



Center for Media, Religion and Culture
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

“WHY WE COME TOGETHER”

IMAGING THE FUTURE: MAPPING AN AESTHETICS OF DANGEROUS MEMORY

Can we hope for a just future in a society beset by violent forms of injustice against Black and Brown people? Burgeoning forms of theopolitical pessimism in intellectual discourse have asserted that a form of “political hopelessness” is the only ethically viable or politically effective response to this pervasive violence. Reading political hopelessness in conversation with the work of political theologian Johann Baptist Metz, however, suggests the significance of dangerous memory for disrupting political violence in the present, while also providing a possibility for a future liberated from such violence. Dangerous memory “is not bourgeois counterfigure to hope,” writes Metz, “it holds a particular anticipation of the future as a future for the hopeless, the shattered, and the oppressed.” (Metz 89) Examining the Denver-based #SprayTheirNames mural movement, where vibrant portrait murals visibly remember the lives of Black and Brown people who have lost their lives through unjust and violent social structures, this presentation traces the rationale and challenges of a political theology of hopelessness. It then maps a theopolitical aesthetics of dangerous memory that is capable of forging aesthetic solidarity among communities committed to justice.

9:00AM – 10:30AM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

WILLIAMS VILLAGE CONFERENCE CENTER



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