, glass negative

AN INSUFFICIENT RECORD

figure 14// JENNIE WILLIAMS, OCT 27 1912, glass negtive
figure 15// ROY DENNY, DEC 6 1912, glass negative

AN INSUFFICIENT RECORD

figure 16// ELLA ROBINSON – ALIAS MARY JONES, MARY SMITH, OCT 11 1912
glass negative
figure 17 // VIRGIL THUMAN – ALIAS VIRGIL COLE, TRUEMAN, DEC 7 1912
glass negative

figure 18// MRS. DAVIDSON - ALIAS BLACK MARY, DEC 6 1912, glass negative
figure 19// MRS. LOTTIE MILES - ALIAS LOLA WILLIAMS, 1912, glass negative

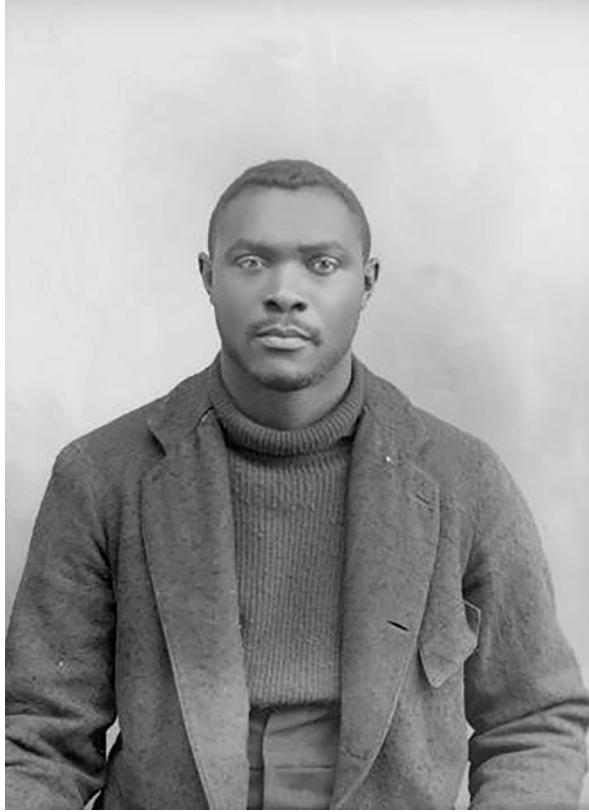figure 20 // JOSEPH PERRY, JUL. 16, 1898, glass negative

AN INSUFFICIENT RECORD

figure 21// L. ED. MOSELEY - ALIAS ED DUFFY, DEC 17 1912, glass negative
figure 22// MRS. SUSY DENNY - ALIAS BESSIE JOHNSON,
SUSIE COLEMAN, DEC 7 1912, glass negative

"cultural analysis has a special role in the transformation of the passivity of penal spectatorship to an informed and engaged mode of citizenship, which requires a critical engagement with the work"

MICHELLE BROWN, *THE CULTURE OF PUNISHMENT: PRISON, SOCIETY AND SPECTACLE*

mugshots as portraiture//
VIOLENCE OF THE IMAGE

Photography has a long-standing relationship to policing. In the early 19th century, technology was introduced to police for identification and surveillance purposes. Police departments in the United States started photographing arrestees as early as the 1850s and displayed their portraits for public viewing in rogue galleries. In Canada, the Toronto Police Service began collecting photographs of criminalized suspects beginning in 1874. Public dissemination of mug shots dates to 1840, deploying photography to locate serial offenders, instructing, and engaging dominant populations in societal inspection, creating a veil of mystery and terror within white upper-class society—the dangerous anonymous stranger or outsider. Mugshots positioned as a strategy for policing and punitive systems transformed predatory policing. Carceral photography has long functioned as much more than pure documentation. The history of these photos is based on pseudo-scientific theories that photography could be a tool for helping to classify criminal types, often ethnic, racial, and religious minorities of the dominant society.

In "The Mug Shot: A Brief History," historian and theorist Shawn Michelle Smith (2018) states, "Although photographic documentation of prisoners was not at all common until the 1860s, the potential for a new juridical photographic realism was widely recognized in the 1840s, in the general context of these systematic efforts to regulate the growing urban presence of the 'dangerous classes'." *An Insufficient Record* exhibits seventeen reproduced dry plate glass negatives. This state-of-the-art technology between 1850s and 1920s, allowed for sharper, more detailed photos. During this time, glass negatives predominantly used for institutional images helped standardize photography practices, paving the way for reproductions and faster photography methods. Sensitive to oxidation, delamination, scratches, and breakage, the black and white mugshots edged with silvering typify anthropological photography, intrusively capturing the dynamics of superiority and subversion. Enacting an uninvited gaze at a subject that is rendered powerless, the institutional and carceral gaze of the Vancouver Police department serves to reflect and reinforce societal power dynamics. Compounded by the archival gaze, which assigns the act with a sense of permanence and historicity, the mugshots both within the proposed exhibit and as individual images stand as a proof of existence and as a counter act, a practice in looking back and destabilizing the legibility of state-sanctioned visualizations of Blackness.

It is imperative to note that although the arrest book and information on the sentencing of these subjects are not made available, the images (figure 1 through figure 17) are cross tagged as "Incarcerated Persons" in the City of Vancouver Archive. What photography insinuates is an evidentiary, visceral response where the observer linked to the decontextualized subject, assumes power or expertise over what is presented. Mugshot images stigmatize, dehumanize, criminalize, and are often consumed for entertainment, regardless of a criminal conviction, creating an illusory correlation for viewers that fosters bias.

The sitters pictured, photographed shoulder or waist up, front and profile views are preserved in fonds with their booking names and alias (where available). Heading the images top center are booking numbers that coincide with the Vancouver Police departments arrest book. In contradiction to common conceptions of mugshot etiquette, they are meticulously dressed, well groomed, and posed in a stately demeanor. Complicating assumptions about their class and means, arrestees wear suits, blouses, coats, tight pinned hair, afros, braids, low cuts and stretched buns, some accessorized with hats, their forward gaze directly engages the photographer. B.H Chandler smizes directly into the lens, his finger waves and ascot intact. 11 out of the 17 arrestees are women of varying ages and marital status. Apart from Gertrude Smith and Mrs. Susy Denny, who are visibly uncomfortable, a sense of asserted presence carries throughout. Though an averting gaze in institutional photography is impermissible, none of the subjects look vacant. Sitters Mrs. Davidson, Virgil Thurman, and Jennie Williams project a pointed, demanding almost invitational look, a confrontational tension. Absent of despair or fear, many of the sitters don an impartial glare, a half smile. I believe that had the vernacular of a profile image been different, sitters like Mrs. Lottie Miles, Joseph Perry, Rebecca Campbell, Roy Denny, and Ella Robinson could be mistaken for studio fashion portraits.

The oppositional gaze enacted by the sitters feels as if the process of being recorded by police is inconsequential, or perhaps the social convention associated with "picture-taking" caused them to pose despite the circumstances. In images like Tulby Thorne and Ed Mosley, a physically articulated resistance, their posture slumped, and their returned gaze unmoved. Under obvious surveillance, scrutiny, and subjected gaze, the loss of autonomy is taken up with an awareness of visibility, the images embody a sense adroitness, looking back and seemingly interrogating the gaze of the other. *An Insufficient Record* appropriates the front view mugshots exclusively, employing their oppositional gazes as a site of resistance, speculating an opportunity for reclamation.

literature review//
ARCHIVE AND COUNTER ARCHIVES

The scholarly discourse on the issue of the archive, however subjective, spans centuries, with theoretical practices and seminal Eurocentric texts such as Foucault[14] and Derrida[15] informing archival studies' revolving utility. The elasticity of the archive goes beyond literal reference and is complicated and strengthened by the integration of perspectives from a variety of disciplines. Many literary critics take influence from Focault and Derrida in adopting archival theory to explore issues in contemporary scholarship, contributing to explorations of the function of the archive in both democratic and totalitarian societies. Scholar and writer Hayden White[16] writes transforming archival data into historical narrative is a subjective act. The writing of history always requires the intervention of a human interpreter. Critiques of archives' inability to uphold democratic principles of accountability and transparency problematize the historical positioning of the archive as a principle of credibility. Understanding the flaws of publicly disseminating provisional truth foregrounds the sociopolitical realities of colonial and racialized forms of structural control over history of place, people and belonging. This problematization has made for a different, seemingly disordered kind of knowledge[17] to emerge. Prompted by a lack of representation in public archives, marginalized communities thus turn towards the transformative potential of a counter-archive, bringing to the forefront the work of women, Queer, racialized, class poor, and othered communities to create archives that expand, interrogate, and disrupt conventional archives and archival methodology. I consider the work of feminist archivists, scholars and organzations who have contributed to discourses addressing the unique challenges of collecting feminist materials and the potentiality of visual documentation and archival practices within feminist thought.

14   Michel Foucault (1926-1984) was a French historian and philosopher associated with the structuralist and post structuralist movements. Foucault's theories primarily address the relationship between power and knowledge, and how they are used as a form of social control within institutions. In relation to archives, his text *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* in which he proposes his own definition of the archive, "the system of discursivity," establishes the archive as a conception of academic disciplines as discursive formations or systematic conceptual frameworks that define their own truth criteria.

15   Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), was a French philosopher whose critique of Western philosophy analyses the nature of language, writing, and meaning. Despite their limitations, we cling to archival materials in the hope of somehow connecting to a past we can never fully know. In their seminal text *Archive Fever,* Derrida likens the intention in archiving to that of a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic, irrepressible desire to return to the origin—a homesickness, a nostalgia for the return to the most archaic place of absolute commencement.

16   Hayden V. White was an American historian in the tradition of literary criticism. In their published text *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe,* he states that postcolonial archives place the former subjects at the center and makes possible the exposure of the distortions and manipulations of the historical record. Postcolonial scholarship has demonstrated how the colonial archive was shaped by the aims of its creators and how interpretation of the archive always depends on the perspective of its interpreters. Postcolonial subjects are to reinterpret and recontextualize the information and thus call into question the colonial version of events.

17   Throughout the text, I interchange theoretical texts from library studies and archival studies with the intention to bridge knowledge organization, and the preservation of knowledge and historical materials. In alignment with my research questions, both serve as the foundations of theoretical study of representation and provide overlapping perspectives of the structure and principles of organization and the cultural ramifications of categorization.

Scholars such as Olson,[18] Cook & Schwartz,[19] and, more recently, organizations such as The Free Black Women's Library,[20] Not Your Mammy,[21] The Caribbean Women's archive,[22] We've Been Essential,[23] Race Women,[24] and Bilphena's Library[25] employ feminist history and theory to complicate archival practice, citing the gendered, patriarchal nature of the archive as evidence against ideas of neutrality. Olson's feminist classification theory posits that systems of organizing information are not neutral (Olson 2002); rather, they have the values of the people that made them inherently. Consequently, the circular process of creating the society we want to be evidenced, documenting and collecting are significant parts of feminist archiving. Additionally, the processes of rethinking access, interpretation, use, and the creation of new structures ensure broader social relevance and application of pedagogies.

In relation, the body of literature concerning Queering the archive posits that Queer archiving as a collection methodology that remains vigilant against dominant and harmful representations of Queer bodies, while actively imaging a political present and future that approaches an archive as an intangible site of knowledge. Such an approach requires both adjacency and cross-disciplinary methodologies. Queer Theorists Cvetkovich,[26] Halberstam,[27] and more

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18   Hope A. Olson is author of *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries* (2002).

19   In 2002, Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook published "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," for *Archival Science* at the National Archives of Canada/Queen's University.

20   The Free Black Women's Library is a social art project, archive, installation and book collection that celebrates the brilliance, diversity, and imagination of Black women writers. The library features 4000 books, journals, articles, cultural production, and documentation written by Black women.

21   The Not Your Mammy project was created by Crystal Des Ogugua in 2018. In partnership with the Library of Congress, the collection focuses on Black feminist futurism, holding photos and interviews from Black American women leaders.

22   The Caribbean Women Archive was founded by artist Zainb in 2019 and is a photo collection that works to educated and decolonize the work and impact of AfroCaribbean women globally.

23   We've Been Esential was founded by first generation Dominicana curator, Ayling Zulema Dominguez. The archive documents the stories and experiences of Black and Brown women essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

24   Race Women was founded by nonfiction writer Maya Millett, with support from Spelman College documents Black feminist pioneers, in the hopes of paving the way for current and future generations of Black feminists.

25   Bilphena's Library archives Libian, West African texts from Black women using a womanist approach, centering women's health, wellbeing, intersectionality, and abolition.

26   Ann Cvetkovich, Professor of English and Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Texas in Austin, is author of *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Duke 2003), and *A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies.* Her current writing projects focus on the current state of LGBTQ archives and the creative use of them by artists to create counter archives and interventions in public history.

27   Jack Halberstam is Professor of English, American Studies and Ethnicity, and Gender Studies at the University of Southern California. Halberstam is the author of *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (NYU Press 2005).

recently Canada's Queer archives ArQuives,[28] the Black Lesbian Archives,[29] The Rukus! of the Black Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Cultural Archive[30] and *Legacies in Motion: Black Queer Toronto Archival Project*[31] express the importance of uncovering an archive that challenges the marginalization of LGBTQ2+ histories, and accounts for the past trauma of queer lives but also for the subjugation, and intersectionality of queer experiences. Queering the archive centers intimacy, sexuality, love, and activism as experiences fundamental to Queer people and histories that traditional archives do not or cannot engage. In 2021, author, archivist, and Queer activist Jessica Lynne commented on the rising necessity for Black Queer archives. She states that for Black folks, particularly Black trans, non-binary, and gender-expansive people, the urgency to rearticulate public visual narratives of personhood is palpable. To do so (rearticulate public visual narratives) in a manner that acknowledges—indeed, revels—in the personal and subjective without flattening is the task of care--this intimacy lives in the creation, organization, and preservation of these images' genealogies. (Lynne 2021)

A community archival approach prioritizes the redistribution of authority, burgeoning opportunities for new narratives, expansion of accessibility, and the daylighting of lived experiences beyond their current state of representation. Community archives—the product of any community attempt to self-document and preserve and disseminate historical references—function to inflate the scope of archival representation by existing in opposition to archival incompleteness and misrepresentation. Within the altlantic Afro-diaspora, the scholarship of community archivists and archival projects such as Caswell (and their revisited theory of symbolic annihilation)[32], Black Cultural Archives, Renata Cherlise's Black Archive,[33] and the

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28   The ArQuives was established in 1973 to acquire, preserve, organize, and give public access to information and materials by and about LGBTQ2+ people, primarily concerning Canada. The archive maintains a research library, international research files, and an internationally accessible collection of queer and trans periodicals.

29   The Black and Lesbian archives were created and founded by artist Kru Maekdo in 2017 to bring awareness to, educate and preserve Black lesbian histories.

30   The Rukus! archive project was launched in London in June 2005 by photographer Ajamu X, and filmmaker and theatre director Topher Campbell. The archive's mission is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and otherwise make available for the first time to the public historical, cultural, and artistic materials related to the Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities in the United Kingdom, through a variety of activities and events (exhibitions, film-screenings, oral history work, presentations, etc.).

31   *Legacies in Motion: Black Queer Toronto Archival Project* unearths the stories of the vibrant period of political organizing and cultural activism from the Black LGBTQ communities in Toronto in the 1980s and 1990s. Drawing its diverse exhibit materials from personal archives, which feature images, documents, videos and visual art, *Legacies in Motion* directly challenges the common narratives within mainstream LGBTQ communities that often render the history and contributions of Black queers as invisible and marginal. Additionally, *Legacies in Motion* connects an earlier generation of activists and artists, and their legacies, directly to contemporary organizations, movements, movers, agitators, disruptors, and creators.

32   Michelle Caswell is an Associate Professor of Archival Studies in the Department of Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research on archives, memory, public history, and social justice has been widely cited in a range of fields. Symbolic annihilation points to the ways in which poor media treatment can contribute to social disempowerment and in which symbolic absence in the media can erase groups and individuals from public consciousness. More simply, symbolic annihilation is what happens when the lack of representation of a group affects their real-life empowerment in the public sphere. In 1976, researcher George Gerbner coined the term, arguing that the role of symbolic annihilation is to maintain inequality on a structural and social level. By not allowing the representation of marginalized groups, "tastemakers" and other wielders of cultural capital not only strip people within these categories of their identities but deny that identity's place within the larger cultural context.

Center for the Study of Black Canadian Diaspora's State of Blackness have highlighted the importance of creating a more inclusive and accurate view of history by giving voice through documenting, preserving, and sharing stories that serve the underrepresentation and diverse contributions of Black communities. By enacting representational belonging,[34] Community archives empower people marginalized by dominant culture with the autonomy and authority to establish, enact, and reflect on their presence in complex, meaningful, and substantive ways.

I must also position scholar Rhodes[35] within the discussion of community archiving, as their notion of "A Living, Breathing Revolution: How Libraries Can Use 'Living Archives' to Support, Engage, and Document Social Movements" has been taken up by BIPOC communities globally, such as in the S A V V Y Contemporary's "Vulnerable Archives"[36] and South Asian American Digital Archive SAADA.[37] This approach sees a collection of materials presented to allow for expression, exhibition, documentation, and preservation of sentiment in a particular community. Consisting of historical, narrative, current reflections, and real-time feedback, the living archive prioritizes the conservation of in-the-moment responses, presenting a holistic convergence of ideas.

Though these interventions enact a kind of cultural negotiation between "othered" peoples and the realities of historical colonialism and neo-colonialism, I make the case that, particular to Black diasporic communities, a strategic response to disparate imagery, perforated documentation, violence, and dehumanization in mainstream repositories must exist to directly confront anti-Black racism in archiving practices. Beyond permission for viewers, archivists or researchers to intervene, archival projects like Ethnic Archive[38] and Afrodiasporic archiving re-imagine the relationship between vernacular photography made and circulated in the public sphere and the public consumption of Blackness. Creation of a counter-archive, authorizes a refusal to the practices of objectification that underpin colonialism and its logics of capture,

33 The Black Archives, founded in 2015, is a multimedia platform that provides dynamic accessibility to an evolving visual exploration of Black American life.

34 Representational Belonging, coined by Michelle Caswell, refers to the intersectional impact of ontological, epistemological, and social archival study. "We were here, I am here, We belong here."

35 Tamara Rhodes, UCSD librarian for Psychology, Cognitive Science, Human Developmental Sciences and Linguistics, coined "living" archive of student activism.

36 S A V V Y Contemporary's "Vulnerable Archives" is a project that aims to address dominant knowledge structures and historical narratives. The archive serves as a platform for discussion, exchange, and collaborations with artists from various fields. S A V V Y Contemporary was founded by Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung in 2009.

37 SAADA is a community-based culture change organization dedicated to documenting preserving and sharing stories of South Asian Americans. It is the largest publicly accessible collection of South Asian American archives, ensuring that South Asian Americans are included in the American story: past, present, and future.

38 The Ethnic Archive—theorized by Dana Williams, professor of African American literature, and Marissa Lopez, professor of English and Chicano studies at University of California in 2009—centers discussion of the various ways ethnic holdings are rendered illiterate or unreadable, producing unintended consequences of ignoring distinct needs of ethnic histories in theoretical practices informing archival studies. (Williams, Dana A., and Marissa K. López. "More Than a Fever: Toward a Theory of the Ethnic Archive." *PMLA/Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 127, no. 2 (2012): 357–59. doi:10.1632/pmla.2012.127.2.357.)

containment, and stasis. Black-centered archives *SUNU Journal*,[39] Know Your Caribbean,[40] and BLK MKT Vintage[41] quarrel with the risk of simply re-committing harm by refiguring the archive. However, by making a new system that demands the archive does not serve a singular interest and authority but accommodates nuances, discrepancies, contradictions, and mistakes, the opportunity to look at what the archive fails to address becomes central to the work. The Ethnic Archive has historically provided an opportunity to establish tradition, challenge assumptions cultivated as truths and contest the hegemony of the nation-states imagined pasts and futures, appealing to a multiethnic disharmony of voices that require reexamination of established knowledge and knowledge production.

The Ethnic Archive inquiry insists upon the unique and self-preserving interpretation of memory. It challenges the ethnic "canon" and acts as a site of resistance establishing genealogies capable of destabilizing assumed ethnic histories and collective knowledge of self, evolving with their subjects. Similarly, Schomburg's[42] work in the Negro Society for Historical Research positioned the Afrodiasporic archive as one that simultaneously engaged the past, present, and future. Schomburg argued that recovering, archiving, and making accessible a diverse Black archive is vital to Afrodiasporic subjectivity, the instilling of Black pride, the combatting of racial prejudice, and the endless well of imaginative futures for Afrodiasporic peoples. The Ethnic and Afrodiasporic archives consider that Eurocentric texts dismiss the political significance of archival practices that prioritize a diasporic vision that functions as an oppositional gaze of material and knowledge collection. An active archive takes place with and against the political and violent realities of the afterlife of slavery. Specific to communities whose psychohistories are marked by ongoing loss, denial and erasure, this methodology assesses the photographic constructions of race, the politics of human rights, identity formations, national narratives, and cultural memory, and theorizes alterity.

39   *SUNU: Journal of African Affairs, Critical Thought + Aesthetics* is an independent, Pan-African, post-disciplinary, global, multimedia platform that was founded in 2015. *SUNU Journal* publishes original, transtemporal works of various themes, forms and ideas dealing with Africa and the Diaspora. *SUNU* Contributors engage critically with African and Afro-diasporic themes and topics at continental, regional, national and international levels. *SUNU Journal* delves beneath the surface to identify theories, practices and representations at the nexus of (but not limited to) politics, society, visual culture, post-colonial theory, literature, history, Black + African studies, art, and cultural theories + practices.

40   Know Your Caribbean is a platform dedicated to the enrichment of the history and culture of the Caribbean. Focused on telling the untold stories of the region, it promotes the diversity, dynamism and beauty of a region that has been misrepresented with monolithically shallow narrative. Focusing on the Caribbean in its entirety, this includes Black/African history, Indian, Chinese, Indonesian, and European history—falling all into one giant colorful melting pot that is the Caribbean.

41   BLK MKT Vintage is a Brooklyn, NY-based antique/vintage archive collection that represents the richness of Black History and lived experience. Curated by founders Jannah Handy and Kiyanna Stewart, the collection includes literature, vinyl records, art, and media. By centering Black cultural artifacts via thoughtful curation and varying modes of accessibility, BLK MKT explicitly communicates a sense of love and worthiness for Black cultural production (blkmktvintage.com/pages/about).

42   Arthur Alfonso Schomburg (1874–1938) was a historian, writer, collector, and activist. Founder of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a research library and archive repository for information on people of African descent. Schomburg theorized an Afrodiasporic archive that restores "what slavery distorted". (Holton, Adalaine. "Decolonizing History: Arthur Schomburg's Afrodiasporic Archive." *The Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (2007): 218–38. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20064181.)

methodology//
AN ACTIVE ARCHIVE

Queering the archive, community archiving, ethnic archiving, and living archives foreground the necessity and possibility for an archive that addresses the intersection between cultural absences and countering police brutality through penal photography. The upcoming text approaches this multi-prong issue through an exploration of assemblage, theorizing a form of labor that, when taken on by Black communities, presents the opportunity to artistically and curatorially shift the legibility of Blackness through memory and archive.

I am in constant search of reflections of myself and my culture. Through Black thinkers, academics, scholars, artists, and activists, I build a foundation of what is possible for my future. As a student of curatorial practice & ethnographic study, much of my practice addresses the politics and processes of historical recovery,[43] speculating the possibilities of making visible narratives that promote liberatory futures. My research and gesture towards creating an exhibition that approaches the impacts of the mythology of Blackness, borrows from the genres of counter-archiving that form multiplicative refusals of colonial violence, erasure, racism, censorship, and abuse of authority. *An Insufficient Record* examines the possibilities of an exhibition that, though juxtaposition of images, presents a supplementary relationship to dominant historiographies and knowledge. Working alongside other community efforts to urgently respond to historical discontinuity, the proposed exhibition, however fragmented, takes the form of a repository for potentially forgotten histories, upsetting academic structures of inequity, and lapses in cultural memory.

I position active archiving as a space-making gesture, for rich imaginings, voices, actions of activism, critical thought, reform, inclusion, equity, and diversity. I contend that curation can work to actively address absences in visual archives through a strategy of affirmation and visibility. At stake is the survival or preservation of Black histories. In the interest of illuminating the nuance of Black life, active archiving foundationally creates a contradictory position that imagines Black people in full documentary participation of their past, present, and future. I see this methodology as an opportunity to construct subjectivity, shifting the trajectory of contemporary images of Black Vancouverites as witnessed through a white colonial gaze. An *active archive* engages in an energetic pursuit of refusal and presence declaration. It is a methodology that circumvents the absences to provide a multi-source reassessment of Black representation. active archiving asks: what survives the image? How does collective confrontation and mediation of oppressive images create an opening for Sealy's (2019) transcension, and Campt's (2017) futurity?[44]

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43   Historical recovery refers to the act of conscious recollection or re-memory (Rememory cited as used in Toni Morrison's Beloved "Rememory" addresses the recollection of the things that a person has forgotten and repressed) of history making as a means for acceptance and transcendence. Used by Afro diasporic cultural producers, historical recovery is the process of reconstruction and reconceptualization of historical methodologies that center the perspectives of Black people.

An Insufficient Record provides an opportunity to imagine the possibilities of collective restoration through staging. Beyond the archive, the lives or consciousness of these images has the potential to pivot representations of individual presence through adjacency, reading the bonds of affiliation created by reconfiguration as transformative and generative. I propose a mode of exhibition that promotes interdependence between documentation and the communities it records, that gives Black and African people something to return to and agency to define what is missing. I engage a curatorial approach that in presentation complicates documentation and dissemination by centering dialogical image making, marking subversion, and tracing the relationship between public memory, representation, and quality of life. Active archiving emerges as more than proof of Black life, but as a retroactive critical and artistic act of empowerment through documentation and representation. The proposed exhibition attempts to foreground a plurality of voices, emphasizing the collective creation of knowledge through gathering, visiting, storytelling, and reflection. Using new images to build new ways of relating, *An Insufficient Record* intervenes with the City of Vancouver Archives and forms a kind of cultural mediation through staging that shifts how the images are read. *An Insufficient Record* assembles a diversity of portraits to consider what a progressive cartography of Black Vancouver visual histories may resemble. An interrogative active archive that explores the changing modalities of the archival images in its transition from a mode of ethnographic or carceral documenting to a means of social and cultural transmission, inviting with intention Black Vancouver communities to consider their ideas about self-representation and futurity.

MEDIATING BLACK VISUALITY

I lean on Mirzoeff's[45] multi-faceted definition of visuality to think through possible mediation of mugshots and implications of anti-Black racism in the use of photography. In *Culture of Punishment*, Michelle Brown (2009) speaks to this possible cultural malleability. Brown (2009) states, "Cultural analysis has a special role in the transformation of the passivity of penal spectatorship to an informed, and engaged mode of citizenship, which

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44   Futurity refers to a tense of anteriority and a tense relationship to an idea of possibility. In *Listening to Images*, Campt describes the possibility of using Black feminist conception of practice to think beyond conventional notions of resistance as the primary model for understanding the relationship of marginalized subjects to power, and a performance of the future. (Campt 2017)

45   Nicholas Mirzoeff is a visual culture theorist and professor of Media, Culture and Communication at New York University. In *The Right to Look*, Mirzoeff examines the role of "visuality" in modern history. As opposed to a perceptual definition, Mirzoeff's use of the term relates to how authority self-authorizes by envisioning itself within a particular historical perspective. Authority's visuality is a worldview—what Mirzoeff calls a "complex of visuality"—that seeks to naturalize and aestheticize its perspective in the classification and organization of the social order. *The Right to Look* describes the inherent instability of dominant visuality through a historical exploration of countervisualities, countervisualities confront authority's narrow construction of reality by imagining and then asserting its alternative. I am interested in his use of visuality as visualization of history. Here, he cites visualities first domains as slave plantations, monitored by the surveillance of the overseer operating as the surrogate of the sovereign. Visuality supplemented the violence of authority and its separations, forming a complex that came to seem natural by virtue of its investment in history. Visuality sought to present authority as self-evident that division of sensible whereby domination imposes the sensible evidence of its legitimacy. (Mirzoev, Vladimir Grigorevic. *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.)

Using installation and scale instructively, both aesthetically and in theory, how many images does it take before you stop seeing the mugshots as a defining iconography or presence?

How do we build an Afrodiasporic visual archive that asserts our collective will to participate in a curatorial process that creates oppositional standards of evaluation, without essentializing our sense of self and identity?

requires a critical engagement with the work". Active archiving's centralized visualizations of Blackness force an audience to negotiate with an exhibition presentation that potentially summons tangential memories and expands beyond the frame, shifting how one might view the image read against a community of images that demand you engage with them as part of a whole. Mugshots re-appropriated by their extended communities, or those who share an interest and adjacency to the Black experience, enact new kinds of subjectivity by refusing the instrumentalization of both carceral images and portraits.

On the potential of a communal methodology, theorist and author Tina Campt (2017), in *Listening to Images*, states "It is a method that opens up the radical interpretive possibilities of images and state archives we are most inclined to overlook, by engaging the paradoxical capacity of identity photos to rupture the sovereign gaze of the regimes that created them by refusing the very terms of photographic subjection they were engineered to produce". I refer to author Mark Sealy's (2019) take on the use of photography and confrontational gaze to decolonize and rebuild notions of community: "Photography has been, and is, central to that aspect of decolonization that calls us back to the past and offers a way to reclaim and renew life-affirming bonds. Using images, we connect ourselves to a recuperative, redemptive memory that enables us to construct radical identities, images of ourselves that transcend the limits of the colonizing eye".

Sealy's vital critique of the role of photography in the construction of Black subjectivity[46] illustrates the consequences of positioning photographic archives as a neutral voice. "Archives are loaded with unspoken and culturally invisible subjects, and the photographs within them work politically and aggressively as active agents locked within a colonial paradigm" (Sealy 2019). The archive positions itself as an unquestioned authority and an honest reflection of a bureaucratic organizational system. The importance of locating and analyzing photography of racialized people within the political and cultural articulation of its creation is clear. Public archives affirm the historical flaw of the state and the nature of homogenous colonial coding. Recognizing that photographic works concerning Black people, when critically read through the prism of colonialism, function in dialogue with the histories of the social and visual spaces it occupies, the archive works in service of subjugation, yielding photography as an agent of colonizing authority (Sealy 2019). With this understanding, I assess the ethics of classifying mugshots as portraiture in the City of Vancouver Archives, and the role of cultural analysis and critical engagement in transforming a fragmented visual library.

Images produced, maintained, and distributed by white colonial and carceral culture reinforce irrefutable enactments of surveillance. The compounding scrutiny of the white supremacist gaze, penal gaze, and archival gaze[47] births a catastrophic observational power dynamic,

46   Black subjectivity situated within critical race studies, draws on multiple theoretical frameworks that seek to preserve the complexity of blackness, its meanings, and implications.

47   The archival gaze fixes an act, and in doing so, assigns the act with a sense of permanence and historicity. The archival gaze reinforces societal power dynamics between the originator of the gaze (the records' creator) and the object of the gaze (the subject(s) of the record).

with the intent to make permanent the containment of Black bodies, and mediate the telling of history. In *Decolonising the Camera: Photography in Racial Time*, Sealy (2019) claims that photography can function as a gruesome reminder of the cultural violence aimed at the "other" over centuries. In a municipal public archive, photographs collected are not simply historical documents, but images open to different interpretations and cultural translations. The potential for lens-based media to create and enforce seemingly concrete ideas of normative conventions, signifying practices of cultural bodies of knowledge, directly correlates to the implications of imaging marginalized communities that are rooted in the criticisms of ethnographic and colonial anthropological documentation. Stuart Halls' (1997) critical writing on race and representation frames my work of addressing absences encountered in the Vancouver Archives. He writes: "The image is being read, in part, against what isn't there." (Hall 1997)

CURATING INTERVENTION

An Insufficient Record aims to materialize alternative histories, drawing influence from curatorial methodologies that make visible the absences in public record by redrawing the connections between historical presence, visual agency, and public memorial. Jeff Thomas's photography series *My North American Indian Volume 21, Volume 22* (2014)[48] exhibited contemporary portraiture as a counter-narrative to Edward S. Curtis'[49] ethnographic archival images of the NDN (Native Indian). The series engaged Curtis' historical images without romanticizing or dismissing them, breaking through its stasis centering post-colonial dialogue on "Indian-ness" and confronting historical narratives that extol nation building. Thomas' curatorial gesture to "hear the subjects" voices beyond the silence of the image appropriates Curtis' study of tribal culture, while considering the absence of Indigenous agency and of images produced by Indigenous people (Thomas 2020). Fred Wilson's influential 1993 exhibition *Mining the Museum*[50] is a model for daylighting institutional racism and excluded presence through the excavation of colonial objects. The exhibit served as an intervention of the Maryland Historical Society mining artifacts from the permanent collection, juxtaposing and repositioning objects, labels, and audiovisual material, subverting them, offering a commentary on forgotten African Americans, and revealing the correlation between the portrayal of history and the assumptions that surround the documentation and presentation of Black histories.

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48   Jeff Thomas is an Iroquois photographer, curator, and cultural theorist. Thomas's work interrogates the place of First Nations photography in contemporary Canadian ethnographic histories.

49   Edward Curtis (1868-1952) was an American photographer and ethnologist whose work centered the American west and Native American culture.

50   Fred Wilson (b. 1954, Bronx, New York) is a conceptual artist primarily working in installation and sculpture. His work challenges assumptions of history, culture, race, and conventions of displays.

Exhibitions like Deanna Bowen's ~~On Trial~~ *The Long Doorway* (2017)[51] and *Black Drones in the Hive* (2020),[52] as well as Julie Crooks *Fragments of Epic Memory* (2021)[53] and *Free Black North* (2017)[54] counter colonial objectification by positioning portraiture and archival objects within a diasporic framework, as a site of articulation of personal and social preservation. Through strategic staging, these exhibits speculate new racial epistemologies that center self-representations and historical agency, employing vernacular photography as a performing agent in the reclaiming and development of diasporic identities and communal memory. The approach critically engages with the historiography of Afro-diasporic communities in Canada, offering an alternative lens to ethnographic portraits in confrontation of institutional photography's racist past, combating the erasure of personal and collective histories.

An Insufficient Record interrupts the ill-placed institutional images by exhibiting them in direct conversation with contemporary artists, underrepresented histories, alternative historical voices, and perspectives, re-charging the mugshots in question through genealogical and historical research. The proposed exhibit also considers the contrasting lives of Black people by proposing a shift in archival structure and operating principles to modes of generative knowledge keeping. At its core, the exhibit will function as an anti-racism project that presents an analysis of the ethics of collecting and displaying visualities of Blackness within a system of public archives while critically engaging the assumptions such databases create surrounding Black life. In a city where a distinct Black presence is ongoing and questioning, *An Insufficient Record* bridges the social construction of Black identity, race, class, authority, surveillance, and the dissolution of Black communities in Vancouver within a colonial photographic archetype.

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51   A 2017 solo exhibition by Toronto-based artist Deanna Bowen at Mercer Union Working across film, sculpture, performance, installation, drawing and photography, Bowen excavates invisible histories. Through genealogical and historical research, she digs into histories of slavery, oppression, migration, and Civil Rights' movements in North America, making discerning personal work through the historical.

52   Presented at Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery 2021 on the centenary of the first-ever exhibition of the Group of Seven painters, Deanna Bowen's interdisciplinary exhibition *Black Drones in the Hive* reveals the strategic erasures which enable canons to exist without question or complication. By weaving threads of settlement, migration and displacement using local archives, KWAG's Permanent Collection, publications and propaganda, Bowen excavates the roots of systemic racism in Canada and the erasures that have enabled historical canons to persist without question.

53   *Fragments of Epic Memory* explores multiple ways of encountering the Caribbean and its diaspora, from the period following emancipation through today. Curated by Toronto's Julie Crooks, the exhibition blends historical and contemporary narratives, presenting more than 200 photographs from the AGO's Montgomery Collection of Caribbean Photographs alongside paintings, sculpture, and video works by modern and contemporary Caribbean artists that show how the region's histories are constantly revisited and reimagined through artistic production over time

54   *Free Black North*, organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) and curated by the AGO's Assistant Curator of Photography, Julie Crooks, features photographs of men, women, and children living in Ontario in the mid-to-late 1800s, descendants of Black refugees who escaped enslavement in the Southern United States. These portraits, drawn from collections at Brock University and the Archives of Ontario, many shown here for the first time, reveal how these chiefly unknown individuals presented themselves with style, dignity, and self-assurance. This exhibition highlights how historic Black Canadian communities utilized photography as an important tool to visualize and lay claim to their complex histories.

In The Body and the Archive, photographer, writer and theorist Allan Sekula offers a guiding note for collections in continuous metamorphosis. Sekula (1986) states "An archive in the process of summation does not threaten to dissolve the intention of the mugshot but assembles images that transpose and regulate...and encourages the proliferation of its uses and meaning". The proposed exhibit requires a time-bending approach to collecting, where assemblage creates "A counter-hegemonic world of images that would stand as a visual resistance, challenging racist images" (hooks 1995). Theorist bell hooks' Art on my Mind: Visual Politics has served as a foundational reference in articulating the intentions of an active counter-archive. Our relationship with the world shapes our reading and experiences of the image. "The place of art in Black life, connections between the social construction of Black identity, the impact of race class, and the presence in Black life of an inarticulate but ever-present visual aesthetic governing our relationship to images" (hooks 1995)

exhibition review//

Exhibitions like Warhol's 1964 traveling 13 Most Wanted Men (Museum 2014), War Inna Babylon at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, UK, (Arts 2021) and This Little Light of Mine at the Mississippi Museum of Civil Rights (Muesum 2017) have taken on presentation of mugshots. These exhibits have served as case studies, supporting analysis concerning the display of sensitive documentation. Vancouver artist Angela Grossmann's 2013 Capture Photography Festival exhibition Small Crimes brought to life discarded mugshots (1935-1948) from the now closed BC Penitentiary, purchased in 1995 from a Vancouver junk shop. The mixed media collages reinvent the 5 x 7 black-and-white mugshots, making giant color portraits, piecing together narratives in an attempt to rehumanize these images using discarded vintage photography equipment as framing devices (Capture 2013). The work lives as a reflection of injustice in the judicial system of the time, engaging an artistic refusal of dehumanization, highlighting the social constructs that underpin the human, particularly classism and misogyny. Peterborough Museum's Arresting Images: Mugshots from the OPP Museum (Aoki 2017), curated by Kim Reid in 2017, comprised 100 reproduced cartes-de-viste mugshots (1886-1908) mounted inside matted frames, making visible data recorded by the arresting officer. Surrounding the mugshots, display cases housed artifacts: a ball and chain, a whip, nightsticks, and fingerprint cameras. Also included were tables with criminal-themed activity sheets, and a photobooth for audiences to pose their own mug shots.

Though the exhibitions mentioned acknowledged displaying mugshots as an opportunity to expand social discourse within the various centering of "othering", the exhibitions did not critically analyze the presentation of mugshots' social, political, and ethnographic implications, engaging commissioned judicial records as tangible indisputable representations. Rather than an uncovering of stories, without contextualization and mediation, the exhibits evoked a pop culture spectacle or fascination with criminality. At risk of eroticism or voyeurism, they fail to challenge the intersectional relationships between the use of photography in policing and the long-term impacts on reading criminality, anti-racism dialogue, cultural and gender bias tropes, and public safety.

exhibition making//
PROCESS OF COLLECTION

I ask, where are all the images of Black life in Vancouver?

Of the nearly 100 reference images available in the City of Vancouver Archives, most are of well-documented first settler families like the Sullivan family and Sprott family. Singers and stage performers like Eleanor Collins and Oscar Peterson are notably well documented. Images of Black railway porters and other popular and often tokenized images of key historical figures like Barbara Howard,[55] Joe Fortes,[56] and Jimmy Hendrix are also well represented. These holdings reveal a fragmented story that negates the disproportionate amount of documentation of Black existence via white photographers, white donors, and law enforcement. Access to photography in Vancouver between 1920-1990 was indicative of the privilege, access, and socioeconomic standing of non-Black Vancouverites. While studio and street photographers like Foncie Pullice,[57] Fred Herzog, and recently exhibited Yucho Chow[58] reflected 1939-1970 Vancouver society, staged and candid shots of individuals, couples, families, and other groups rarely included images of Black people.

Thus far, my research has yielded no evidence of Black photographers for hire or intercommunal popularity during this time, nor has there been documentation of any Black-owned, operated, or widely engaged photographers and photography studios, reflecting the socioeconomic realities impacting access to cameras, photography, image-making and personal agency as sitters. My inquiry, then, widened to publicly accessible visuals of Black life between 1930-2000, searching institutions that hold presence as markers of society and culture: city and provincial archives, archives belonging to cultural institutions, studios and well-known collectors. A general request for access to yields search description "Black", "Black persons", "Black-Canadian", "Caribbean", "International student", "Black History month", "Hogan's Alley", "Strathcona", "Negro", "Blacks", "African Canadian" or any possible intersecting fields such as "athletics department", "students union", and "Vancouver racism" was sent to the City of Vancouver, Royal BC Museum, BC Archives, Simon Fraser archives, University of British Columbia archives, Museum of Vancouver, Contemporary Art Gallery of Vancouver, Vancouver Art Gallery, grunt gallery, Vancouver Public library, Strathcona community

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55   Barbara Howard (1920-2017) was the first Black woman athlete to represent Canada in an International competition, and the first person from a visible minority to be hired as a teacher by the Vancouver School Board.

56   Seraphim Joseph Fortes was born in Port-of Spain, Trinidad, British West Indies 1863. In 1885, Joe was a crew member on the Robert Kerr, which sailed via Cape Horn to Panama and then on to Vancouver, arriving in September 1885. The seaman and swimmer was credited with saving at least 29 lives from drowning, including adults and children, as well as teaching three generations of Vancouver children to swim; in 1986 the Vancouver Historical Society formally declared Joe as "Vancouver Citizen of the Century".

57   Foncie Pulice was a Vancouver Street photographer and founder of 'Foncie's Fotos' (1939-1979).

58   Yucho Chow was a professional photographer and founder of Vancouver's first Chinese photography studio in Chinatown.

center, Hogan's Alley Society, and Black History Awareness Society. In response, I was given access from each institution to comb the archives for relevant material. Holding results were minimal, criteria for chosen images as follows: portraits must be unique in subject and context; portraits must have majority Black subjects; portraits must be taken with clear subject autonomy; portraits must be exhibited with all available subject information. Fifty pertinent hard copy and digitized portraits[59] of Black and African self-identifying people in Vancouver were identified for the proposed exhibit. Images span gelatin, sepia 35mm, and color negative prints, depicting Vancouver residents such as constables, nurses, politicians, educators, students, religious leaders and artists, present in public activity.

It is imperative to note what the proposed exhibition can and cannot do. It is not the position of the exhibit to enact a form of exorcism of mugshots to sanitize the histories of Black Canadians in BC. Nor will it create an immediate salve of healing, upending the harm caused by publicly displaying mugshots of marginalized people. The exhibit does not attempt to restore wholeness to the colonial archival project. Still, it works to complicate the use of public images within a racial conflict, offering the safety of an alternative approach to memory recovery. Though the proposed exhibition assembles archival yields from official municipal holding records, public arts and culture organizations, as well as special collections (please see exhibition contributors' listings), it does not attempt to represent the complete spectrum of images available in British Columbia. Staged in presentation, the images are gathered to speculate the possibilities and structural limitations of transforming penal spectatorship[60] to a participatory re-shaping and reading of the carceral images. Here, I imagine a system of photographic collection and organization that engages Black Vancouver communities in the re-representation of their histories. An exhibition that may grow in volume and collective strength, opening the possibilities for Black communities to contribute by narrating their own experiences, inviting an ever-expanding definition of Black life, and forging new meaningful connections to our visual memory.

EXHIBITION DESIGN: DIALOGICAL EXHIBITION MAKING

The proposed exhibition comprises sixty-seven photographic portraits; hidden amongst the portraits are the seventeen acquired gel print mugshots, reappropriated by cropping their profile view. The archival images converge into one immersive experience to present a visual mapping of contemporary Black presence in Vancouver. Influenced by Shirin Neshat's *Land of Dreams* (2021), Carrie Mae Weem's *Repeating the Obvious* (2019), Deanna Bowen's *Black Drones in the Hive* (2020), and Steven Shearer's self-titled exhibit (2021), *An Insufficient Record* employs salon hang aesthetics to present a larger-than-life presence of collective gazes. The

59   All fifty images will not be represented in thesis. Reproduction permissions are exclusive to grant grunt gallery and its representatives, including the Curator, non-exclusive, non-transferable with permission to print, and include the photograph(s) in the exhibition *An Insufficient Record: The Photo Ethics of Preserving Black Vancouver*. However, no additional permission to publish online or in print documentation of photograph(s) within the context of the thesis, promotional, grant writing/reporting, research, and educational purposes..

60   Penal Spectatorship was coined by author Michelle Brown in 2009. It refers to citizens who have no necessity to address the problem of hyper-incarceration, or criminalization, developing cultural meanings and understandings about punishment by way of what is available in popular discourse, including dominant representations.

audience is welcomed to a living room lit gallery, and at the entrance a black title wall hosts an exhibit abstract and content warning. Evoking a surrealist approach, black and white portraits (framed with black matting) use scale and arrangement distinction to complicate the vernacular of institutional photography, bringing the portraits out of an ethnographic private-collection aesthetic and into the public artistic sphere. The non-linear approach daylights the connections or contrasts between the experiences of Black people, capturing the diversity of Black visual representation.

Though historically disconnected, compositionally, the groupings of portraits surround the mugshots (5 x 7), documenting and elevating the oft-maligned images, inscribing them into collective memory and anchoring them through discursive exhibition method. Larger portraits displayed with family mantle style frames provide a new perspective, questioning which representation is central to the visual narrative. Image groupings intimately hung centered on the gallery's L-shaped exhibition walls mimic holdings, organized with implied holding headings (athlete, politics, academia, arts & culture). Label panels for each wall correspond with the exhibition guide, providing annotated context for each portrait.

Adjacent to the main exhibition, I propose the creation of a records room. Here, critical writing and archival documentation daylight the trajectory of contemporary Black British Columbia between 1930-2000. Text and multimedia archives from artists and community members David George and Peter Hudson, as well as from artist run institutions Artspeak, VIVO, UNIT/PITT (formerly the Helen Pitt Gallery), and Access Gallery, present key reflections as witnessed by Black cultural producers, tracing a progressive cartography of Black Vancouver's presence against and beyond the margins of the City of Vancouver public archives. Central to the ethos of the exhibit, the room will also serve as space for resource sharing, programing, and community discussions. Concerning future access and exhibit legacy, *An Insufficient Record* will be adequately documented in an exhibition note. This proposed text includes exhibition concept and strategy, characterization and scope of research, historical mapping of Black Vancouver presence, community and collective discourse and programming, commentary on possible impacts of community archive interventions and interpretations from curator and artist contemporaries Vanessa Kwan, Dan Pon, Josh Tecumseh-Robertson, and Chantal Gibson.

I am interested in this paradigm where Curatorial practice and archives live as both the origin and as a resulting witness of a complex process (collecting, reflection, intervention) As proof of concept, *An Insufficient Record* may exist as a resource for objective research but also an operational structures where curatorial visions are employed to consider new outcomes through the accumulation of materials. In its current iteration, *An Insufficient Record* additionally lives as a curatorial archive, one with its own anthropological journey that prioritizes collective actions; authorship, ethical documention, exhibition development, responses, and research activation, forming a new resource that isn't simply a snapshot of representivity, but an appropriation of memory.
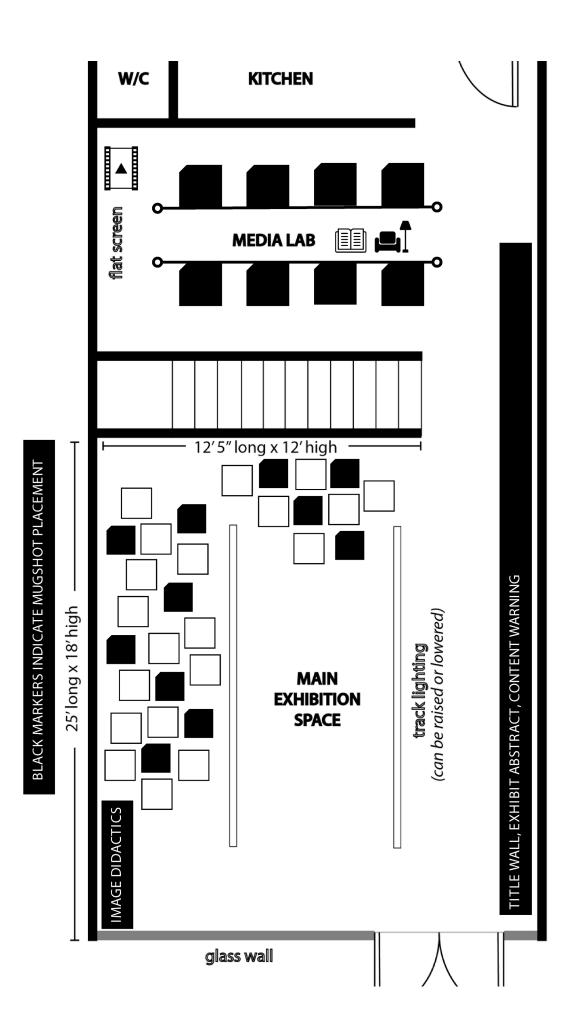
W/C

KITCHEN

flat screen

MEDIA LAB

BLACK MARKERS INDICATE MUGSHOT PLACEMENT

12' 5" long x 12' high

25' long x 18' high

**MAIN
EXHIBITION
SPACE**

track lighting
(can be raised or lowered)

IMAGE DIDACTICS

TITLE WALL, EXHIBIT ABSTRACT, CONTENT WARNING

glass wall

venacular photography//
PROPOSED EXHIBITION IMAGE LIST

IMAGE DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
UNIDENTIFIED BLACK WOMAN , FLAPPER FASHION SHOW, 1937	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
UNIDENTIFIED COUPLE, MAN IN COWBOY HAT, 1937	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
ADELINE LANE, BRIDE PORTRAITS, 1949	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
RUTH HOMES, NURSE, UNKNOWN DATE	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
HOWARD FAIR AND MOTHER, 1948	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
LAWRENCE BRATHWAITE, HALFBRED MIS-CEGENATION CABARET, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
MERCEDES BAINES, HALFBRED MISCEN-GENATION CABARET, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
LIZA HUGET, IMAGES OF WHOLE, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
CELESTE INSELL, IMAGES OF WHOLE, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
NADINE CHAMBERS, IMAGES OF WHOLE, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
NATASHA TONY, IMAGES OF WHOLE, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
MELLINA MOLLINEAUX, [T(HERE)], 1996	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
BBUNO, BUILDING BRIDGES, DA-VID-GEORGE,1994	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
BBUNO, BUILDING BRIDGES, UNKNOWN SITTER, 1994	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
SIOBHAN BARKER, 1996	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
PETER HUDSON, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
TERRENCE ANTHONY, 1994	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
SELINA WILLIAMS, 1994	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
BLACK MAN PENDER, WORK UNTITLED, FRED HERZOG, 1958	EQUINOX GALLERY
BLACK WOMEN AT THE BEACH, WORK UNTI-TLED, FREG HERZOG, 1958	EQUINOX GALLERY
BARBERSHOP, WORK UNTITLED, FRED HER-ZOG, 1958	EQUINOX GALLERY
GAIL BOWEN, BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT, 1990	VANCOUVER ART GALLERY ARCHIVES
STAN DOUGLAS, 1989	VANCOUVER ART GALLERY ARCHIVES
MICHELLE MACKENZIE, ATHLETICS DE-PARTMENT PORTAIT, 1986	SFU ARCHIVES

MARK POYSER, ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT PORTRAIT, 1989	SFU ARCHIVES
AUSTIN MAYERS, ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT PORTRAIT, 1989	SFU ARCHIVES
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, THE PEAK, ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN DESCENT, 1990	SFU ARCHIVES
WAYDE COMPTON, SCENE OF TRANSLATION, 2000	ARTSPEAK ARCHIVES
AFUA COOPER, 1998	SFU ARCHIVES
VANESSA RICHARDS, 1986	CBC ARCHIVE
CARIB DRUM AND DANCE ENSEMBLE, UNKNOWN DATE	CBC ARCHIVE
CARIB DRUM AND DANCE ENSEMBLE, UNKNOWN DATE	CBC ARCHIVE
HOGAN'S ALLEY SOCIETY, LAND TRUST ADDRESS, 1999, SUBJECT UNKNOWN	HOGAN'S ALLEY SOCIETY
HOGAN'S ALLEY SOCIETY, LAND TRUST ADDRESS, 1999, SUBJECT UNKNOWN	HOGAN'S ALLEY SOCIETY
HOGAN'S ALLEY SOCIETY, LAND TRUST ADDRESS, 1999, SUBJECT UNKNOWN	HOGAN'S ALLEY SOCIETY
THELMA GIBSON, 1958	CBC ARCHIVE
SELWYN JACOBS, 1976	BLACK BC HISTORY AWARNESS SOCIETY
BENNY SMITH, 1957	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
FRANK COLLINS, 1957	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
PHILLIP RANDOLPH LLC, 1957	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
MARIAN ANDERSON LLC, 1950	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
LINCOLN ALEXANDER LLC, 1968	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
CONSTABLE BRUCE CLARKE LLC, 1970	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
CHARLES ROSE LLC, 1949	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
CHARLES JACKSON, FOUNTAIN AFRICAN METHODIST CHURCH, 1945	EAST HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER
MAN AND CHILD, WORK UNTITLED, 1942, FONCIE PULLICE	MUSEUM OF VANCOUVER
ROSEMARY BROWN, HONORARY DOCTORATE CEREMONY, 1996	UBC ARCHIVES
UBC ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT, SUBJECT UNKNOWN, 1965	UBC ARCHIVES
UBC ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT, SUBJECT UNKNOWN, 1965	UBC ARCHIVES
UBC ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT, SUBJECT UNKNOWN, 1965	UBC ARCHIVES

records room//
PROPOSED MEDIA LIST

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
STILL WRITING BLACK VANCOUVER, NANYAMKA LEWIS	MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY, VANCOUVER SUN ARCHIVE
DIASPORA MAGAZINE, ISSUE 2	PITT GALLERY, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
DIASPORA MAGAZINE, ISSUE 3	PITT GALLERY, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
49TH PARALLEL PSLAM EXCERPT, WAYDE COMPTON, 1998	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
BLUESPRINT EXCERPTS, WAYDE COMPTON, 2001	YUCHO CHOW ARCHIVES
SOURCE OF TRANSLATION, WAYDE COMPTON, 2000	ARTSPEAK ARCHIVES
SUPPOSING IT WAS YOUR SISTER, WENDY COBURN, ANDREA FATONA, 1994	ARTSPEAK ARCHIVES
PELEKANA, BLACK ARTISTS IN ACTION, TEXTUAL DOCUMENTATION, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
BBUNO BLACK SUBJECTED, THE VISUAL, TEXTUAL DOCUMENTATION, 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
VANCOUVER SOUL BLACK COLLECTIVE, TEXTUAL DOCUMENTATION, 1994	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
IMAGE OF WHOLE, NIGHTWOOD THEATRE VIDEO AND TEXTUAL DOCUMENTATION 1995	PITT GALLERY ARCHIVE, DAVID-GEORGE MORGAN
JAZZ SLAVE SHIPS WITNESS I BURN, JAN WADE, VANESSA RICHARDS, 1995	PRINTED MATTER ARCHIVE
SEPIA PLAYERS THEATRE SOCIETY, TEXTUAL DOCUMENTATION, 1986	GRUNT GALLERY
HOGANS ALLEY, ANDREA FATONA, C. WYNGAARDEN, 1994	VIDEO OUT ARCHIVE
HOGANS ALLEY NEWSLETTER, 1999	HOGANS ALLEY SOCIETY
BLACKS IN BC SYMPOSIUM, TEXTUAL DOCUMENTATION 1973	CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVE, CBC ARCHIVE

Negroes Live Next Door

Vancouverites have 700 neighbors about whom they know very little

City Gets First Negro Policeman

BUILT BY 50 FAITHFUL
Historic Negro Church Reopens He

POOL NOW OPEN TO ALL COLORS

Hotels Refuse To Take Negroes

Judge Wipes Out Col-or-Line:
Negro Given Damages Because City Hotel Refused To Serve Him Beer

Young Negro Couple Threatened With Death Unless They Move

Poison-Pen Artist Sends Warning to Parents

Tribute to Colored Race Appreciated

More Than 5' Masons Com

Negroes Seek Full Civil Rights

Subtle City Racism Lashed By Porters

Negro Church Celebrates Founder's Day

Women Guilty In Threat Letter Case

Judge Wipes Out Color-Line Here

UBC To Bestow LLB On Bunche

Nobel Peace Prize Winner To Arrive In City May 18

New Group Organized To Fight Discrimination

TO THE

African Church Unused

African Methodist Pastor to Speak In Unitarian Church

Bob Brown Signs Colored Pitcher; Caps To Have All-Negro Battery

Eddie Locke Will Join Richey On City Ball Club

'Shoeshine or Porter' Only Situations Open

First Canadian Agreement Signed By Railway Porters

Marian Anderson No Tragedienne; Songbird, Tall, Vivacious, Humorous

First Negro lawyer called to bar in B.C.

Negro First As Barrister

Unionists Hit Pub For Barring Negro

Few Occupations Open To Negroes, Group Told

academic and community work//

I consider the intersection of archiving and curatorial practice as an opportunity to weave the notions of history, discovery producing a dynamic reinterpretation of material. I am excited by the synergy between research and exhibition production and believe curating should take inaccessible material perhaps not intended for exhibition and through innovative presentation create coherent themes – altering and informing the archive with new entries points. I am enthusiastic about developing partnerships with contributing organizations and their archives. In recognition of their incomplete records and the anti-Black practices within their archives, I have been invited to work in the Vancouver Art Gallery, UBC, and SFU photograph archives to tag and recategorize any information on the ethnic or racial identity of persons in historical images metadata (descriptive information). The short-term impact means searching the photograph database using terms such as "Black", "Black Canadian", "Caribbean", "African American", "Afro" would yield centralized results concerning Black historical records. I look forward to retroactive archiving community initiatives, hosting discussions, and supporting local Black organizations to document and make accessible their histories. A more complete archive provides resources for Black history curriculums, projects, and initiatives in the long-term. The metadata collected may also be used for cultural policy reform, impacting populous records, land and trust records, and mainstream media records.

I believe that the visual histories of Black western Canada live in the family archives and private collections of Black and communities of color, creating intimate pockets of preservation through assimilation, marking their own presence in the face of racism and socio-political challenges. In addition, the continuation of this research takes the form of a national submissions call to Black families with familial ties to Vancouver, minority owned studios within Chinatown who documented nonwhite clientele, and Strathcona based community centers (the Jewish center, the Japanese cultural center) who, due to proximity and the cultural melting pot of Strathcona, may have images of Black residents.

In the wake of a global reckoning with police brutality, my research daylights the ongoing absence of diverse reflections of Black life, impacting our perceived humanity within dominant white culture. *An Insufficient Record* considers the strategy of tracing a phantom lineage or succession, bringing an ongoing, fragmented, and questioning collection of images forward into public consciousness. Where diverse reflections of Black life are not publicly collected or exhibited, the curatorial responsibility of presenting images of Blackness that mirror the ways in which we see ourselves seemingly multiplies. Beyond representation, what new conditions of care may we extend when addressing these archives? What counter narratives may be offered in a community archive?

conclusion//

An Insufficient Record exposes the strategic erasure of nuanced Black representation which enables the City of Vancouver's insufficient fonds to exist without question or complication, and speculates on the role of curation and documentation in supporting collective movements beyond the public archive. The curatorial gesture makes use of assemblage and staging to visualize and voice the disenfranchised, reinforcing Black personal, political, and social presence. A conductor of creative thinking and a connector for increasing empathy, tolerance and understanding, discursive curatorial methods disrupts, challenging the viewers perspective by creating a new lane of communication. In its storytelling capacity, it supports the re-writing of inherited colonial narratives, confronting efforts of misrepresentation, history recording, and dissemination of information to center underrepresented histories that exist within the margins. Shifting the paradigms of archiving, *An Insufficient Record* proposes a shift in depiction, challenging the public to consider images of Black and Brown subjects within their historical contextualization and in exhibition, read and displayed as part of a larger whole.

For Black communities where diverse reflections of Black life are not publicly collected or exhibited, the threat of control and dissemination of historical narratives is at the mercy of the authoritative body that yields it. The imposed social construction of Black identities—or the ways of seeing and conceptualizing Blackness through stereotypes—rigidly frames the Black subject, and erodes safety, survival, and—within the Black community—a sense of collective self-regard. *An Insufficient Record* works to identify and present materials related to Black presence, while articulating a future imaginary that thrives on the intercommunal interconnectivity of Black/African communities and their efforts in collective preservation. Simply placing subjectively non-oppressive images where harmful or sensitive images previously existed will not solve anti-Black racism, or issues of representation and stereotypes. *An Insufficient Record* analyzes the notion of recoding or mitigating the current collection, offering a re-positioning of the mug shots "portraits"; the practice considers the images subject to the context of the histories of Black Canadian diaspora in Western Canada, with full understanding of the implication of nineteenth century Canadian judicial photography vernacular. Rather than a site of social reproduction, active archiving aims to cyclically re-approach the efforts of collecting, prioritizing the presentation of images of Blackness that mirror how we see ourselves. An articulation for Black Canadian existence, the archive effectively leverages the potential to support Black communities' claim to imaging created in opposition to the pervasive criminalization of Black Canadians. This research supports the construct of new curation methods that cultivate self-representations, speculation on a more just archive, and reflection of the nuanced conditions of Black life in Vancouver. Conduits of an unlikely interplay between a visual vernacular and the institutional records, a successful exhibit responds to the demand from systemically marginalized communities to participate in national discourses of belonging, both to Canada's past and present, and to recontextualize historiographical challenges and their impact on archival record.

acknowledgements
& dedication//

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ENHANCE RESEARCH
AND CURATORIAL
CAPABILITIES

MAKE EVIDENT THE
HISTORIES OF PEOPLE
OF AFRICAN DESCENT

ON MAKING AN ARCHIVE

ONGOING AND QUESTIONING: ENGAGE
BLACK COMMUNITIES IN
COLLECTING PRACTICES

CENTALIZED DOCUMENTATION
MAKING ALL COLLECTIONS PERTAINING TO
BLACK HISTORY IN VANCOUVER
SEARCHABLE & ACCESSIBLE

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