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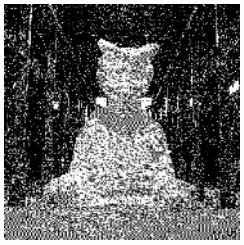
Sugar Time: Reactivating Memories of Scottish Empire through Contemporary Art and Performance



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Abstract
As a circulating commodity, sugar holds heavy histories of violence and exploitation that connect up map points of the former British Empire in ways that place time firmly out of joint. This article suggests how persistent visual traces of these sugar remainders can contribute to contemporary reckonings with the past time of empire. Working in the interval between commemoration and ruination, it shows how Kara Walker's *A Subtlety* (2014) has informed how contemporary artists and performers in Scotland engage with sugar histories in their practice. Alberta Whittle, Kayus Bankole, and Adura Onashile all figure sugar time as both continual and contemporary, linking histories of empire and post-industrial memories with artistic and activist expressions in the present. Their works respond to the violence of history in what Saidiya Hartman has termed "aesthetic mode", leading to the formation of creative and critical practices that people can enact to untangle themselves from the sedimented pain of imperial pasts.

Introduction: Sugar Time

Jamaican-born cultural theorist Stuart Hall famously described himself as the sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea. I want to start by quoting his words in full, words that bear reading slowly, and rereading several times: "I am the sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea. I am the sweet tooth, the sugar plantation that rotted generations of English children's teeth."[1] The foregrounding of "English" rather than "British", which succeeds in erasing Scottish involvement in the plantation economy of British Caribbean sugar production, is one element of this statement that I will hold in suspension throughout the analysis to come. But Hall's comments also introduce and illuminate several other aspects of sugar histories that I want to draw attention to. First, that sugar has brought about the material emplacement of Caribbean identities (and indeed *bodies*) within a narrative of Englishness (or Britishness, or indeed Scottishness) that Hall argues always incorporates multiple different locations of empire. For if the construction of Englishness is imperial in its foundation, it follows that an English identity must reserve space for residues from "elsewhere", which persist to muddle both the time and the space of the nation. As Ian Baucom says, inspired by Salman Rushdie, "empire is less a place where England exerts control than the place where England loses command of its own narrative

of identity".[2] When the English cup of tea has been drunk, the silty dregs of Caribbean sugar remain, pointing towards different stories of presence and influence that are still being told today. The autobiographical note that Hall introduces here becomes something almost geological, excavatory, yet reading his words here in Scotland raises additional questions about imperial times and their displacements in the present. This article shows how sugar remainders (or, indeed, sugar *reminders*) in works of contemporary art and performance by Alberta Whittle, Kayus Bankole, and Adura Onashile offer material, embodied access to such slippages between past and present, and how they can thus shed new light on the workings of the time of empire in Scotland.

Hall's statement also indicates the contradiction that lies at the root of the shifting scale of interest, from fascination to horror, that societies worldwide still reserve for sugar as an object of consumption. Sugar's sweetness, and the emotional, gustatory pleasure we find in this sweetness, as well as its preserving and even medical properties, are counteracted by its capacity for rot, for damage, and for destruction.[3] Sugar affects us: from the bodies it nourishes and nurtures, to those it destroys through decay and disease, and the inhabited landscapes it has historically scarred through extractive overproduction. Sugar's material effects are also linked irrevocably to the generations of lives lost or brutalised by the sugar industry through the transatlantic slave trade and the daily tortures of work in the cane fields and plantation houses. These are the bodily remainders that persist as presences in our everyday consumption of commodities that have historically been—and continue to be—produced through sweat, toil, and violence. Representations of sweetness are characteristically gendered too, meaning that sugar holds heavy histories of both racism and sexism simultaneously.[4] It speaks of both pleasure and vice. It connects histories of extraction, exploitation, and deprivation, from the peripheries of the metropole to the colonies, into a global network. In works such as *A Subtlety* (2014) and in the writings she has produced to accompany it, Kara Walker has shown how these bodily histories persist in our material reception of sugar trading, and how they can be reactivated into contemporary reckonings through art and performance. In her exploration of the twin processes of rot and ruin, Walker also identified the persistent decay of sugar time in her understanding that "history would not dry".[5] Sugar, like other imperial commodities such as cotton and tobacco, is thus "a material with memory", a material that accumulates layers of time through the manual labour of its production and the physical pleasures of its consumption.[6] As Anna Arabindan-Kesson has shown, artists can animate this material history through an attention to elements of interconnectedness, entanglement, and the "intimacies between people, places, and things brought together by the slave trade and its aftermath in the Atlantic world".[7] In the analysis that follows, I will use three interlocking strategies enacted by Walker's monumental sculpture to decode a series of art and performance works by Whittle, Bankole, and Onashile, thereby adding new location points in a variegated and dynamic mapping of the contemporary sugar time of Scotland's imperial past.

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The title of this piece gestures to a statement by Roland Barthes: "Sugar is a time, a category of the world".[8] In developing his broader discourse on the semiotics of contemporary food consumption, Barthes was disturbed by memories of an earworm, the 1958 hit song performed by an American trio of singers called the McGuire Sisters:

Well
Sugar in the mornin'
Sugar in the evenin'

Sugar at suppertime
Be my little sugar
And love me all the time.[9]

In 1961 American sugar consumption was double that of the French, and Barthes inferred a *modernity* about sugar associated with its all-pervasive influence on American eating habits, playfully evident in the "Sugartime" song. This modernity is also emphasised by Sidney W. Mintz, yet as part of a historical approach to the study of sugar that situates both consumption and production within broader capitalist-inflected patterns of supply and demand that stretch from the eighteenth century to the present day.[10] Combining these two lines of thought allows me to posit Scotland's sugar time as both continual and contemporary, linking histories and memories of empire and industry with artistic and activist expressions in the present day. Scotland is currently undergoing a hard-fought reckoning with its imperial past, which counters what Alberta Whittle has called its previous "luxury of amnesia", and was characterised by the sense that "it wisnae us", reflected in the title of Stephen Mullen's 2009 volume recasting the significance of Scotland's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade.[11] Yet, any sense that Scotland's reckoning with empire and slavery was "late" in relation to parallel actions of working through south of the border has been countered by the huge groundswell of political, cultural, and artistic activity in the field over the past ten years, which—as Michael Morris states—can "lay claim to being the fastest growing area of the Scottish cultural landscape".[12] Barthes also claims that sugar is an attitude, and that food constitutes information—it signifies. It is, in itself, a form of communication. Through examining a range of artistic methods for communicating and re-presenting sugar histories, I will argue that the past time of empire persists to signify and to communicate today through art's ability to create a space where memory can act to provoke change. Artworks and performances such as those analysed here can bear witness to what Priya Satia calls "the fullness of time", and provide a non-linear illustration of how the past floods the present and influences the future in a range of productive ways.[13] To fully grasp the temporal mechanics of this layered meaning-making, it is important to go beyond thinking about sugar as an object of study and instead think about embodied and emplaced forms of sugary art and response. I will therefore read site-specific works by Alberta Whittle, Adura Onashile, and Kayus Bankole in Scottish places such as Greenock, Glasgow, and Edinburgh through their looping affiliations with Kara Walker's *A Subtlety*. In developing this cross-analysis, I have been inspired by Ian Cook's method of presenting academic arguments "between the lines" of a series of overlapping vignettes that make powerful, disturbing connections between different imperial (time) zones in Britain, North America, the West Indies, and Africa.[14] I identify three particular ways in which the meaning of sugar sediments in *A Subtlety* and show where these are picked up in works by Scottish artists: first in material ruins, then in ghostly presences, and finally within enlivened encounters generated between audiences and art. In what follows, I aim to use Cook's method to loosely stitch back together again places conjoined by imperial memory, and in so doing re-situate Scotland within the now of its persistent, cyclical sugar time.

Sugar Ruins

Greenock, a town on the west coast of Scotland, lies downriver from Glasgow at the mouth of the Clyde. Known as "Sugaropolis" in the nineteenth century, it was once a global hub for sugar refining, attracting vast capital, investments, and inward migration, which led to it forming a diverse community that stretched far beyond its founding trade with the West Indies. Active from

the 1760s onwards, Greenock's sugar refining industry peaked in the 1860s and declined through the twentieth century, until its definitive end when Tate & Lyle closed the town's last refinery in 1997. By 1852 Greenock was the largest depot for raw sugar in the United Kingdom, and by 1872 there were fifteen active refineries in Greenock producing a quarter of a million tons of sugar annually.[15] Greenock was globally known as a sugar place, and sugar quite literally made up the material landscape of the town. Heaps of sugar piled up on the quayside, and it would cross the town from the ships to the refineries through systems of conveyor belts and roads, with residents siphoning off samples from supply routes in various ways—asking for pan sugar at the refineries or taking illicit cups or bowls of sugar from barrels in transit. Yet scant material traces of Greenock's sugar past survive to mark the landscape of the town today. Most of the refineries were burned down in various accidents over the years or were destroyed in the bombing blitz of the Second World War. Today muted signs of the historical industry of Greenock are visible only in the forms of the custom house and the monumental sugar sheds on James Watt Dock on the road leading east towards Port Glasgow. Other traces of Greenock's sugar past are retained in the street signs that point to its transnational industrial ties (Tobago Street, Jamaica Street, Customhouse Lane, Container Way, Lyle Street), in the dank, empty spaces of storage sheds and warehouses, and in the memories of those whose families once worked in the refineries.

Yet, as Ann Laura Stoler reminds us, it may be more productive to turn our attention beyond the physical markers of ruins and look instead towards identifying processes of rot and ruination, which she defines as "deeply saturated, less spectacular forms in which colonialisms leave their mark".[16] These processes can be seen in the multiple signs of deprivation that cluster around Greenock and the surrounding area of Inverclyde—deprivation that lies at the root of the morbidities of imperial post-industry that for a time also saw the area suffer the highest COVID-19 death rate in Scotland.[17] While Niall Ferguson might claim that the rapacious expansion of the British Empire abroad was "built on a huge sugar, caffeine and nicotine rush—a rush nearly everyone could experience", in places like Greenock, it is more accurate to say that sugar filled a desperate calorie gap for the working poor.[18] Sugar here was more a substitute for food than a foodstuff itself, something that Mintz has termed a "proletarian hunger-killer".[19] Greenock's refineries were filled with workers displaced by the Highland Clearances and the Irish famine of 1845–52, and the sugar they produced *and consumed*, itself linked the labour contribution of Caribbean slaves, indentured Asian peasants, and working-class Europeans to the growth of Western capitalism.[20]

Beyond the foundational catastrophe of chattel slavery, sugar production persists to scar both the landscapes and the economic futures of Caribbean places too, articulating new twists on pre-existing systems of inequality and extraction. Andrea Stuart, speaking of her native Barbados, points out that sugar is still cultivated here, "and the vista of endless fields of cane remains emblematic of the region, as is the sweet, syrupy smell of the fields as they are fired and razed. Sugar has transformed the landscape and changed the region's ecosystem".[21] But as real estate becomes more valuable than cultivation, the sounds of construction have started to drown out what Stuart terms "the perennial soundtrack of the plantation, the strangely soothing and sad noise of the cane".[22] Patterns of extraction are replicated in contemporary papaya farming too: fruits are grown today on farms in Jamaica where sugar cane used to be cultivated, layering time in ruins. "The plantation's great house, sugar factory, and rum distillery in ruins at its centre. Ancient equipment rusting away inside. The farm manager's house built in the ruins of the overseer's."[23] The labour of gathering the fruits is hard, and miserably paid. And the symbols of empire still oversee the activities of the labouring poor: Modest and Barringer remark on the

statues of Queen Victoria that remain in Jamaica, signs of imperial architecture that persist in dilapidated railway stations, houses, and churches.[24] With Victoria thus figured as "a spectre of empire haunting the Jamaican present",[25] we might say that the "waste of bodies, degradation of environment, and psychic weight of colonial processes entangle people, soil and things" in Scotland and the Caribbean in different ways, reconfiguring them *both* as zones of imperial duress.[26] We need to reintegrate imperial histories into our telling of Scotland's past *and* present in a way that recognises repeating gestures of "colonisation and expulsion, incorporation and erasure".[27] Mimi Sheller uses a liquid metaphor in her suggestion that colonial histories *seep* through national boundaries to connect up places, but I prefer to persist with Hall's image, which opened this article, to claim that they also *sediment* to create new formations. These formations also give rise to creative and critical practices that people engage with to untangle themselves from imperial pasts.[28] Indeed, as Caitlin DeSilvey argues, such processes of untangling and "disarticulation can lead to the articulation of other stories" and to a creative transformation of the histories we tell around places.[29] This is a gesture neither of retreat nor of resolution, but a conscious act of staying with the trouble of the now: "not of doing justice to the past, but rather of committing to justice in the present".[30]

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At the behest of *Creative Time*, Kara E. Walker has confected: *A Subtlety, or the Marvelous Sugar Baby*, an Homage to the unpaid and overworked Artisans who have refined our Sweet tastes from the cane fields to the Kitchens of the New World on the Occasion of the demolition of the Domino Sugar Refining Plant.

These words greeted visitors to Kara Walker's monumental sugar installation *A Subtlety*, which was on display in the former Domino sugar refinery in Williamsburg, New York, from May to July 2014. *A Subtlety* was figured as female, a cross between an ancient Egyptian sphinx and a stereotyped image of a southern "mammy" figure, crouching on her haunches in a classical pose that combined serenity and sexuality, measuring thirty-five feet tall and seventy-five feet long, and made from polystyrene coated with eighty tons of bleached sugar (fig. 1).

Figure 1

Kara Walker, *A Subtlety, or the Marvelous Sugar Baby, an Homage to the unpaid and overworked Artisans who have refined our Sweet tastes from the cane fields to the Kitchens of the New World on the Occasion of the demolition of the Domino Sugar Refining Plant*, 2014. Polystyrene foam, sugar. Approx. 35.5 × 26 × 75.5 ft (10.8 × 7.9 × 23 m). Installation view: Domino Sugar Refinery, A project of Creative Time, Brooklyn, NY. Digital image courtesy of Kara Walker / Photo: Jason Wyche (all rights reserved).

As indicated in Walker's introductory text, the installation was commissioned to mark the partial demolition of the refinery. Built in 1882, the Domino plant refined over half of the sugar sold in the United States in the 1890s. It is thus contemporary to the construction of the James Watt Dock in Greenock (1878–86), where the sugar sheds are located, and is only a few years older than the Tobacco Warehouse, which still stands in central Greenock today, and which was the site of Alberta Whittle's performance *A Recipe for Planters Punch* in 2016. The Domino plant and the Greenock sheds represent embodied traces of the global sugar trade that linked the Caribbean, where the raw materials were harvested, with locations where they were processed and refined, such as Scotland and the United States. Contemporary responses to these specific sugar sites by artists such as Walker and Whittle emphasise the bodily nature of sugar work that took place within them, from enslaved labour on Caribbean plantations to the manual work in refining plants. When asked once about the irked response Walker's work often provokes in critics and audiences, Carrie Mae Weems replied that Walker was in deep trouble, "But then so are all of us—in deep trouble."[31] Donna Haraway reads "trouble" as a temporal disturbance—a mixed-up layering of times that we should lean into rather than attempt to evade through thinking to the future. I will argue that *A Subtlety* and *A Recipe for Planters Punch* "make trouble" in their "myriad unfinished configuration(s) of places, times, matters, and meanings".[32] Both works demonstrate how engaging audiences with ruins and ghost-like remainders in their work can function as ways of entangling different sugar places and sugar times.

Post-industrial sugar ruins hold co-temporal legacies of slavery, poverty, and labour exploitation, and the task that faced Walker was how to honour these layered pasts in the moment of their

erasure in the Domino site. How to attend to the sounds of the plantation that still hummed in the building's sugar stalactites but that were—as in Stuart's comments earlier—also being submerged by the noise of construction. The demolition of the Domino, slated for conversion into luxury apartments, clearly reflected processes of urban racial gentrification, which added another layer of unease to Walker's controversial work. On first visiting the site, Walker was struck by the overwhelming smell of molasses. The sensory impression was vast: the refinery walls were still wet, sticky with sedimentation that voiced sugar time, "decades of molasses that cover the entire space; it's coated—it's an amazing relic or repository vessel that contains all of these histories".[33] Walker has spoken of how she wanted to involve this industrialisation of the processing of sugar in her work, interrogating the oversaturated symbolism of turning brown sugar into the bleached white figure of *A Subtlety* as "testament and monument to the quest for whiteness".[34] Yet, as well as the material framework of the space, I am also struck by how she aimed to involve the corporeal by-products and sensory afterlives of the refining process into her thinking, as testimony to the physical labour, the sweat that is involved in hot, heavy sugar work. If the space of the refinery has absorbed sugar time into its coated walls, the workers are permanently afflicted by a "grassy, pungent, almost nauseating sugar smell that lives in the tissue of everyone who has worked in that plant". How, Walker asks, could she "work with the stink", yet also construct something that would be easily "digestible" to a wide audience, something that works with their attention span, that takes account of what people want to look at?[35]
Walker began her research for the project through a process of free association, "mining both her own mind and our collective consciousness for the many sweet and sour resonances of sugar". When faced with the layers of horror that make up the history of sugar production and consumption ("slave labour, colonization, land seizure, extractive capitalism, the exploitation of women and children, and then, later, the global cultivation of sugar addiction, a public health catastrophe that can be said to affect most profoundly the black and the poor"), Walker says: "And I got to the end and I was like *Ruins! … Ruins!* … And I couldn't just produce ruins."[36] But as DeSilvey has shown, working *with* rot and decay can lead to the formation of productive alternative formulations of our relationship to the past. We invest huge amounts of energy in maintaining, shoring up, and conserving matter—matter that inevitably and continually degrades, despite our very best efforts. Decay offers another pathway towards memory-making, one that can be read as both liberatory and positive. "Decay occurs when a complex of processes combines to break down the integrity of a substance and to *make its components available for enrolment in other projects*."[37] I argue that *A Subtlety* is one such project, which allows for new logics of affective engagement and experimentation with sugar times and spaces. Engagement here is enabled by release. Margo Natalie Crawford places Walker's work in dialogue with the earlier Black Arts Movement murals, in particular the 1969 *Wall of Truth* mural in Chicago, in ways that illuminate our understandings of how sugar time functions in *A Subtlety*. In contrast to the *Wall of Truth*'s "claiming" of an abandoned building, Crawford argues that *A Subtlety* provides a space for the witnessing of demolition: "Instead of seizing a space, *A Subtlety* (like the ephemeral nature of the sugar, which melted within two months) was a *letting-go of a space*."[38] Letting go of the monumental sugar space of the Domino, and indeed also of the monumental sugar statue itself, allows memory work to continue in different forms. Sugar memory is not deposited here in fixed forms made to last, but is grafted through intimate relationships and clusters in afterlives created by personal experiences of the intervention. This is a response to the violence of sugar histories in what Saidiya Hartman has termed "aesthetic mode", aesthetics that allow for the creation of a "recombinant narrative which loops the strands

of incommensurate accounts and which weaves present, past, and future in retelling the story".[39] Such aesthetics are not meant to harmonise or to resolve troublesome histories, but to allow them to continue to reverberate into the present.

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As I started to write this article, I was troubled by Barthes's same earworm, catching myself singing "Sugartime" as I went through early drafts. The aural loops turned into tricks of persistent involuntary memory. As my writing proceeded, I began humming out another tune, alternating between the two. "Pay me. Pay me what you owe me. Pay me, pay me, pay me, pay me, pay me, pay me, pay me. What you owe me." This low repetitive refrain forms the backdrop to Alberta Whittle's *A Recipe for Planters Punch*, which the Scottish Barbadian artist performed at Greenock's Tobacco Warehouse in October 2016 (fig. 2)[40]

Figure 2

Alberta Whittle, *A Recipe for Planter's Punch*, 2016, still from filmed performance, 09:49. Image courtesy of Alberta Whittle. All rights reserved, DACS/Artimage. Digital image courtesy of the Artist and The Modern Institute / Toby Webster Ltd., Glasgow 2023.

Whittle's practice is intimately concerned with interrogating the shared histories of Scotland and the Caribbean. Her work aims to challenge the ability of people in Scotland to "forget" unpalatable histories, specifically the contested historic and contemporary relationships between the Caribbean and the United Kingdom, a condition she has termed "the luxury of amnesia".[41] As we will see, she enacts this challenge in part through emplacing her own body in both the past of Britain's sugar production in the Caribbean and the now of its post-industrial relics.

In *A Recipe* Whittle creates a posed tableau, inspired by William Holland's 1807 satirical print *A West India Sportsman*, copies of which are now held in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich and the British Museum. Holland's planter protagonist is depicted reclining in a chair with his feet up on a stool and a gun in his hand. He asks for more rum punch or "sangaree" (spiced, diluted wine) from one of the enslaved plantation workers he has assembled around him, and directs another to move the birds closer to him so that he doesn't have to get up to take his shot. He is the embodiment of perfect myopic luxury, a vision that cannot be far in Whittle's mind from tourists who expect the same attentive coddling from hotel and bar staff in the numerous hotels and resorts that make up today's Caribbean experience for European visitors.[42] In her performance, Whittle embodies the plantation sportsman and the enslaved worker in turn. Seated at the start, wearing a modern tracksuit and a woven wicker breastplate, Whittle is positioned behind a table laden with the ingredients and measuring tools needed to

make a traditional rum punch. She pours out the ingredients in turn: one of sour, two of sweet, three of strong, four of weak. As she goes through the recipe, she sings a fragmented version of Barbadian singer Rihanna's "Bitch Better Have My Money" (2015):

I call the shots
Don't act like you forgot
Pay me what you owe me
Bitch better have my money.

While in Rihanna's original, the interval between the words "pay" and "me" is a perfect fifth, Whittle makes it a minor third and manipulates its rhythm through fractured repetition. Her singing acquires a mourning quality that recalls the blues sound of the Black American South. She immerses her face into the bowl multiple times, attempting to continue to sing Rihanna's lyrics under the liquid. At the end of the performance, she sings louder and louder as she exits the warehouse room, her face now dripping wet with punch. As a work of performance in a derelict space, there is an ephemeral quality to the experience, which is countered only by the lingering persistence of the musical memory of Whittle's song. Although the performance was filmed, and stills of it can still be viewed on Whittle's website, the experience of the shared relationship with both the space of the Tobacco Warehouse and the audience at the event is lost in subsequent online viewings.

The temporary status of both *A Recipe* and *A Subtlety* is also replicated in Kara Walker's latest work, *Fons Americanus*, on display in the Turbine Hall of London's Tate Modern from 2019 to 2021. Made from reusable materials including wood, cork, metal, and a cement composite, Walker's fountain monument to empire was created to be destroyed when the exhibition closed, much like the Domino refinery and *A Subtlety* which inhabited it.[43] This stands in stark contrast to "original" monuments of empire, which were made to last; for example, *Fons Americanus* is a response to the Victoria Memorial (1911), which still stands outside Buckingham Palace today. But the fountain's location in the Tate Modern also provides a memorial link back to Greenock through the Tate & Lyle company, combining sugar times and places through the wealth generated for individuals that continues to benefit the metropole.[44] The transient nature of both Walker's and Whittle's work counters confinement, resists fixity, and refuses permanence.[45] Yet the memorial residues that remain are the after-effects of the sugar at work. The commentaries and opinion pieces in print. The images online. The earworms you can't get out of your head. In addition, the material erasure of the artworks produces a space-making effect that allows for ghosts to be conjured and confronted through sugar memory work. Christina Sharpe, for one, reads the mammy figure in Walker's work as *phantasmatic*: everywhere and yet invisible, a figment of the collective imagination.[46] In the section that follows, I will use Sharpe's prompt and her related work *In the Wake* to read ghostly figures in Kayus Bankole's and Adura Onashile's works as alternative signs of sugar time, signs that work to provide a counter-narrative of atemporality to official, fixed memorialisations of empire.[47]

Sugar Ghosts

Witness me as a living memory, a ghost made flesh conjuring residual hurt.
– Kayus Bankole

Imperial statues are living a vexed moment, thanks to the contemporary activism of the Rhodes Must Fall and Black Lives Matter movements. New modes of memorialisation, as well as new subjects to honour, are urgently required. In Scotland, there has been much discussion over the Melville Monument (1827) to Henry Dundas, which stands in Edinburgh's St Andrew Square,

including during the popular Black History Walking Tour of the city led by academic and founder of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association, Lisa Williams. If we cross from the New Town to the Old Town of Edinburgh, passing over Waverley's railway tracks and climbing the Mound to the Royal Mile, we find a statue of the Enlightenment philosopher David Hume. The statue was only recently installed, in 1997. It is said that rubbing the foot of the statue can bring good fortune and, as a consequence, Hume's toe shines a brilliant gold in contrast to the deep sea-green of the rest of the statue. The hands that have rubbed Hume's foot so enthusiastically recall the audience hands that helped mix planter's punch with Alberta Whittle, the visitors' hands that touched and prodded *A Subtlety*. The thousands of hands of visitors framing, curating, and posting their own versions of Walker's artwork on Instagram. As a sceptic of religious miracles, Hume would doubtless be dismayed by the superstitious fervour of the foot rub he has been subjected to. Would he also object to the sign left hanging round his neck in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests in June 2020, which replicates his own words in his 1753 revision of "Of National Characters"—"I am apt to suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites"? As Felix Waldmann has shown, Hume was not only a racist but he also acted "as an intermediary for three London brokers in the purchase of a number of plantations in Grenada" and possibly also lent money to invest in them.[48] Hume's support for slavery was not only theoretical but material.

The signs of touch that mark Hume's memorial statue in both these ways thus trace intersections where, as Homi Bhabha has stated: "claims to national culture … are *touched*—and are translated by—the interruptive and interrogative memory of the displaced or displaceable populations that inhabit the national imaginary—be they migrants, minorities, refugees, or the colonized".[49] These haptic presences recall the manual toil honoured by Walker's homage to the sugar-refining labour in the Domino plant. The hands that fan and otherwise tend to William Holland's robust, red-faced plantation sportsman. Yet as Haitian novelist Edwidge Danticat wrote about the sugar industry in the Dominican Republic to mark the installation of *A Subtlety*, the *absence* of hands is a more chilling indictment of conditions on plantations not having substantially improved in modern times: "We do not have to travel to the distant past to find fingerless, armless or legless people on sugar plantations. There are hundreds of them nearby."[50] These traces of touching hands also remind me of the fingers that warp and weft in and out of sight as part of the visual images that Scottish artist and musician Kayus Bankole projected onto the facade of Edinburgh's City Chambers, just a few steps away from the David Hume statue, in *Sugar for Your Tea* (fig. 3).

Figure 3

Kayus Bankole (written and performed), still from film by Rianne White, music by Young Fathers, *Sugar for Your Tea*, 2020. Digital image courtesy of Kayus Bankole (all rights reserved).

Part of "Message from the Skies", whose 2020 theme was "Shorelines", *Sugar for Your Tea* was projected on landmarks around Edinburgh each evening from Hogmanay on 1 January to Burns Night on 25 January 2020, Scotland's annual national celebration. Bankole's work was a spoken word performance, a film shot through shifting light and water by its producer Rianne White and accompanied by a sound score produced by Bankole's group Young Fathers. We see his submerged hands and face at close range, glints of teeth and jewellery flashing through red and blue filters: the effect is claustrophobic and evokes the moment of drowning.

The words from the text Bankole reads flash up periodically across the images as he speaks, re-scripting a maritime history that binds Scotland to Africa and to the Caribbean through imperial trades in tobacco, linen, and sugar.

The seas are liquid roads with junctions and crossings that connect us; uniting us in moments of shared history. The wreckage of the past floats on the surface of our Scottish waters, the survivors and drowned wave their hands for us to take notice. It's too late for rescue but we can offer a proper burial.[51]

The debris of slavery's afterlives may still be present in Scotland, but Bankole argues that its memorialisation is absent. This is part of a deliberately "selective curation of history" that Bankole aims to redress.[52] He lists just a few of the prominent Scottish figures who benefited ("got fat") from the transatlantic slave trade and plantation ownership in the Caribbean, and whose names are still honoured on Scotland's street names, buildings, and plaques today: James Lindsay, Henry Dundas, Archibald Ingram, Andrew Buchanan, and John Gladstone of Leith. These are figures who stand as emblems of a nation that profited from slavery, yet Bankole emphasises that the goods they traded and brought back to Scotland brought individual and collective material benefits to all who live here today. "From Freetown to the plantation to what you see around you now. If it wasn't for the blood of my ancestors … those who were punished, pushed, pressed, pressured, peeled, poked and provoked … there would be only crumbs and dust and maybe whisky."[53] The repetitive alliteration of the hard plosive sound forces the speaker to emphasise the burst of breath each *p* releases, and verbalises the images of bubbles lifting from his mouth that accompany the text. This aspiration, the struggle to breathe, links "those who chose drowning over a life of enslavement" with a reference to "a young Scotsman proudly standing with his shiny buckled boot on a black throat". This atemporal image, which could as easily come from the eighteenth century as the twenty-first century, cannot help but recall the death of Sheku Bayoh from asphyxiation in police custody in Kirkcaldy in 2015. Bayoh's death

has recently been memorialised as part of the Scottish Black Lives Matter mural trail with an image created by Scottish Jamaican artist Abz, which was displayed on the outside of the Usher Hall in Edinburgh's West End.[54]

But then how do you go about mourning the now—how do you "memorialize an event that is still ongoing"?[55] The allusion to the death of Bayoh in *Sugar for Your Tea* connects the sugar ghosts of Scotland's past to other afterlives of slavery that persist globally today, the "skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment".[56] Bankole here is engaged in what Sharpe calls "wake work", a "mode of inhabiting and rupturing this episteme with our known lived and un/imaginable lives".[57] His African heritage fuses with his status as a young Scot to mean that he embodies a past that is not past, but is present firmly in the now (in his own words he is "a living memory, a ghost made flesh"). The abundant memorialisation of Scottish slavers is placed in contrast with the total absence of his own Nigerian ancestors in the Scottish imaginary: "I remember Mariatu, Jalevina, Adama, Tennah, Fatima, Tejan, Kwaku, Mensah, Akua, Funke, Aminu, Olaudah, Ayodele, Funmilayo, Dillyon, Jahshara, and I ask that you remember them too".[58] The insistence on these names in the public sphere, and Bankole's own physical presence in the piece—writ large on the walls of the administrative centre of Scotland's capital city—allow them to function as sugar remainders, traces of what remains after the temporal sequence of sugar production, consumption, and disposal has concluded. Their haunting, here, represents an "unacknowledged debt", one that we, as present heirs to past consumption, owe them.[59] If, as Stuart says, the land of Barbados is haunted by its sugar past, Bankole stands ready to claim space for his family in Scotland's past, present, and future times.[60]

Ghosts also trouble the present in recent work produced for the National Theatre of Scotland by British Nigerian actor-director Adura Onashile, who moved to Glasgow in 2010. *Ghosts* is an augmented reality piece that allows audiences to follow a fugitive enslaved child as he runs through the streets of eighteenth-century Glasgow. Onashile states that her guiding question in designing the piece was: "If we deny our past, how does it affect our present?"[61] Glasgow itself becomes a character in the experience, and the built environment takes on a sense of debt or responsibility in its ability to breach delineations of past and present, enabling viewers to "imagine otherwise from what we know *now* in the wake of slavery".[62] An immersive experience, which became available for download in April–May 2021, *Ghosts* offered an opportunity for audiences not to memorialise the past in static fashion, but to emplace the past back into the present through a creative augmentation of reality. Once the viewer has experienced *Ghosts*, Onashile's hope is that Glasgow will feel like a completely different city and that the place of current residents in it will feel different as well. This will function as a temporal unsettling of space, a blurring of the "ordering of space through a folding of time".[63] Indeed, as the piece closes, past, present, and future collapse into a moveable continuum; the superimposition of past characters muddles the two statements "I was there" and "I am here". In Hetherington's analysis, this folding of the past into the present occurs by means of a disclosure, not a "bold and direct statement of fact, but an unfolding of understanding through an unexpected gap—an absence made present".[64] In the next section, "Sugar Encounters", I will go on to identify instances of this strategy of disclosure (revelations, leaks, confessions, confidences, divulgences, whispers) that occur through immersive methods and through the encounters and interactions that take place between audiences and artworks.

Sugar Encounters

One of the most striking episodes in *Ghosts* occurs in front of Glasgow's Museum of Modern Art (GoMA): once the townhouse of William Cunninghame, an eighteenth-century tobacco merchant who profited from the transatlantic slave trade. The viewer watches as the serene neoclassical building slowly collapses into a pile of rubble and rising dust before their eyes. Onashile's question around the damage, the ruination that a lapsed reckoning with the past can effect in the present, is posed in personal terms by Bankole. During the performance of *Sugar for Your Tea*, direct interpellations to the audience abound: "If *you* try to suppress and sink the truth of the damage *you* will never be able to truly grasp what *we* may become". As Stoler says, the truth is that these are unfinished histories, "not of a victimized past but of *consequential histories of differential futures*".[65] Witnessing artists performing the self as Bankole and Whittle do, the audience are asked what they will tolerate within that artwork—what stories, what histories, and which discomforts? As Ward points out, by extension, the question really being posed is what we will tolerate *outside* the artwork, in real life: "the unforgiving implication of their work is that there are no innocent bystanders".[66] The audience is required to take on an active role by directly witnessing the live performance in real time and engaging physically with it through the close proximity of the artist too: Whittle states that her practice demands that "audiences participate in their own discomfort when race or gender is discussed".[67]

Pay me. Pay me what you owe me
I call out all the shots
Don't act like you forgot.

Whittle's singing in *A Recipe* is part lament and part demand—she sings it directly *to* the audience, and her call is a call for reckoning and reparations. She moves among them, gives them ingredients that they are instructed to pour into the large punch bowl as she watches. The recipe becomes a ritual that implicates them all in its tense construction, as Whittle cuts and squeezes limes, grates nutmeg, and pours spirits and seawater from Greenock and Barbados from two ornamental teapots in a symbolic mixing of the waters of the two places. With each step, she submerges her face into the liquid, attempting to sing as she drowns out the words simultaneously. The effect is unnerving, violent. Shouldn't someone step forward? What if the drowning goes on too long? Reflecting on the experience, Whittle speaks of this tension, a tension based in the audience's witnessing of her suffering, which thereby "implicate[s] them in the process and the shared history".[68]

That Whittle's performance centres on the act of food-making, both production and consumption, also allows for strategies of disclosure to occur through specifically bodily interactions. Preparing food allows the body to be used as an instrument and as a site of knowledge. Food-making becomes a form of enquiry in itself, which food studies scholar Sarah Marie Hall has called "an embodied form of learning where people are doing, … sensing with each other and potentially registering the world in more articulate and more sensitive ways".[69] This is interrelational work, in which bodies exist in interaction with other bodies through processes related to acts of production and consumption.[70] And within the context of the Domino refinery, the body of *A Subtlety* itself also became a scene of immersive, interrelational consumption. Around 130,000 people visited Walker's installation over the course of the four-month exhibition, many of whom licked, patted, and stroked the statue, or took photos and selfies that relegated her monumental size to the status of interactive yet passive backdrop. Others delved their hands into the baskets held by the statue's "attendants", thirteen molasses boys built to

scale, bearing baskets for harvesting sugar cane. Made of candied brown sugar or molasses, the boys proceeded to melt into sticky pools as spring turned to summer, and the sugar could be scooped and tasted from their diminutive figures.

Walker was inspired by reading about sugar subtleties in the work of Sidney Mintz, and found it an obvious way into thinking about sugar and sculpture—this long history of manipulating sugar so that it could be aesthetic, preservable, and edible all at once.[71] Artistic uses of marzipan spread to Europe from the Middle East in the thirteenth century, and such "subtleties" were served to mark intervals between courses in court banquets. Walker was struck by the power displayed by the ingestion of this valuable substance and by its status symbol as an artistic medium. But Mintz explains how over time sugar subtleties acquired a political symbolic service, expressing positive or negative messages about individuals or contemporary issues. Walker must have been inspired by Mintz's description of the "strange significance of a food that could be sculptured, written upon, admired, and read before it was eaten".[72] And not only by the display's embodiment of the wealth, power, and status of the host, but also by the power being validated by the ingestion of the subtleties by his guests. Walker plays with these power relations in her figuring of the Sphinx, who is both strong and subservient, confined and revealing, regal and submissive. She takes control over her guests, manipulating their consumption of her work, which is "evocatively staged as an open-access, interactive experience in a crumbling relic to sugar refining and processing", and one that "brilliantly lends itself to the expansive reach of the social media age".[73]

But the audience consumption of *A Subtlety* also played into the unclear racial politics of the visitor experience, where the central spectacle was not only the "Black body displayed for consumption", but also a scene that "uncomfortably reintroduce[d] the slave as spectacle".[74] Alice Procter has commented on how white visitors were able to perform obliviousness, seeing the sprawling statue of *A Subtlety* solely as an object of desire, and engaging only with its sweet surface. And indeed, if you search #KaraWalkerDomino on Instagram, you can scroll through nearly 22,000 visitor photos (some arty, but many insensitive or offensive), as people play with the perspective of the piece to pretend to tweak a nipple or otherwise sexualise the statue. In protest, a group of New York artists organised a mass visit on 22 June, which they called "We Are Here", to encourage people of colour to gather to produce images "grounded in respect and thoughtfulness" that would drown out the less tasteful visual representations flooding social media. But in a further twist, it turned out that Walker had incorporated this range of audience reactions to the piece into an afterlife of the work, a video piece called *An Audience*. In it, Walker turned her attention to the visitors in the last hour before closure—their consumption of the artwork—and in so doing made them complicit in a missed opportunity to mourn what Thompson has called "the devastation of Blackness".[75] Described as akin to a "history lesson", the afterlife constituted by *An Audience* plays with tropes of spectatorship, violation, and trespass, and offers a way of "extending [Walker's] analysis of racial dynamics from the historical to the present".[76]

Emplacing the visitor within the artwork has always been a focus of Walker's practice, from her early silhouette projections in which viewers would have to step in front of the projector, their shadows now included in the work, to the design of the communal space of the *Fons Americanus*.[77] The ridge of Walker's fountain encouraged visitors to sit and linger as part of the artwork itself, and she has stated that she wanted it to function much like a town square, "a delightful family setting".[78] This attention to the role of the physical body (both of the artist and of the viewer) in the social life of interactive, immersive artwork is also a way to recognise

opportunities for what Ladelle McWhorter calls "counter-attacks", where the body's physical capacities are consciously remobilised to effect progressive change.[79] In sugar artworks by Walker and Whittle, the body is called upon to perform in multiple metaphorical and material ways, be that as an organ that can "digest" difficult histories or as an organ of resistance—a site where representations become "lodged in our collective gullet".[80] Bodies are also the site in which sugar time flexes its full potential reach between past and present, and encompass an imaginative element of recuperation, as Walker herself states: "What I discovered was that possessing a black body through which history and fiction coexist was the stuff performances are made of".[81]

Conclusions: Imperial Aftermaths

In a time when conversations about the legacies of empire and slavery in Scotland are moving more firmly towards concrete actions of reparations, apologies, and repatriations, this article has traced the figuration of sugar as a temporal continuum between past and present through its mobilisation in works of contemporary art and performance by three contemporary Scottish artists. They operate in the contemporary context of the historic return of a Benin Bronze by the University of Aberdeen in 2021, the official apology by the City of Edinburgh Council for its past role in sustaining slavery and colonialism in 2022, and the University of Glasgow's 2019 agreement to raising and spending £20 million in reparations in a programme of reparative justice for former profits from the transatlantic slave trade. In focusing on interlocking zones of meaning-making enacted by the artworks in question, I place them in a transatlantic dialogue with Kara Walker's *A Subtlety*, which recalls the historic triangular networks of sugar production and trade, while highlighting their shared theorisation of ruination and ghostly remnants as moments in sugar time. Specific places are called to response within these works as much as the audiences who experience them: in the case of Scotland, the monumental spaces of Greenock's Tobacco Warehouse, Glasgow's Merchant City, and Edinburgh's City Chambers are physically implicated by performances that evoke histories of slavery, sugar, and empire. Even in their transience, these works will leave what Baucom calls "estranging marks" on Scottish places, places that will now become sites "in which the present re-creates the past, as a 'contact zone' in which succeeding generations serially destabilise the nation's acts of collective remembrance".[82] And their connections to the traces and memories left by Walker's monumental sugar sculpture in the Domino refining plant in New York allows us to conceive of the aftermath of empire as a "bending of time" and place rather than assuming any sense of a "linear history of progress".[83] Memorial interventions in the present such as these can provoke disruptions to the smooth accumulation of time, and conflicting narratives of history can cause unexpected sedimentations.[84] This may well recall Chakrabarty's evocation of the tension inherent in postcolonial time, in which the "not yet" of the coloniser clashes with the "now" of the colonised in the fight for self-determination.[85] In bringing this discourse into the present, Sandro Mezzadra and Federico Rahola see postcolonialism as an accumulating archive in which images, concepts, and words are *deposited*, enabling us to reconstruct the contours of our present.[86] It is this sense of sugar time as both continual and contemporary that effects a temporal mixing, affording performers and artists working today the potential to re-script the Caribbean into Scottish history in their selection, curation, and collection of multiple sedimented moments. The deposition of memories within such contemporary constructs also allows for temporal entanglements that Achille Mbembe has conceptualised as being composed of "presents, pasts, and futures that retain their depths of other presents, pasts, and futures, each age bearing, altering, and

maintaining the previous ones".[87] The challenge now is for those entanglements not to replicate the traumas of history, but to turn towards the generative potential of future aftermaths. Indeed, Rachel Cusk reminds us that the etymology of "aftermath" is "second mowing": a second crop of grass that is sown and reaped after the harvest is in.[88] As Olúfémi Táíwò has noted, to build a future-oriented world characterised by just distribution, reparations cannot simply be financial transactions but must be made up of a blend of material, symbolic, and psychological components. This also means addressing symbolic injustices that construct visual landscapes of violence, such as monuments and memorials, as well as raising "collective racial consciousness".[89] In her work representing Scotland at the 2022 Venice Biennale, *deep dive (pause) uncoiling memory*, Alberta Whittle has, indeed, continued to advocate for self-care, healing, and "investing in love" as an example of a positive, future-oriented response to the increased pace of contemporary reckoning with Scottish-specific histories of colonialism, empire, and anti-Black violence.

The sugar time that I have sketched here is a time of imperial aftermaths, which are aesthetic as well as social or political in nature. In a postscript to the story of the earworm of the McGuire sisters' song that has accompanied me throughout the writing of this article, I discovered that a cover version of "Sugartime" had also been recorded by Paul and Linda McCartney during a trip they made to Lee "Scratch" Perry's Black Ark recording studio in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1977. The later song's reggae beat and Linda's relaxed vocal performance are in strong contrast to the saccharine primness of the McGuire sisters' hit, and suggest different undertones as well as different sugar times. Singing of sugar as a constant daily presence in 1970s Jamaica means different things from what the same refrain meant in 1950s America. This temporal layering reveals the presence of contact zones that are both "disquieting and uneven, yet also affiliative and eruptive".[90] The imperial aftermaths of sugar time are, in Cooppan's words, "more imaginable in the scales of time that are fractal—as geologically sedimented as sugar, or as liquid as a cup of tea."[90] Yet, as Richard Mark Rawlins's 2018 photographic series *I Am Sugar* shows, sediments are apt to provoke revelation (Figs. 4, 5, 6, and 7). Rawlins pictures a Black hand making gestures of acknowledgement, empowerment, and resistance as it rises out from a traditional porcelain tea cup which was designed in England, manufactured in China, and sold via Amazon, deftly illustrating Stuart Hall's statement of complex positionality cited at the beginning of this article. The sugar time that Rawlins so powerfully evokes is further refined in the site-specific nature of the works by Alberta Whittle, Kayus Bankole, and Adura Onashile analysed here, which, through the theoretical framework introduced by Kara Walker's *A Subtlety*, seek to address lagging amnesia around Scotland's imperial trades and involvement in plantation slavery. In so doing, together they succeed in sketching out a new map of contemporary Scottish sugar time.

Figure 4

Richard Mark Rawlins, *I Am Sugar*, 2018, digital photograph. Digital image courtesy of Richard Mark Rawlins (all rights reserved).

Figure 5

Richard Mark Rawlins, *I Am Sugar*, 2018, digital photograph. Digital image courtesy of Richard Mark Rawlins (all rights reserved).

Figure 6

Richard Mark Rawlins, *I Am Sugar*, 2018, digital photograph. Digital image courtesy of Richard Mark Rawlins (all rights reserved).

Figure 7

Richard Mark Rawlins, *I Am Sugar*, 2018, digital photograph. Digital image courtesy of Richard Mark Rawlins (all rights reserved).

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Emma Bond is Professor of Italian and Comparative Studies at the University of Oxford. She has published widely on transnational cultures and migration histories, including *Destination Italy: Representing Migration in Contemporary Media and Narrative* (co-edited with Guido Bonsaver and Federico Faloppa, 2015) and *Writing Migration through the Body* (2018). Emma's work also explores representations of histories of colonialism in Italy and the United Kingdom, particularly in museums and the heritage sector. She founded the network *Transnational Scotland: Reconnecting Heritage Stories through Museum Object Collection*s (2019–2020), which resulted in the publication of *Scotland's Transnational Heritage: Legacies of Empire and Slavery* (co-edited with Michael Morris, 2022) and the *Re-collecting Empire* exhibition at the Wardlaw Museum, St. Andrews (2022). Her third monograph, *Curating Worlds: Museum Practices in Contemporary Literature*, is forthcoming with Northwestern University Press in 2024.

Footnotes

1. Stuart Hall, "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities", in *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*, ed. Anthony D. King (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 41. Tao Leigh Goffe has also used Hall's words to open her article "Sugarwork: The Gastropoetics of Afro-Asia after the Plantation", which proposes artworks by Andrea Chung and María Magdalena Campos-Pons as tactile and aesthetic modes of preserving the lingering memories of multiple, interconnected narratives of bondage in the Caribbean. Goffe points to fact that the sugar Hall embodies here is neither fully dissolved nor assimilated and figures him as a "residue of colonialism", the "collateral damage of imperial intimacies". *Asian Diasporic Visual Cultures and the Americas* 5, nos. 1–2 (2019): 32.
2. Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Location of Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 1. Carla Sassi builds on Baucom's comments in relation to Scotland and the Caribbean: "The West Indies represent a powerfully destabilizing *lieu de memoire*, where Scotland might eventually lose command of its own narrative of identity, but also the place onto which Scotland might fruitfully 'displace' itself, and thus put into question its most resilient identity myths." "Acts of (Un)willed Amnesia: Dis/appearing Figurations of the Caribbean in Post-Union Scottish Literature", in *Caribbean–Scottish Relations: Colonial and Contemporary Inscriptions in History, Language and Literature*, ed. Carla Sassi, Giovanna Covi, and Joan Anim-Addo (London: Mango, 2007, 135.

3. Mimi Sheller deftly traces the multiple ethical and moral contradictions surrounding sugar consumption in *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London: Routledge, 2003). "Reaping the sweetness of the Tropics also involved European consumers in particularly morbid relations to the bodies of other humans whose labouring bodies produced the comestible commodities of world trade. Images of their diseased, whipped, scarred and mutilated bodies came to figure in European moral economies of consumption, along with imagery of the 'tropicalization' and degeneracy of the European body in the Tropics. These debates over the moral economy of consumption were from the beginning framed in relation to a geography of bodily health, in which flesh and blood were literally consumed by morbidity and mortality." Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 74.
4. Fernando Ortiz personifies sugar as feminine (in contrast to "masculine" tobacco), and gives it the name "Doña Azúcar". *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet De Onís (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 3.
5. Doreen St. Félix, "Kara Walker's Next Act", *Vulture*, 17 April 2017, https://www.vulture.com/2017/04/kara-walker-after-a-subtlety.html.
6. Arabindan-Kesson, *Black Bodies, White Gold*, 27.
7. Roland Barthes, "Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption", in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 2008), 20.
8. See McGuire Sisters, "Sugartime", 1958, YouTube video, 1:54, uploaded by jaggme, 20 August 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aH9HlmVfdyg.
9. Sidney W. Mintz, "Time, Sugar, and Sweetness", in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 2008), 359 and 361. See also Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London: Penguin, 1985).
10. Alberta Whittle, "The Luxury of Amnesia", *Caribbean Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (2017): 3, DOI:10.1080/00086495.2017.1302145; and Stephen Mullen, *It Wisnae Us: The Truth about Glasgow and Slavery* (Edinburgh: Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, 2009). Mullen has also created an extensive website to accompany the volume: see https://it.wisnae.us.
11. Michael Morris, "Avowing Slavery in the Visual Arts", in *Scotland's Transnational Heritage: Legacies of Slavery and Empire*, ed. Emma Bond and Michael Morris (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), 201.
12. Priya Satia, *Time's Monster: History, Conscience and Britain's Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2020), 264.
13. Ian Cook et al., "Follow the Thing: Papaya", *Antipode* 36, no. 4 (2004): 662, DOI:10.1111/j.1467-8330.2004.00441.x.
14. Robert Murray Smith, *The History of Greenock* (Greenock: Orr, Pollock, 1921), 100.
15. Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), x.
16. In May 2020 the rate for Inverclyde stood at 12.7 deaths per 10,000 people, more than double the national rate of 5.1. See Libby Brooks and Caelainn Barr, "'You Can See the Stress': Inverclyde Tops Scotland's Coronavirus Death Tables", *Guardian*, 6 May 2006, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/06/you-can-see-the-stress-inverclyde-tops-uks-coronavirus-death-tables.
17. Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2003), 15.

18. Mintz, "Time, Sugar, and Sweetness", 360.
19. Mintz, "Time, Sugar, and Sweetness", 360.
20. Andrea Stuart, "Blood Sugar: Spectres of Empire", *Architectural Review* 1455 (17 October 2018), https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/blood-sugar-spectres-of-empire. Stuart has also published an earlier family memoir: *Sugar in the Blood: A Family's Story of Slavery and Empire* (London: Portobello, 2012).
21. Stuart, "Blood Sugar".
22. Cook et al., "Follow the Thing", 646.
23. Wayne Modest and Tim Barringer, "Introduction", in *Victorian Jamaica*, ed. Tim Barringer and Wayne Modest (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 36.
24. Modest and Barringer, "Introduction", 43.
25. Stoler, *Imperial Debris*, x. This connective formulation also recalls Michael Morris's recasting of Scotland and the Caribbean as part of a grouping of "Atlantic archipelagos", following Glissant. Michael Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean, c.1740–1833: Atlantic Archipelagos* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
26. Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 1.
27. Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 8.
28. Caitlin DeSilvey, *Curated Decay: Heritage beyond Saving* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 30.
29. Vilashini Cooppan, "Time-Maps: A Field Guide to the Decolonial Imaginary", *Critical Times* 2, no. 3 (2019): 415, DOI:10.1215/26410478-7862533. I am also referencing Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).
30. St. Félix, "Kara Walker's Next Act".
31. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, 4.
32. Kara L. Rooney, "A Sonorous Subtlety: Kara Walker with Kara Rooney", *Brooklyn Rail*, May 2014, https://brooklynrail.org/2014/05/art/kara-walker-with-kara-rooney.
33. Rooney, "A Sonorous Subtlety".
34. Tim Adams, "Kara Walker: 'There Is a Moment in Life When One Becomes Black'", *Guardian*, 27 September 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/sep/27/kara-walker-interview-victoria-miro-gallery-atlanta.
35. Zadie Smith, "What Do We Want History to Do to Us?", *New York Review of Books*, 27 February 2020, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2020/02/27/kara-walker-what-do-we-want-history-to-do-to-us.
36. DeSilvey, *Curated Decay*, 11; emphasis added.
37. Margo Natalie Crawford, *Black Post-Blackness: The Black Arts Movement and Twenty-First Century Aesthetics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017), 175.
38. Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts", *Small Axe* 12, no. 2 (June 2008): 9, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/241115.
39. Alberta Whittle, *A Recipe for Planters Punch*, performance work, 30 October 2016, *Rum Retort* exhibition, The Tobacco Warehouse, Greenock, 15–30 October 2016, https://www.albertawhittle.com/a-recipe-for-planters-punch.html.
40. Whittle, "The Luxury of Amnesia", 3. Morris is careful to term Scottish responses to its slaving past in terms of (active) erasure rather than (passive) amnesia. See Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean*, 4.

41. Whittle also comments that "at the height of trade to the port, Greenock received up to 400 ships from the Caribbean annually, arriving with sugar and tobacco, and now, like the Caribbean, is a stopping point for cruise ships". Whittle, *A Recipe*.
42. Katherine McGrath, "Kara Walker's Fountain at the Tate Modern to Be Destroyed", *Architectural Digest*, 15 April 2020, https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/kara-walkers-fountain-at-the-tate-modern-to-be-destroyed.
43. . Tate & Lyle was formed through the merger of companies owned by Abram Lyle & Sons and Henry Tate & Sons in 1921. Abram Lyle was born in Greenock in 1820 and began his sugar refining business there in 1865. A recent installation by Scottish Guyanese artist Hew Locke in the Duveen Galleries of Tate Britain, titled *The Procession*, revisits this history, "making links with the historical after-effects of the sugar business, almost drawing out of the walls of the building". "Tate Britain Commission: Hew Locke: *The Procession*", Tate Britain exhibition, 22 March 2022–27 January 2023, https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/hew-locke.
44. . See Raquel Kennon, "Subtle Resistance: On Sugar and the Mammy Figure in Kara Walker's *A Subtlety* and Sherley Anne Williams's *Dessa Rose*", *African American Review* 52, no. 2 (2019): 148, DOI:10.1353/afa.2019.0025.
45. Christina Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-slavery Subjects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 161.
46. Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).
47. David Hume, *Further Letters of David Hume*, ed. Felix Waldmann (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, 2014), 66.
48. Homi Bhabha, quoted in Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Ghostwriting: Working Out Visual Culture", *Journal of Visual Culture* 1, no. 2 (2002): 249.
49. Edwidge Danticat, "The Price of Sugar", *Creative Time Reports*, 5 May 2014, https://creativetimereports.org/2014/05/05/edwidge-danticat-the-price-of-sugar.
50. Kayus Bankole, "Sugar for Your Tea", *Scotsman*, 20 January 2020, https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/books/read-kayus-bankoles-contribution-to-edinburghs-message-from-the-skies-1396752.
51. Michael Morris, "Jamaica: A Sweet Forgetting", *Studies in Photography* (2017): 32. Morris's piece is an astute analysis of Stephen McLaren's eponymous photographic series of 2015, which reconnects specific sites in Scotland and Jamaica to expose their shared history and the unequal legacies of Scottish involvement in the plantation economy of the Caribbean island in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. See Stephen McLaren, "Jamaica—A Sweet Forgetting", 2015, https://www.stephenmclaren.co.uk/jamaica-a-sweet-forgetting.
52. Bankole, "Sugar for Your Tea".
53. Phyllis Stephen, "New Images Added to Scottish Black Lives Matter Mural Trail", *Edinburgh Reporter*, 15 July 2020. Bayoh's death has also been memorialised in Hannah Lavery's *Lament for Sheku Bayoh* (Glasgow: Salamander Street, 2021), which was first commissioned and presented at the Lyceum Theatre as part of the 2019 Edinburgh International Festival, as well as in Alberta Whittle's film, *Lagareh—The Last Born* (London, 2022), which was presented at the 59th International Art Exhibition: La Biennale, Venice.
54. Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 20.

55. Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 6.
56. Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 15.
57. Bankole, "Sugar for Your Tea".
58. Kevin Hetherington, "Phantasmagoria/Phantasm Agora: Materialities, Spatialities, and Ghosts", *Space and Culture* 11–12 (2001): 29.
59. Andrea Stuart, "Blood Sugar". It is worth noting that the Young Fathers were subject to racist abuse online following their appearance in a 2017 video commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery in London and filmed at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh, in which they criticised the overwhelmingly white, male profile of the portraits on display in the gallery. See Young Fathers, "Young Fathers Scottish National Portrait Gallery Van Dyck A Masterpiece for Everyone", May 2017, YouTube video 4:06, uploaded by maskedavenger777, 1 August 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lt1umirFdY4.
60. See Adura Onashile, *Ghosts*, National Theatre of Scotland, May 2021, https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/past-performances/ghosts.
61. Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 18.
62. Hetherington, "Phantasmagoria/Phantasm Agora", 25.
63. Hetherington, "Phantasmagoria/Phantasm Agora", 26.
64. Stoler, *Imperial Debris*, 11; emphasis original.
65. Frazer Ward, *No Innocent Bystanders: Performance Art and Audience* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2012), 4.
66. Whittle, "The Luxury of Amnesia", 3.
67. Whittle, *A Recipe for Planters Punch*.
68. Sarah Marie Hall et al., "Food for Thought? Material Methods for Exploring Food and Cooking", in *Mundane Methods: Innovative Ways to Research the Everyday*, ed. Helen Holmes and Sarah Marie Hall (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 87–8.
69. Jessica Hayes-Conway and Allison Hayes-Conway, "Visceral Geographies: Mattering, Relating, and Defying", *Geography Compass* 4, no. 9 (2010): 1277, DOI:10.1111/j.1749-8198.2010.00373.x.
70. Adams, "Kara Walker: 'There is a Moment in Life When One Becomes Black'". See also Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 88.
71. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, 89.
72. Kennon, "Subtle Resistance", 144.
73. Alice Procter, *The Whole Picture: The Colonial Story of the Art in Our Museums and Why We Need to Talk about It* (London: Cassell, 2020), 225 and 229.
74. Malik Thompson, "Kara Walker's Desecrated Cemetery for Blackness", *Groundwork for Praxis*, 3 July 2014, https://groundworkforpraxis.wordpress.com/2014/07/03/kara_walker_exhibit.
75. Amber Jamilla Musser, "Queering Sugar: Kara Walker's Sugar Sphinx and the Intractability of Black Female Sexuality", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 42, no. 1 (2016): 164, DOI:10.1086/686756.
76. See Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies*, 154.
77. Suyin Haynes, "Kara Walker Breaks Down the Influences behind Her Bold New Work at the Tate Modern", *TIME*, 9 October 2019, https://time.com/5695978/kara-walker-fons-americanus-interview.

78. Ladelle McWhorter, *Bodies and Pleasures: Foucault and the Politics of Sexual Normalization* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).
79. McGrath, "Kara Walker's Fountain at the Tate Modern to Be Destroyed".
80. Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies*, 153.
81. Baucom, *Out of Place*, 5.
82. Kojo Koram, *Uncommon Wealth: Britain and the Aftermath of Empire* (London: John Murray, 2022), 19. Koram sketches an aftermath of empire that is predicated on Aimé Césaire's notion of the "boomerang effect", or "choc en retour". As such, he aims to show how Britain's imperial afterlife continues to impact race relations, health inequalities, and wealth and economics both in Britain and in its former colonies. See also Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review, 2000 [1955]).
83. Stoler, *Imperial Debris*, 2.
84. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 8.
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86. Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 16.
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90. Cooppan, "Time-Maps", 412.

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