



HISTORICAL PRESENCE IN VISUAL CULTURE

# Contemporaneity

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## Questionnaire

Introduction

Kale Serrato Doyen

### **About the Author**

*Kale Serrato Doyen (she/her) is a Ph.D. student in the History of Art and Architecture department at the University of Pittsburgh, where she studies Black and Latinx artists in modern and contemporary U.S. art history. Her dissertation maps structural racism in Pittsburgh through historic, architectural photographs from the Charles "Teenie" Harris Archive at the Carnegie Museum of Art. She was a recipient of the 2024-25 Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellowship and served as Symposium Chair for "Ruin and Reparation: (Dis)Repair in Art and Architectural History" in Spring 2024.*

# Questionnaire

## Introduction

Kale Serrato Doyen

Through our departmental curriculum model known as the Constellations, our community in the History of Art and Architecture (HAA) defines Reparation as “the act of redressing and resisting aggression and erasure in their individual and institutional forms.”<sup>1</sup> Our collective conversations wherein we defined the new Reparation Constellation led us to contend with our embodied positionalities and roles as scholars. By contending with how the history of art and architecture has enabled marginalization and cultural dispossession, we can sharpen our

understanding of why, when, and for what ends this history has reinforced unjust social hierarchies. In the singular form, rather than plural, Reparation is a call for reparative action and a vehicle for social and disciplinary change. This curricular shift signals our responsibility as researchers and educators to reckon with challenging pasts in order to envision new futures.

In Spring 2024, our graduate student symposium, *Ruin and Reparation: (Dis)Repair in Art and Architectural History*, helped inaugurate Reparation as a Constellation in HAA. Here, we foregrounded graduate student scholarship that contends with tensions of inherited imbalances of power in art and architectural history, with presentations by Rahel Kesselring, Santasil Mallik, Amanda Guido Ochoa, Ava Romano, Eric W. Ross, Emilela Thomas-Adams, and Jenna M. Wilson. Our themes of ruin and reparation were brought home to Pittsburgh’s local context in a keynote address by Dr. Felecia Davis, Associate Professor of Architecture and Director of the SOFTLAB digital studio lab at Pennsylvania State University. She presented on her two computational textiles commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art for the 2021 exhibition *Reconstructions: Architecture and Blackness in America*, both of which draw on the histories and rituals of quilting and architecture in Pittsburgh to imagine new possibilities for sustainable, physical, and cyber architectures in Black neighborhoods.

This questionnaire is motivated by the ideas developed from the Reparation Constellation and 2024 symposium. I hope that the following questions and their responses from invited emerging and established scholars can prompt reflection on how our scholarship and pedagogy might mobilize repair and change in our field:

- What does a reparative history of art and architecture mean to you?
- Is a reparative history of art and architecture possible, given the legacies the discipline has inherited?
- How have these questions shaped, and/or manifested in, your own teaching or research practice?
- What methods are you or others using that move our discipline towards reparation?

<sup>1</sup> “Constellations.” Constellations | Department of History of Art and Architecture. Accessed June 15, 2025. <https://www.haa.pitt.edu/graduate/constellations>.



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