

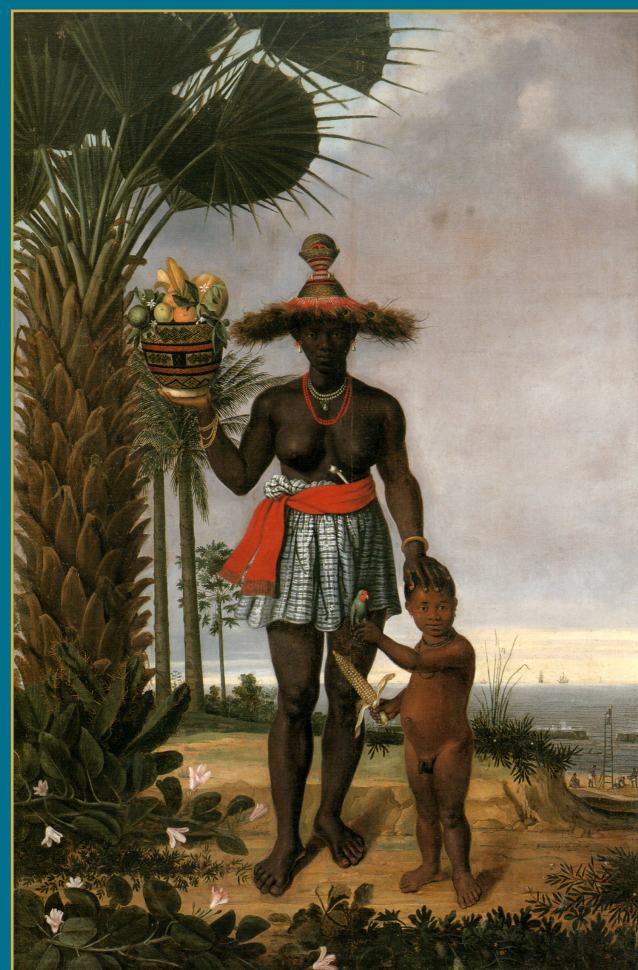
Dutch Americas Symposium Keynote Lecture

Material Matters in the Dutch Atlantic World: Albert Eckhout's Paintings of an *African Man and Woman*

by

Carrie Anderson

Middlebury University



Art historians have largely abandoned the notion that artist Albert Eckhout's (1610-1665) series of so-called ethnographic portraits offer transparent portrayals of the people with whom the Dutch had contact in New Holland, the name given to the northeast region of Brazil during Dutch occupancy (1630-1654). More recent studies have instead shed light on the Eurocentric assumptions and hierarchies integral to the conception and interpretation of the series. Acknowledging the critical importance of these studies, this talk seeks to reframe the parameters of the discussion by reestablishing the crucial connections between material culture and social identity—which are evident even when bound by the pictorial conventions of oppressive colonial forces. Drawing on recent research related to an ongoing, collaborative digital art history project, this talk will focus primarily on the blue-and-white textiles worn by the figures in Eckhout's paintings of an African Man and Woman, garments that gesture towards the complexities of Dutch global trade networks, but also make visible the complex negotiations that informed social identities in the early modern Atlantic world.



Friday, December 9, 5:30pm
Stone Auditorium, Woldenberg Art Center