



Organizers of *Rethinking Resilience*, the 2020 ACIP Workshop:  
Janeke Thumbran and Ruth Sacks

## **2020 African Critical Inquiry Workshop: *Rethinking Resilience***

The African Critical Inquiry Programme (ACIP) is pleased to announce that the 2020 ACIP workshop will be *Rethinking Resilience*. The project was proposed by organizers Janeke Thumbran (History, Rhodes University) and Ruth Sacks (Postdoctoral Researcher, SARChI Chair for Social Change, University of Fort Hare). It will take place in Makhanda (Grahamstown), South Africa in March 2020.

### ***Rethinking Resilience***

This three-day workshop brings together early career scholars and visual artists to engage with the concept of resilience and its co-option by neoliberal governance. The concept of “resilience” has a long history in psychology, but in the past decade or so it has become a pervasive buzzword in humanitarian and development circles, as well as in politics and governance, business, education, and more. We will examine problematic prevailing narratives that expect previously disenfranchised citizens to cultivate forms of self-reliance and informal networks in the face of collapsing infrastructure. The workshop also thinks with resilience as the manifestation of pervasive political and material remains from the past that shape everyday life. We reconsider historical systems that emphasize inherited societal inequalities and how they have been repurposed out of necessity.

Our focus on the afterlife of the infrastructural constructions of former regimes (including institutional policies, architecture, and industrialization) will allow for discussions on the politics of materiality and its affective influence on social relationships and structures. The multi-disciplinary forum (including history, fine art, anthropology, maritime archeology, and agricultural science) will include participants who work with creative practice research to help expand critical humanities methodologies and work across disciplinary barriers. In imagining the critical public culture we wish to build, we seek ways to challenge the capitalist structures that co-opt academic and artistic practice into neoliberal narratives. We will explore interpretations

and manifestations of resilience as a way to develop new spaces for interaction through publications and future events that are accessible to a wider audience. Pointedly starting from the particular situation of a destabilized Eastern Cape environment, we will consider ways to grow a group of researchers concerned with how we operate as academic citizens and lecturers.

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Founded in 2012, the African Critical Inquiry Programme (ACIP) is a partnership between the Centre for Humanities Research at University of the Western Cape in Cape Town and the Laney Graduate School of Emory University in Atlanta. Supported by donations to the [Ivan Karp and Corinne Kratz Fund](#), the ACIP fosters thinking and working across public cultural institutions, across disciplines and fields, and across generations. It seeks to advance inquiry and debate about the roles and practice of public culture, public cultural institutions and public scholarship in shaping identities and society in Africa through an annual ACIP workshop and through the Ivan Karp Doctoral Research Awards, which support African doctoral students in the humanities and humanistic social sciences enrolled at South African universities.

Information about applying to organize the 2021 ACIP workshop and for the 2020 Ivan Karp Doctoral Research Awards will be available in November 2019. The deadline for both workshop applications and student applications is 1 May 2020.

For further information, see <http://www.gs.emory.edu/about/special/acip.html> and <https://www.facebook.com/ivan.karp.corinne.kratz.fund>.