

F U T U R E
J U S T I C E



where I end

A Future Justice Zine designed by Anivia Beylard, written by Malika Soudani, and translated by Sammy Rutten,
for Studium Generale

COLOPHON

A Future Justice
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Special Thanks to
Studium Generale

Future Justice, here we are

Future Justice: An inquiry into the way things are/were/should be
Future Justice is a programme that invites young artists, researchers and educators to help unpack the idea of a future that is based on justice. Out of deep concern for the world, which is marked by a climate crisis as well as a social and political crisis, ArtEZ studium generale commissioned the publication series Future Justice.

It is a series of publications in which students and alumni of ArtEZ present their visions of the future. Future Justice aims at unfolding alternative ideas of justice, which are informed by ideas of collectivity, care, restoration, non-violence and compassion. In doing so, the series takes a kaleidoscopic, hopeful and meaningful look at the future.

Every month a new issue will be published. Each contribution offers a glimpse into a possible future and every contributor does so from their own perspective and artistic practice. We are bearing witness to the simultaneous unfolding of a climate crisis, a social crisis and a political crisis. All of these crises are in the now, are rooted in our past and signal specific futures.

Future Justice is a programme commissioned by ArtEZ studium generale it is carried out by the Professorship Aesthetics & Cultures of Technology in cooperation with the Honours Programme.



I RECOGNIZE

Growing up, my family taught me that the color of my skin wasn't an issue. Neither were my sexual orientation, my hobbies, my educational choices, or my religious beliefs. It felt good to know my family accepted everyone for who they were, including me.

The subtext is like the powder core of a sweet candy ball. I slowly suck little holes in the hard sugar, the sour taste makes my tongue curl up: you are different from us.

Different from my white family and different from people with a migrant background. At one point in time, I believed those who said my sister and me were different, and felt a sense of pride.



courtesy of getty images

Michael Jackson

I used to listen to his music a long time ago. I admired him. He had two black parents and was white himself. Someone told me he had made himself white because that was more beautiful.

Five white Dutch children sat in my primary school classroom. I counted myself among them.

I remember feeling happy when I was old enough to do my own hair. My mother has always appreciated my hair - *a full head of curls* - but it takes effort.

The pain in my neck, an aching hairline, a tub of green gel (mega strong) from Albert Heijn on the table, torn elastic bands on the floor next to me, the palm of my mother's hand red, her knuckles white, my shoulders in a tight grip between her knees.

My hair self-willed, my mom upset. I should have listened, should not have run my fingers through my curls, yearning to look like Rapunzel.



Untitled, Analog photograph by Anivia Beylard

In high school I entered the wondrous world of Youtube and Google. I discovered a plethora of information on how to keep your natural black hair healthy and strong. I also learned that natural black hair is worn like a crown, is seen as a triumph. Natural black hair to oppose Western beauty ideals, to combat world-wide repression of the African woman and her appearance. Natural black hair to worship in all of its glory, to show that we are proud of where we come from.



"Pique Nique à Versoix" Analog photograph from photo series by Anivia Beylard

My father does not believe in racism. He believes in unwordly people. People who live in a bell jar, observing the outside from behind the glass. They look, but they hear little.

For as long as I've lived, he has worked as an independent painter in and around Amsterdam. He still does this with love and success. The people he meets are from different levels of society. Who he eats with does not matter to him, as long as they are nice, respectful, and laugh at his jokes. Those whose walls he paints and plasters are mostly rich people, or at least above-average earners.

White people, old white men of a certain age. *Refined* people:

"You're pretty nice, aren't you?"

"I'm impressed by your work, not what I expected."

"Do you like herring or do they not eat that where you're from?"

LOLLOL
LOL LOL LOL
LOL LOL LOL
LOL

LOL (Laughing (Out Loud))

A friend is lying on my couch, "I really do not understand the black people in the Netherlands. Why are they complaining. What do they even complain about?" I am lying across from him on my bed. He's a black guy from Nigeria who is trained to be an engineer here.

"There is racism and discrimination in the Netherlands too, you know."

"People are just too sensitive here."

"What do you mean?"

"People get angry over stupid jokes. They shouldn't take it too seriously."

"Do Dutch people ever make jokes about your ethnicity or religion?"

"Yes, of course they do."

"Of course. What do you do then?"

"I laugh."

"Because you think it's funny?"

"No."

"Then why?"

"They just don't know what they're joking about."

"So you are laughing to make up for their lack of genuine interest and poor education?"

"Yes."

"Do you think that's fair?"

"Well, life isn't fair, is it?"

where i end

my words on paper
my signature on agreements
my name in someone's phone
the search results for Malika Soudani
praise for my work

i look at the fragments of my body
dry ends of my hair
a pair of scissors, curls on the floor
my baby teeth, stored in a small plastic box

the residue of my filed nails
gnawed-on cuticles
rolled up, dried out, in the corner of my room
where it merges with the dust of my home
in piles, the ultimate summits of my skin;
goosebumps, pimples, moles

specks of my clothes in the lint filter of a dryer
saliva on my pillowcase
fine lines from my belly to my navel, coffee
scrub
roughly four kilos of dead skin cells every year
on the ground, in my house, my bed, in the air
in the drain of the shower

I

everything i rinse off ritualistically behind my blue shower curtain

headlines

comments on facebook posts

unsolicited opinions

playing games with people who only play to win

things i'm not good at

my fear of failing

at poetry

at earning money

at being content

at thinking kaleidoscopically

the soap bubbles between my feet

softly bursting in a whirl of water

pop, black/white thinking

pop, "things are the way they are"

pop, people who ask for answers, but don't want to listen

pop, people who talk and talk and talk

lips like bodies

the lips of the norm the Western view of the world

their lines, their rules, their borders

where i may exist

and where that place ends

the space i may take up

unwritten etiquette of *superior* people

while some of them by now have forgotten

their bodies perish, their beliefs live on

in this society

in my body

whereas individualism consumes our civilization, my body is used to unite people. not only the people who share my cultural background, but also those who think of me as the other. the color of my skin as ensuring a better future.

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all that i manifest behind my blue showercurtain

i arose from two continents
born underneath the constellation of gemini
division lives inside of me
grows in my uterus on binary science
in which one thing rules out another, opposites
the negative of the positive

an eyelash on my cheek, on the tip of my finger - swoosh -
i wish for more of *and*

III

all that i think about behind my blue showercurtain

a friend told me that dating apps that allow me to make infinite matches, narrow my chances of finding the one. with each match i would keep asking myself if they really are the right choice. how can that be determined with so many options? an app that would present me with two or three candidates would bear sweeter fruit, according to this friend. less choice, less doubt; a higher chance of experiencing the feeling of having chosen the "best" match. sometimes i wish that i could think that way about everything.

a lack of information

to consider as freedom, freedom of choice

the space to not have to question everything i do not know

