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The Implications of Image and the Obama Presidency

This project navigates ideas of racial representation within the constructs of politics, citizenship and participation. With the watershed of the new U.S. presidency comes the opportunity to assess the evolution of the multiple meanings that an African American in office implies. This session is intended as a forum for presenting, questioning and creating a critique of aspects of the image of Barack Hussein Obama and the shifting subjectivities that he inhabits. Throughout the campaign Obama was presented as a leader who sought to unify. His message extended beyond American borders, resonating with a global community seeking change.

His election has special significance for citizens of the global South. The panel conveners wish for this to be a forum for an examination of difference and wish to ask the question: what are the implications of a political figure whose presence suggests a post-racial world?