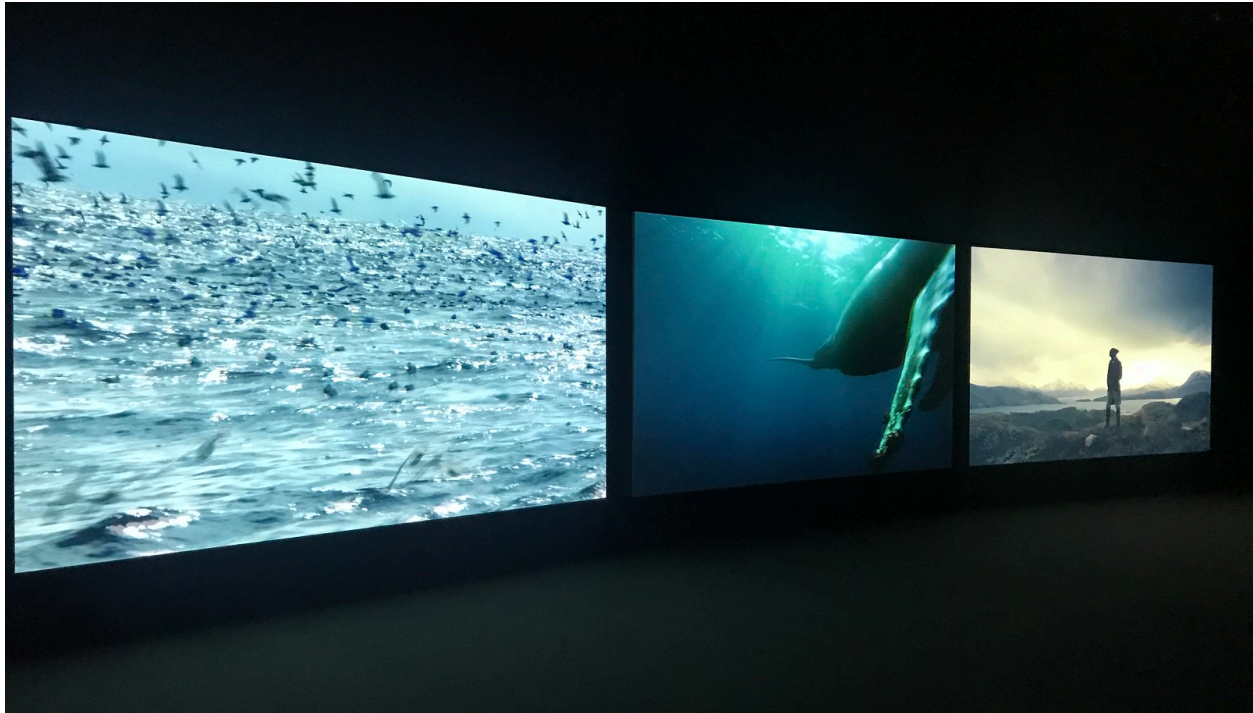


Advanced Studio VI – S20

Global Africa Lab  
**The Space of Water**



VERTIGO SEA, 2015  
Three-Channel Video Installation  
John Akomfrah, @Smoking Dog Films

**Item 1 (Architecture)**

The studio will be informed by the history of radical thinking about architecture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century yet look beyond to the Afro-Imaginary to present an experimental curriculum deploying techniques culled from the visual arts as well as design theories of geography, infrastructure, engineering, and architecture to initiate dialogues about geography and spatiality in an era of global crisis due to human-induced climate change. More specifically, the studio will investigate the cultural topographies of water informed by the line from colonialism to climate change in consideration of forced-migration, resource extraction, environmental degradation, and water scarcity.

**Item 2 (Art + Film)**

John Akomfrah's *Vertigo Sea* is a three-screen film, first seen at the 56th Venice Biennale as part of Okwui Enwezor's *All the World's Futures* exhibition. It is a meditation on the aquatic sublime, fusing archival material, readings from classical sources, new footage and histories that speak to the multiple significances of the ocean and man's often troubling relationship with it touching upon migration, the history human trafficking and colonisation, war and conflict and current ecological concerns and climate crisis.

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The studio will investigate filmic techniques of narrative, fragment, and structure as analytical and generative tools to speculate towards the design of architectural interventions upon either the land or the sea.

**Item 3 (Bodies+ Event + Site)**

Human bodies have an existential yet paradoxical relationship to water. After all the human body is up to 60% water yet water poses an existential conundrum. On the one hand are the rising sea levels that threaten human settlements; severe water events — hurricanes, typhoons, extreme storms, tsunamis and atmospheres destructive of life and property and on the other hand are ironic conditions of the lack of water --- extreme droughts and also the lack of access to healthy and clean water.

Furthermore, for certain bodies water is an existential space in which the sea has been used to exploit, to colonize, and to disappear. These range from contemporary dangerous sea-migration across the Mediterranean, to Vietnamese boat-people struggling to survive, to Argentinian death flights during which political opponents were dropped into the sea, and populations shipped across the Atlantic to North and South America in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Yet water is also a site for *other*-bodily liberation in different cultural and religious practices.

Hence, the studio will consider “water” as both an event and as site.

Each student will conduct preliminary research into water as “abundance” and “paucity” ---the result of global climate change. Then each student shall select one of two possible sites along the southern coast of South Africa to consider the design of a project for environmental liberation. The project will consist of the design of an architecture / infrastructure and the production of a short film for the final presentation.

Travel

The studio will travel to Cape Town and Cape Peninsula (including the Cape of Good Hope) for site reconnaissance and site research. Additionally, the studio will visit the Marine Research Institute at the University of Cape Town, meet with local officials, architects, and cultural makers, and to inform our theorization, conceptualization, and design undertaking.

Dates

January 22, 2020	Studio Lottery
February 27	Mid-term Review
March 7 - 14	Kinne Travel Week
March 16 - 20	Spring Break
April 30	Final Review