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What is an Abolition Futurist?

Afrofuturist Abolitionists of the Americas

September 2019

Afrofuturist Abolitionists of the Americas is a collective of revolutionaries within the Black freedom struggle and Afrikan liberation efforts, who bring a speculative vibe to our radical work.

We believe the destruction of kkkaptivity, of kkkages, of kkkapital, of kkkolonialism, will always require a transgressive imagination that seeks to push against boundaries and other forms of enclosure. Afrofuturist Abolitionists of the Americas seeks to harness the Black Speculative Art Movement toward those ends.

An “abolition futurist” is anyone who is aligned with this practice—anyone who believes, like us, that a dance within the gap between the “material” (or what is here) and the “meta-physical” (or what isn’t fully or truly here) is a useful and immediate strategy for advancing radical action.

We are the radicals who talk synergy and synthesis, who want to both acknowledge, critically engage, and yet overcome limitations of polarizations, divisions, dichotomies in our thinking and movements.

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And we see it as possible, even powerful, to make revolutionary science alive within and around myth, ritual, spirit, and the Beyond.

Not satisfied with either stories about spaceships that run on Kemetist principles or with theory that neglects and negates Africanisms, we seek ways to 'recapture' (Nkrumah) the communist potential embedded within our art, myth, ritual, etc., ultimately with the aim of 'conjuring' new, anti-colonial realities on the ground, in community, by the people, for the people.

"By paying homage to [deity] within the context provided by the ritual, the individual, working on behalf of the community, consistently lets go of and recuperates his or her sense of self-constitution. If one wishes to get out of the post-colonial crisis, the ritual says, first, "Yes, automatically, you have the right to rebel," and second, "you must now prepare and transit through an unavoidable hell to acquire the powers, insights, skills, and unities necessary for you and the community to move to the 'Liberation Hilltop.'" This letting go or relinquishing of the self into the abyss, chthonic realm, or the chaos implies being torn asunder from all those alienating forces and ideological influences, individually and collectively internalized, that has kept one stuck in a restricted state. It is in this way that the ritual of transition provides a kind of built-in mechanism for making a transition from a confining, compartmentalizing, oppressive existence to more liberatory and free realities."

-Ashanti Alston, *Toward a Vibrant and Broad African-Based Anarchism*

There are mechanisms in our stories that can be re-imagined as a living practice of Abolition. How do we begin to not just rehearse revolution in this way, but realize it too?

Afrofuturist Abolitionists of the Americas is all about that conversation.