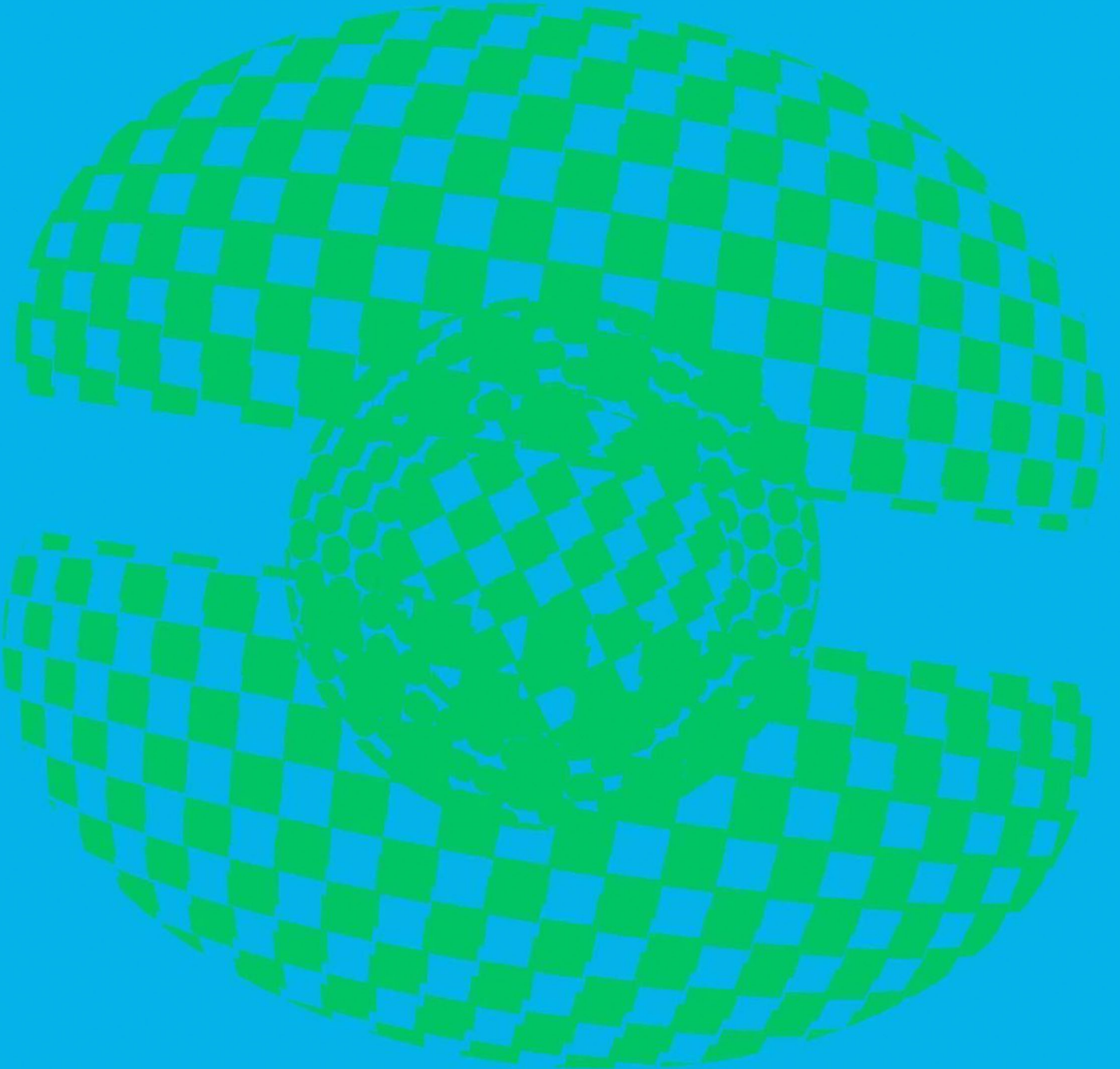


THE DEATH OF COOL

Post-race, post-identity,
post-politics



KALEIDOSCOPE

Words by
Rhea Dillon

04





kaleidoscopemagazine KALEIDOSCOPE Research Unit is a new IG series dedicated to short-form cultural criticism.

K.R.U. 04 THE DEATH OF COOL: Post-race, post-identity, post-politics.

Words by [@rheadillon](#)

With deep embarrassment, we kneel at the altar of "cool." Perhaps it's the stiff unwrapping of our feathers in this "post-of-the-pandemic" time and, yet, not successfully divorced "normal" that makes my blood run cold and my palms hot. With this spiral my mind has chosen to question:

What Is Cool, Who Is Cool, And Why?

In identifying the components of "cool," we stumble upon sticky millennial foes like identity politics, post-race theory, and "activist"—all terms often wielded at the post-colonial artist for currency in the white-owned, governed, and/or fucked organizations. Yes, penetrated, because white money is long and deeply embedded in a history of class, currency, and wealth. Wealth is something only afforded to those with a lineage that has always been able to float. Wealth is Rose on that door in "Titanic." Blackness is the rose that grew from Tupac's concrete. I've never liked rose as a scent; a scent for old white privilege.

(Unnecessary) to clarify: white privilege has never been cool.

So, what makes us soften for the discomfort of said whiteness? Empathy is to discourse politics as the Miu Miu skirt is to fashion; hot and short-lived. But I want to go shorter. Direct-er. This all stems from a harmattan-like dissemination of post-race theory as praxis. Post-race as a theory dishonors the Black lives lost and black love found. Post-race suggests a lack of color. A lack of color means I don't exist. To be post-race engaging in a world past 2020's uprisings sounds like Black pseudo politics. Who are we to not govern our discourse in 2022? And why is that seemingly cool? Cascading between the Margiela toes of the present-day (Black) artist is the projection of "cool must mean ignorant." And ignorant means more followers. And more followers means more more.

I hate the word cool. It's as redactively reductive as "nice." It's "nice" to be cool, we pretend, but it's definitely cooler to be cognizant.

Artwork by PWR, Berlin

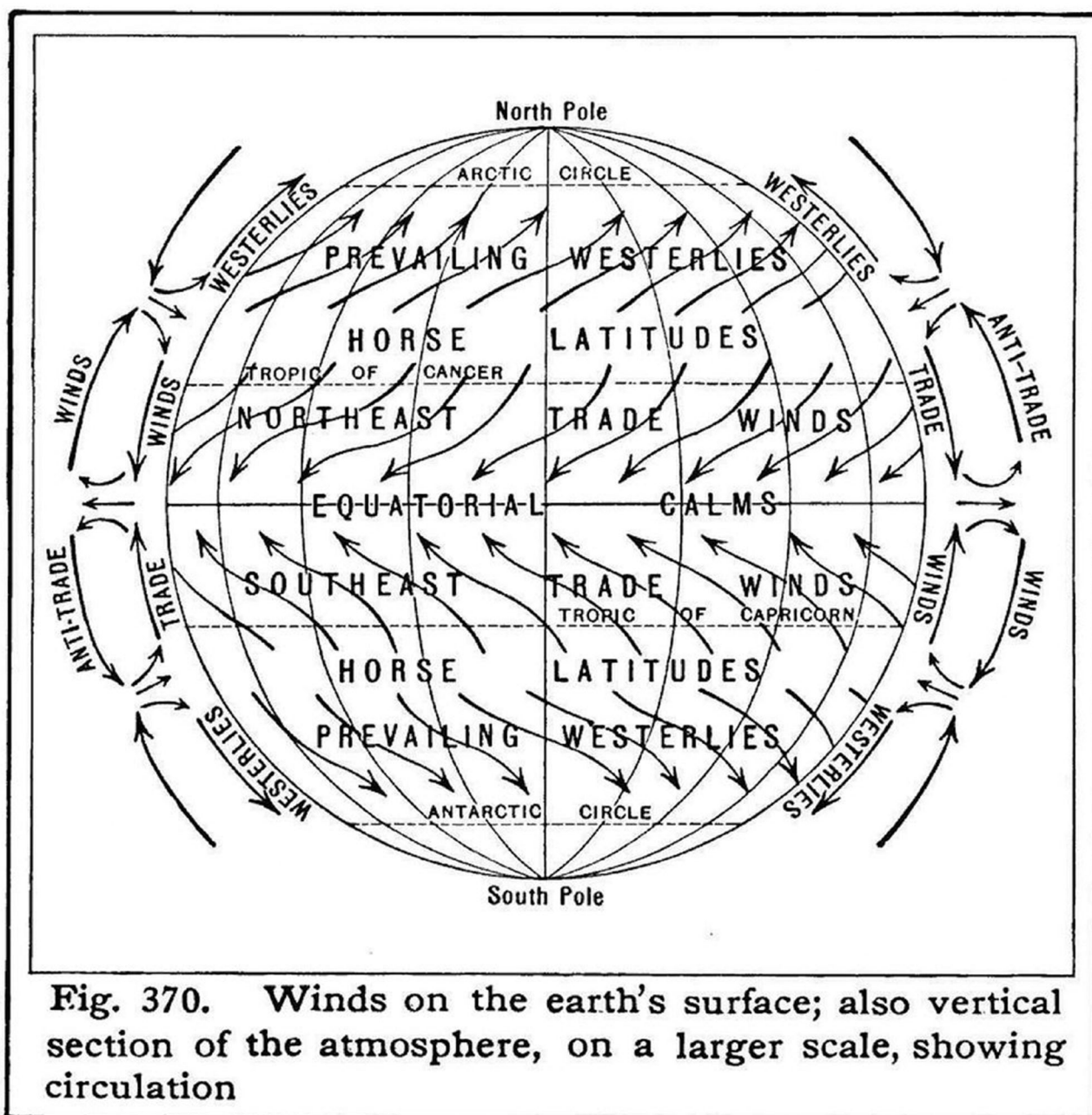


Fig. 370. Winds on the earth's surface; also vertical section of the atmosphere, on a larger scale, showing circulation



Harmattan wind, Niger, West Africa

“In identifying the components of ‘cool,’ we stumble upon sticky millennial foes like identity politics, post-race theory, and activism—all terms often wielded at the post-colonial artist for currency in the white-owned, governed and/or fucked organizations.”





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Miu Miu, Spring 2022 (look 9)





Still from *Titanic*, dir. James Cameron, 1998

“Wealth is something only afforded to those with a lineage that has always been able to float. Wealth is Rose on that door in *Titanic*. Blackness is the rose that grew from Tupac’s concrete.”





K.R.U.



Alvaro Barrington, *Rose that grew from concrete* Ropac Salzburg large Jan 2022, 2022.
Photo credit: Ulrich Ghezzi





Print adv for the exhibition *Freestyle* at The Studio Museum, Harlem, NYC, 2001

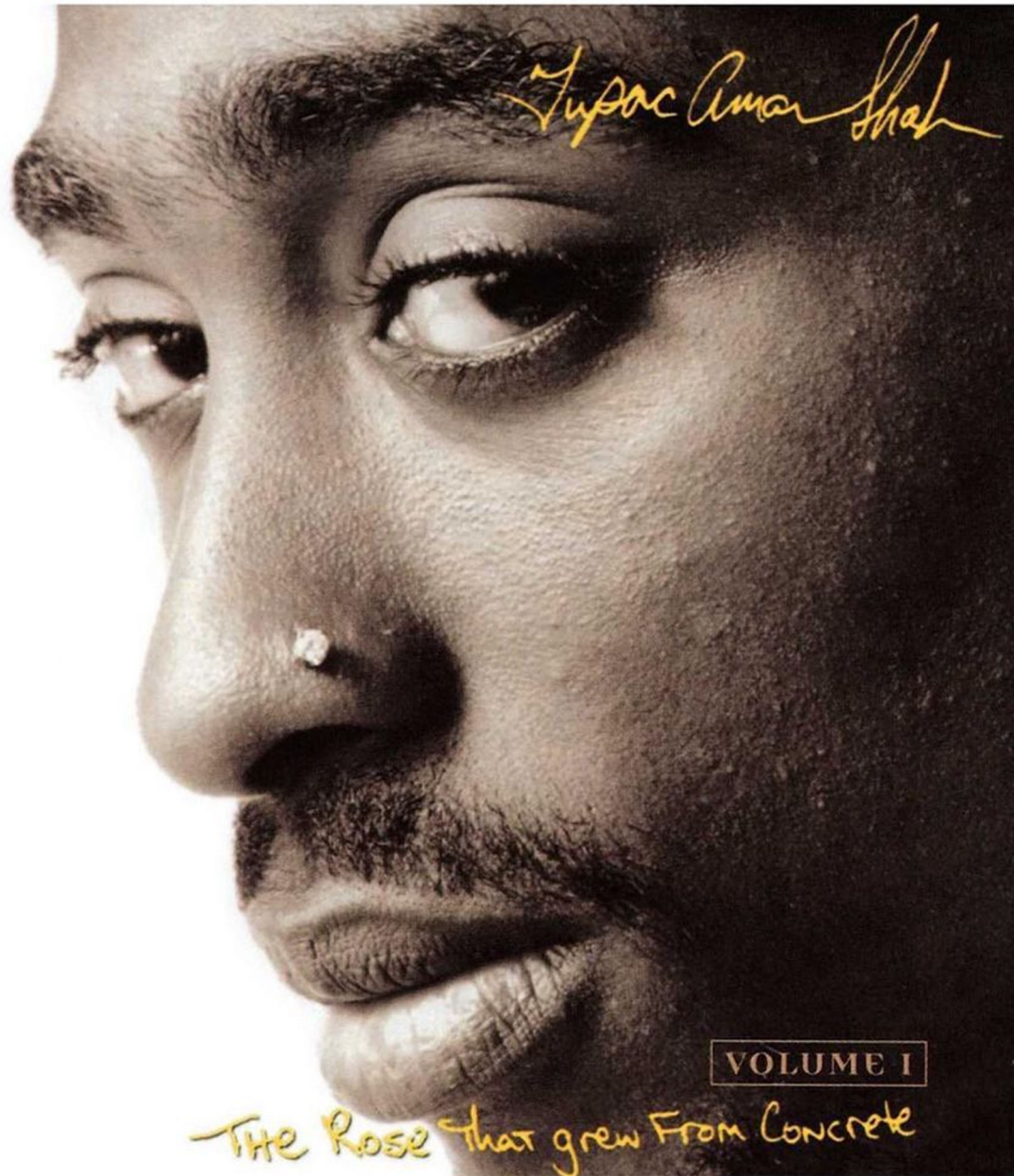
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SoiL Thornton, *Wall Sculpture*, 2019





Tupac Shakur, *The Rose That Grew from Concrete*, 2000 (posthumous)

“Post-race suggests a lack of color. A lack of color means I don’t exist. To be post-race engaging in a world post-2020s sounds like Black pseudopolitics.





2020–2022 United States racial unrest

Part of [Racism in the United States](#) and the [Black Lives Matter movement](#)



Screenshot of the "2021-2022 United States racial unrest" Wikipedia page

