



British Art Studies

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Cover image: Bill Brandt, Family Supper (recto), 1937, printed circa 1943, photographic print.. Digital image courtesy of Bill Brandt and the Bill Brandt Archive Ltd. Photography by Richard Caspole and Robert Hixon.

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At *British Art Studies*, we know from our work to date how thoroughly entangled histories of British art are with the legacies of colonial violence, oppression, slavery, and systemic racism. These histories manifest themselves variously in artworks, art-historical writing, museum displays, and other forms of heritage conservation. Acknowledging the ways that British histories and cultural production have been complicit in anti-Blackness, colonial violence, slavery, and white supremacy is only the first step. Recognising and dismantling the racism that affects and is perpetuated in our institutions today is the essential next step.

The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the Yale Center for British Art, the co-publishers of *BAS*, have both shared statements of solidarity in response to the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police on 25 May 2020, and the Black Lives Matter protests throughout the United States, United Kingdom, and around the world.

- From the Director, 5 June 2020, <https://britishart.yale.edu/director>
- Our Commitment to Anti-Racism, 5 June 2020, <https://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/about/news/our-commitment-to-anti-racism>

We want to echo these statements: as editors, we pledge to actively elevate the voices of Black scholars, curators, and artists, and put in the work required towards dismantling racism in our discipline and its contingent institutions. We will continue to commission and seek content that exposes the relationships between white supremacy and art history in research, writing, museological, and artistic practices in our journal, and collaborate with institutions in Britain and abroad who are committed to doing the same.

This month, we met as a team to re-evaluate the subjects we publish on in *BAS*, and the authors and peer reviewers we commission. In terms of content commissioning, we will plan larger and more sustained projects, with the aim of working collaboratively with institutions to facilitate access to and publish new work on significant, yet underexplored archival and artistic material connected to Black artists' practices in Britain. This summer, we will also introduce language guidelines at the journal for writing about race, colonial history, or slavery, as part of a wider re-evaluation of our own editorial ethic. Our editors will continue to meet monthly to evaluate this progress and set new goals as the work takes shape.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge that while responses by individual cultural gatekeepers—such as journal editors—are crucial, they are not a substitute for the political and legislative changes demanded by Black Lives Matter, and can only be part of a much larger project.

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