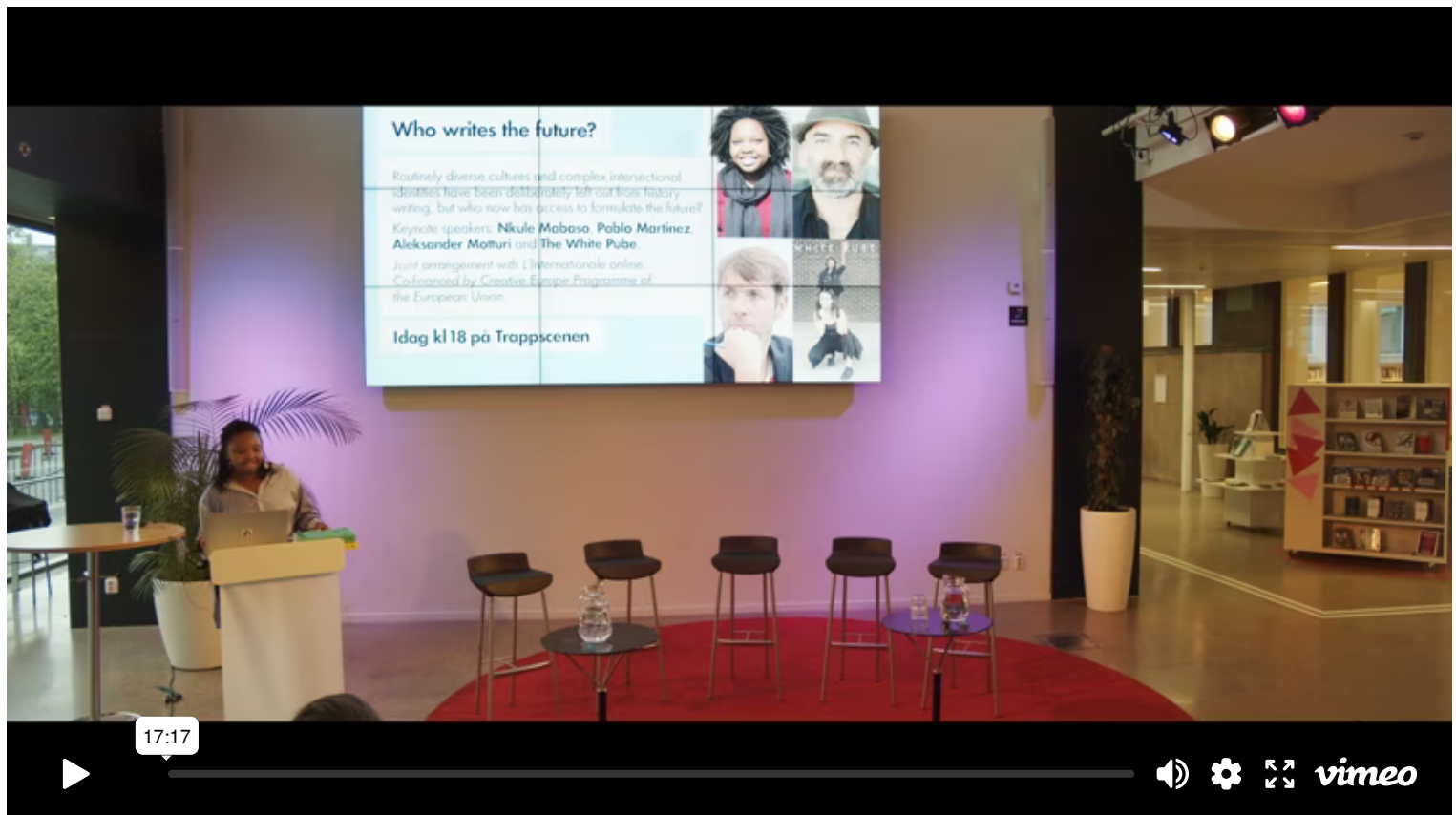


# Drinking from Our Own Wells: Endarkened Feminist Epistemology as Praxis in a Persistent Economy of Lack

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The basis of my presentation draws from a current project Nontobeko Ntombela and I are working on provisionally entitled: *The Painterly Tradition and Black Women*. The project stems both from Nontobeko's long term research into feminist positions in contemporary Southern African art as exemplified through her research on the artist and educator Gladys Mgudlandu. Together we endeavor to produce intergenerational research into black (understood in the broad terms defined by Steve Biko) female artists in South Africa, in order to articulate other frameworks

and reconfigure references and spaces that continue to support their persistent exclusion.

This presentation engages the knowledges that we center, and how these inform our 'theorising' and doing as black African women. This positionality takes its orientation prompted by feminist and post-colonial revisions of knowledge, in order to raise a number of questions concerning black women's history and its representation, primarily in aesthetic and experimental ways, within an expanded field of reference that is artistic practice.

This project is a gesture towards exploring and theorizing aesthetic questions from the black female vantage point, to address the fact that presently there is not a single volume that is dedicated to the painterly contributions of Black women in South Africa. It is about inclusion and representation and creating a historiography of painterly traditions of modernist and current black woman artists. It is epistemically important in terms of reworking of the past and focusing efforts to unveil repressed women histories in ways that are both critical and formally experimental that will make us understand "South African women's subjectivities and forms of agency" and to center their futurity.

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