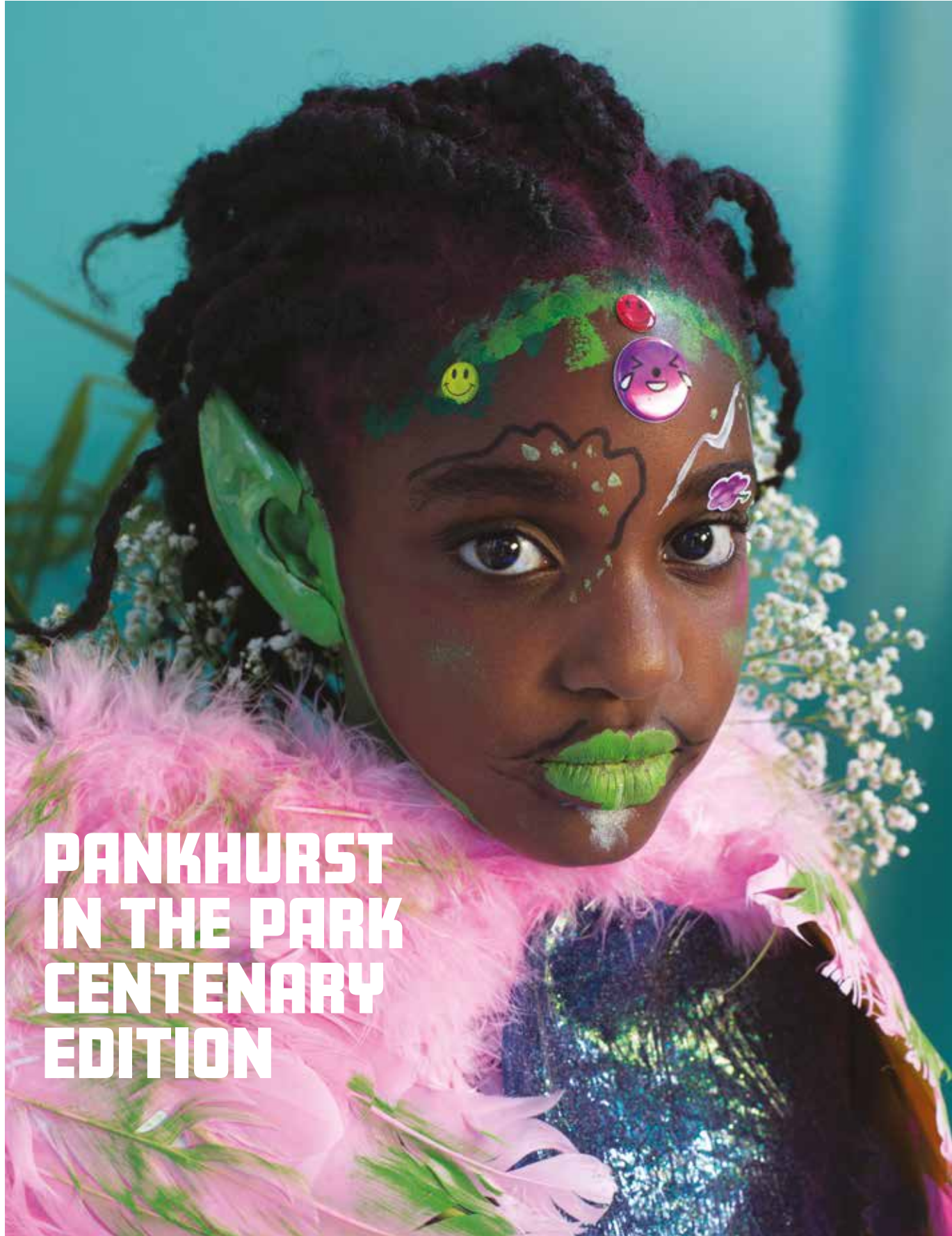


# ART511MAG

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511 INFO ON ART & CULTURE THAT MATTERS



**PANKHURST  
IN THE PARK  
CENTENARY  
EDITION**

## ART511 MAGAZINE

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# FOREWORD

In 1918, after a hard fought battle, some women in the UK were given the right to vote. It wasn't a perfect result but it was a start; and it sparked significant change in the 100 years that have followed.

Women have played men at their own game. They've climbed Everest, explored space, pioneered scientific breakthroughs, assumed positions of power, and many have become the best in their field.

Other breakthroughs have facilitated these achievements, from the contraceptive pill being made available and birth control clinics being opened, to the introduction of maternity pay, for some in the U.K, among many other things.

In the arts, there has been cause for celebration. The best selling novelist of all time is a woman, Agatha Christie; Maria Balshaw has become the first director of the Tate; and, Carol Ann Duffy became the first woman and openly bisexual poet laureate.

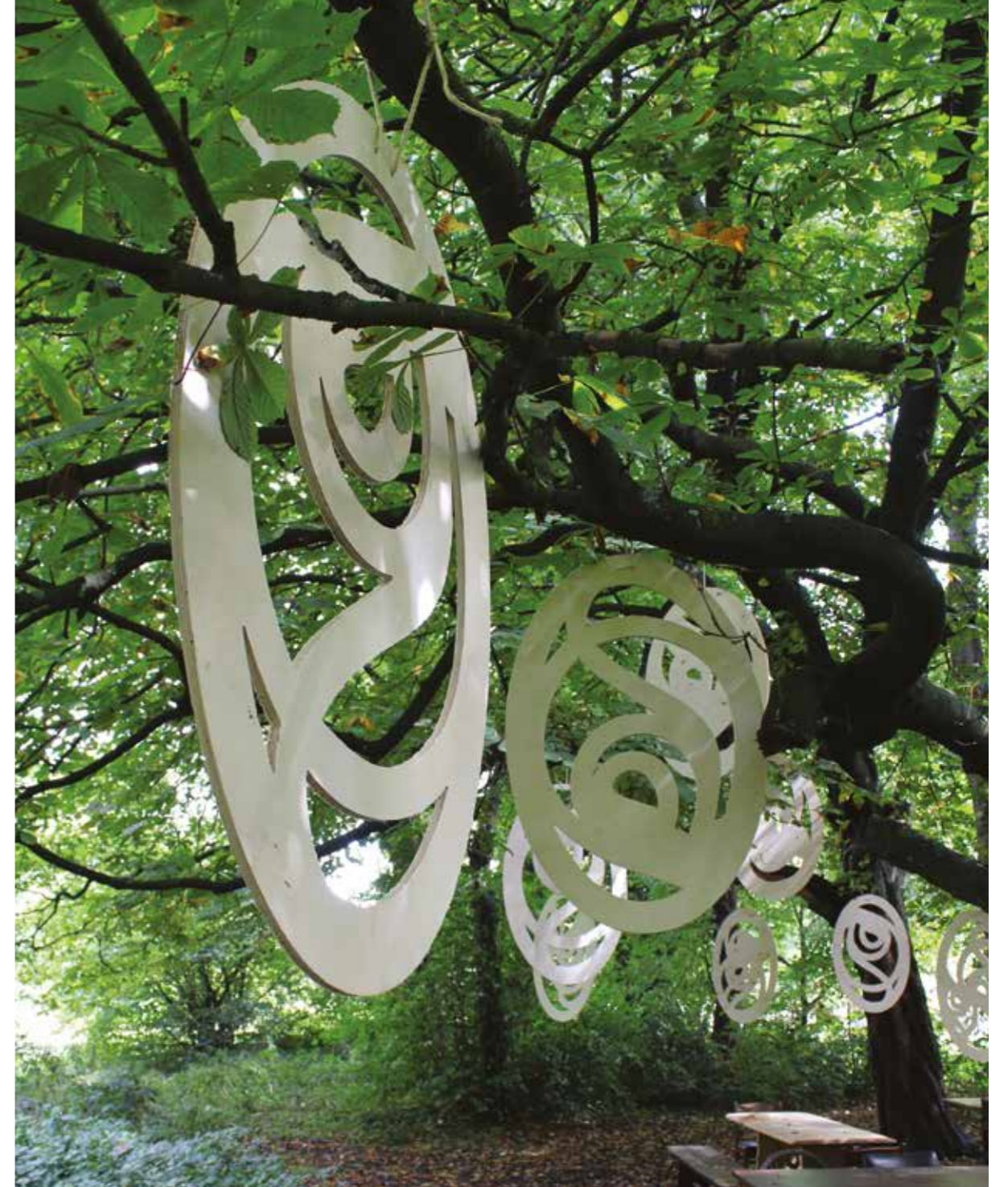
And yet, inequality, and abuse, persist. The art world still bows to a model created by white European men. The top three museums in the world, the British Museum, the Louvre, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art have never had female directors. Female artists earn less on average than their male counterparts and make up a fraction of the work in permanent exhibitions and auction market.

It's not enough to be good at their game or even the best; it's rigged. So, it's time to devise our own, not just for and by women, but in collaboration with all those whose voices, opportunities and rights are stifled.

As one small step, this centenary year, we want to provide a platform for female artists, to redress the balance, to challenge the inherited discriminatory model of what constitutes success and find another way of doing.

That is the aim of this special edition. It has been co-curated by Alexandra Arts and Art 511 Mag. It is part of the third and final instalment of Alexandra Arts' Pankhurst in the Park 2018 programme. A programme inspired by the actions of women 100 years ago; and which aims to empower its community (birthplace to Emmeline Pankhurst, leader of the Suffrage movement) through engagement with their local environment and social history, and to promote and provide a platform for the wealth of talented female artists in Manchester, the UK and beyond.

This special print edition features a host of inspirational contributors to whom we owe huge debt of thanks – Scotto Mycklebust, Katie Cerone, Gia Portfolio, Christopher Booth, Pablo Melchor, Marilyn Minter, Anna FC Smith, Melanie Bonajo, Go Push Pops, Laura Weyl, ULTRACULTURAL



OTHERS, Samantha Conlon/ Bunny Collective, High Prieztezz Or Nah, Sol Kjøk, Claire Zakiewicz, Ekua Bayunu, Elisa Garcia de la Huerta, Lauren Velvick, Hannah Leighton Boyce, Ruth Barker, Castlefield Gallery, Helen Wewoira, Naomi Kashiwagi, NARCISSISTER and Tasha Whittle.

Once again, we are grateful to Arts Council England for funding our 2018 programme, to Manchester City Council Department of Culture, St Mary's Primary School, Friends of Alexandra Park and the Neighbourhood Investment Fund from the Whalley Range ward who have provided additional funding.

Thanks also to you, for picking it up. We hope it engages, enrages and inspires you, so that in 100 years' time, we're telling a different herstory.

-Lotte Karlsen & Amy Clancy





Ginger

Marilyn Minter (b. 1948, USA) lives and works in New York. She has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 2005, the Center for Contemporary Art, Cincinnati, OH in 2009, La Conservera, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Ceuti/Murcia, Spain in 2009, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, OH in 2010, and the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg, Germany in 2011. Her video "Green Pink Caviar" was exhibited in the lobby of the MoMA in 2010 for over a year, and was also shown on digital billboards on Sunset Boulevard in L.A. and the Creative Time MTV billboard in Times Square, New York. Minter's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions in museums all over the world. In 2006, Marilyn Minter was included in the Whitney Biennial, and in collaboration with Creative Time she installed billboards all over Chelsea in New York City. In 2013, Minter was featured in "Riotous Baroque," an exhibition that originated at the Kunsthaus Zürich and traveled to the Guggenheim Bilbao. In 2015, Minter's retrospective Pretty/Dirty opened at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX. Pretty/Dirty then traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, and on to the Orange Country Museum of Art. Pretty/Dirty opened at the Brooklyn Museum in November, 2016. Minter is represented by Salon 94, New York and Regen Projects, Los Angeles.

# MARILYN MINTER

Cornucopia-1





Two Green  
Lights



Tender

# THE RITUALISTIC HERITAGE OF THE SUFFRAGETTES

ANNA FC SMITH

The suffragettes' militant activities were shocking for their time. June Purvis describes them as 'transgressing the gender expectations of Edwardian society'; they unconsciously drew on a history of riotous actions and ritual behaviour that Julius R. Ruff portrays as 'almost instinctual conduct'. Their rebellious behaviour can be read in the context of both early modern riot and festive inversion.

The historical popular protest drew on the symbolism of 'the world turned upside down' – a phrase used by the early American women suffragists and anti-slave campaigners, Sojourner Truth and Angelina Grimke, in the mid 1800s. This carnivalesque concept would flow in both directions. As Ruff says, 'festival mocking satire and ritual violence' could quickly turn to 'direct hostility, mass violence, riot and rebellion', and riots employed rituals to reorder society.

June Purvis quotes the Observer newspaper in 1908 describing suffragettes as turning a meeting in the Albert Hall into 'a Bedlam ... all sense of decency lost ... it was a melancholy and disheartening spectacle'. This social fear of disorder mirrors commentary on festive riot by early modern religious leaders, who thought that it stood against morality, decency and self-control.

Turn-of-the-century anti-suffrage posters continually imagined the politicised woman as the cause of societal breakdown by destroying gender roles, but the female protestor had a long history – as

in the early modern period, women were frequently the leaders of riots. Ruff states 'One historian has estimated [women] at a third of the participants of late eighteenth-century English riots'. Men would themselves take the guise of women to protest; in 1736, the Edinburgh Proteus Riots consisted of men dressed as women led by 'Madge Wildfire'.

Early modern rioters drew on familiar festive rituals, and these actions were directly repeated by the suffragettes. Protestors would sing while marching, accompanied by drums and other instruments, as Ruff says 'in imitation of their activities during popular festivals'. Andrew Rosen repeatedly describes the suffragettes doing this. In February 1907, Mrs Despard led marchers singing to the tune of 'John Brown': 'Rise up, women!'.

Ruff explains that the early modern protestor also 'frequently bore symbols of their unrest' in the form of sprigs like 'May revellers [or] bits of coloured ribbon affixed to their clothing'. In 1908, Mrs Pethick -Lawrence invented WSPU colours: purple, white, and green, which would be worn by marchers and decorate their processional banners. Mrs Pethick -Lawrence said each colour had symbolic meaning: white for purity, purple for dignity and, like May Day, the green represented the 'green fire of a new spring tide'.



AnnaFCSmith Egg 3





The Bacchae And In Their Companies  
Deep Wine-jars Stand Forever and Anon2

The suffragettes often targeted politicians and members of the establishment and they would do this in manners similar to those used by their historical forbears. Retribution inflicted on individuals in positions of power and authority 'represented a violent inversion of the social hierarchy akin to that we found common in early modern festive life' (Ruff). Ethel Moorhead was jailed after throwing an egg at Winston Churchill, a belittling act of ancient origin which Chitra Ramaswamy claims 'strips a politician of his gravitas'. In November 1909, Theresa Garnett attacked Winston Churchill whilst wielding a riding-switch, an act reminiscent of festive Whipping Toms.

In 1913, Mrs Pankhurst said that the suffragettes were guerrillists' and 'if it was necessary to win the vote they were going to do as much damage to property as they could'. This directly links with what Ruff describes as the 'symbolism of social inversion' where 'festive life transgressed the bounds of the public sphere'. Rioters in 1789 burned manorial records which symbolised noble privilege. In the Forest of Dean, 1631, crowds accompanied by fifes, drums and banners destroyed enclosures and burned houses – ending the riot with the destruction of an effigy. The WSPU attacked letters in postal boxes, fire-bombed country houses, and Rosen reports

that their meeting in the Caxton Hall, June 1909, began with 'martial music played by a fife and drum band; the musicians wore purple uniforms, adorned by green sashes and white braids [then] a group of thirteen women, using small stones wrapped in brown paper, began to break windows at the Privy Council, Treasury and Home Offices.'

The suffragette's actions appeared to break new ground in their period, but they were rooted in the innate history of rebellion. We seem bound to repeat these ritualistic traditions of transgression when attempting to drastically reorder society and turn the world upside down.

In light of the centenary of women's suffrage, this piece was commissioned by Alexandra Arts Pankhurst in the Park Programme, an organisation whose community locus is the same Alexandra Park where many of the suffragettes's organizing and protesting took hold. Adjacent infamous suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst's residence, Alexandra Arts Pankhurst in the Park Programme champions women's continuous creativity, radical acts of rebellion and inversion of the status quo through their organisational support of the socially engaged work of contemporary female artists working within and around the park.

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# ALIEN ARMAGEDDON, EMPATHY & THE VINE OF THE SOUL

A CONVERSATION  
WITH MELANIE BONAJO

BY KATIE CERCONI

KC: In your new film *Progress vs. Sunsets* (2017), you use the voice of children, the next generation, to center some profoundly fresh insights about animal rights, bio-politics, dwindling global resources, ecology, anthropomorphism, and the general welfare of our planet. How did you come to work with youth in this way? Did you have an intuition going into it they would deliver such a succinct and profound message?

MB: This is the 2nd part of the new trilogy focused on marginalized groups on the verge of extinction or in endangerment because of techno-capitalist motivations in relationship to structures of power. In the first I addressed elderly people in relation to social media and technological devices, almost all of them around a century old, asking if these devices improve life and social relations or erode them. It made sense the second part would be around children who are born into this techno-

capitalist society in which profit is the number one core value (or that which informs all our other motivations). How do these children who grow up in urban neighborhoods perceive nature and especially animals through funny images on the Internet? When an animal is online often the animal is under endangerment in the wild. The animal becomes sort of like a character or an actor in the human imagination. As soon as that animal steps out of what we imagine the animal to be it's no longer of value for the human species. The animal takes on an ascribed economic, emotional or entertainment value. These children don't really know what an animal is. Also what we see in these so-called amateur videos of endangered species and wildlife online is a suppressed anthropomorphism of human and animals. Looking at animals on a basis of similarity instead of differences is coming out in a grotesque way. It opens up an archive





Night Soil - Nocturnal Gardening, 2016, Courtesy AKINCI



of complete confusion and a battle between an objective and a subjective view of the world. What we perceive as elderly, as feminine, indigenous, primitive, emotional or naive is adultism applied to kids who may be living in a subjective world of interrelation, feeling and emotion. They may live in a more magical world and yet our educational system is so systemized. Creating rationality as a prime core value deprives them from the innate wisdom of the child.

KC: The film's leading rhetorical question **Can we send "funny" animal videos into space for aliens to discover the Earth's ecosystem?** gleefully lambastes the viewer that thinks they can watch this film still running on grown folks' logic. "Maybe aliens can make humans go extinct to save the animals?" As the video unfolds, the youth continue to virtually trash our noxious me-paradigm culturalisms, teasing out of us the piggish egotism that keeps the Internet

widgets moving. "Animals that don't want to be famous won't go on the Internet. All people care about is money; it seems more important than life." I felt like it cracked me open by the end. What was your ah-ha moment in making this film?

MB: What I perceived was a loss of innocence for these kids at an earlier age. Because of the access to information that they have, they are less protected from adult problems – a very complex pool of different polarizing behavioral motivations and thought processes. I see that the children are at an earlier age aware of the ambivalence of what it means to be human and the contradictions of the human and our inherent polarity and darkness. I feel in order to develop a healthy heart and brain structure, there needs to be a space for prolonged innocence. If there is a massive decline of innocence in early childhood based on how we are informed about human behavior through availability of

information on the Internet, then that worries me. And then it's just beautiful to see kids going off into these imaginary spaces and coming up with all kinds of solutions one is only able to come to when one's mind is free of certain limitations. And also to see how much kids actually care and then to see **how hopeless they can feel.**

KC: The youth express a counter-mindset grounded in empathy, interconnectedness and altruism, "We don't want the animals to rely on us in case the humans go extinct. Animals can't break the law because they are not humans." How can we continue to fuse art and the views of young people to rattle us robotic adults out of our mental cages? Is there something in particular about art that can catch the most deranged capitalist by surprise?

also just enough. Art is not a fireproof free zone, it is imperfect and will not hit all points of the complex story of human oppression and segregation, it is a dream. It's also important to support the films with educational programs, workshops, lectures and fieldwork. Change happens on the internal and external level. We have to corroborate how we feel and act, which is according to our values. Surround yourself with people who align with those values and cooperate with them. On the other end, it's very important that things change on the level of law and economy. With the speed of how things are changing and accelerating, it's hard to be positive without first there being huge, unavoidable disasters. It's good to reevaluate how we as groups or as individuals are going to move through that and how are we going to structure ourselves.

**"WE DON'T WANT THE ANIMALS TO RELY ON US IN CASE THE HUMANS GO EXTINCT. ANIMALS CAN'T BREAK THE LAW BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT HUMANS."**

MB: A quality of art is we can rehearse or download future scenarios through the act of imagination. We can create another story and test it, the art test. As an artist we are in the public realm so if we put out images that are difficult for others, we can say this is a misunderstanding, stupid or ridiculous. We can't presume that as an artist we are staying in a safe space. The transformative power of art can be to touch upon the points that are painful, or at least recognize the complex construction through which aspects of human complexities such as oppression can or are taking shape. That can lead to difficult conversations, because of the reality we live in. The interconnection is how these images play into social discourse. They are singular points on a larger cultural narrative spinning around subjects, such as racism, sexism, classism; weaving or even just resonating with one another together these sometimes contradicting points exist within a larger network. It is a proposition for transformational politics, where we rethink the imprisonment and isolation we put ourselves in by engaging in a culture where personal gain is the highest value on all costs, leading to supremacist behavior over one another, claims over other peoples' land and cultures, exploitation of non-humans, economic polarization, flawed mastery and destruction of nature. Meanwhile, most things we really value as humans in our lives are simple and free; less can not only be more, but

KC: Outside of the Western world, where religion has been mostly taken out of schools by law, many believe culture is the meeting of Education and Religion. Here in the United States, what most of us call "Art" boils down to a saccharine popular culture in which whorish corporations are profiteering off of the ghosts of bad religions, post-colonial racial spectacle and disembodied desire. As a student of religion, how do you position yourself as an artist and cultural producer in relationship to the spiritual and the advancement of higher consciousness in womankind?

MB: I think in relation to higher/ collective consciousness, every human is an artist. We all have innate skills to create in alignment with a divine consciousness. We are all creative and creativity is part of creation, the creator and the source. This is the power we all have as humans. How you express that is completely up to you. Maybe you garden, pray, make drawings, sing, dance, write or cook. There are so many ways of expressing creativity with an intention behind it, which can create relationships and also deepen your personal awareness. This is creating spaces that are inclusive and involved. An artistic approach can really give a lot of strength to shaping thoughts into form. Incorporating a spiritual view of the world can offer a sense of support, particularly if there is a space for community to gather and support each other.



**"THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF ART CAN BE TO TOUCH UPON THE POINTS THAT ARE PAINFUL, OR AT LEAST RECOGNIZE THE COMPLEX CONSTRUCTION THROUGH WHICH ASPECTS OF HUMAN COMPLEXITIES SUCH AS OPPRESSION CAN OR ARE TAKING SHAPE."**

KC: Some of us that come from liberal states like California have this damned image of a soccer Mom that went to a weekend workshop, put a feather in her cap and now calls herself a shaman. You said it so well in one interview when you remind us that "In Europe in particular we've assisted to hundreds of years of holocaust against female herbalists, exterminating a relation that united a sacred body of knowledge between women, plants and a non-Christian spirituality." You know, the Dalai Lama did say, "It will be the Western Women that save the planet." With so many seemingly white, Western girls going indigenous glam, and perhaps even – causing a revolution in consciousness, how do we address the issue of cultural appropriation? Do we still have to?

MB: I think cultural appropriation in relation to structures of power is real. The systematic oppression of certain people is very real and it's important that that finally is addressed. There is a lot of punches going here and there and I think that's good. There's more visibility now for voices that are typically off the radar – and really struggling relative to those with more privilege – I really want to encourage that. It's a great, fantastic process. In terms of cultures influencing each other, that's a process that is valid. Sometimes it's hard to say what belongs to whom. There exist some basic similarities within all "non-western" traditions that are ascribed

to specific groups. People turning away from everyday capitalist western modes are rediscovering things like masks, uses of sticks. **There are generic tools that are used in culturally specific ways in specific areas. Structured small societies that used stones, ritual body paint and plants.** It's also just very natural for me as a human to commune with plants. **Living in the time we do, it is also natural for me to commune with plastics.** I also understand certain ethics at this point are very sensitive and confusing. It's also an amazing portal to then go into conversation with each other, with people you don't agree with. Be careful not to attack people who are actually on your side. I think it's important that we all unite and find the solution together somehow. We should keep talking and holding space for each other's vulnerabilities, and maybe we should also

shut up sometimes. If we live in a globalized culture where many people use global tools, then I think the problem is power and cultural appropriation when profit is a core value. How's it going for you?

KC: It's been good (and challenging) for me to really walk through that fire here in NYC. At first it was very jarring, mostly, because I had mountains of racial guilt to move. Then I was all about knowledge as power – unearthing how, as you said, most or all of these traditions actually link us transculturally through our common human origins, which have been intentionally obscured. Then it's also about bearing witness to people's anger. And undersMB: With the work that we do, everybody gets hit, but are we the ones to be getting hit?

KC: Exactly, are we artists just beating each other up when we're all fighting over scraps anyway?

Sometimes the fight is a good thing, it's the fight. But let's acknowledge the anger, shame, guilt, greed – whatever – and circle back to love. It becomes about knowing where the beginning and the end of the emotion is.

MB: When you see cultural appropriation, for example Iggy Azalea – that's so obviously some form of parasiting – then it's so painful. In the end, nobody owns anything. We all – in the end – face being naked all alone.

KC: The diversity here in New York also highlights the way in which these issues are positioned to play out power dynamics socially. For instance, as with cyber-bullying or micro-aggressions, they can paradoxically perpetuate the same old cycle of lack and power over, irrespective of race or gender.

Night Soil Fake Paradise, 2014,  
Courtesy AKINCI





MB: On a spiritual level it doesn't matter. Then it's just a game that you're in and how you play it. Some dynamics are definitely more challenging than others. I also think what's often seen as privilege is complete poverty, loneliness to the core. It's "privilege" in relation to power and greed, and there's also poverty in that.

KC: Completely. Your Night Soil/Fake Paradise trilogy explores not only how commodity-based pleasures increase feelings of alienation and cultural malaise within an individual, but how the plant medicine Ayahuasca Amazonian "vine of the soul" is re-defining consciousness transculturally, pushing against the values of capitalism, and waking up our cellular memory of pre-monotheistic ritual belief systems that wove human life into an organic model of the earth. As you explained in another interview, "The knowledge and power to cure come directly from a conversation with the plant...the dimension of the self performs as a direct interface of nature" and optimally this "anti-capitalist medication" activates the body to break out of the trap of techno-modernity "sealed off from nature's exuberance." Can you talk about your experiences communing

Night Soil - Economy of Love 2015, Rainbow courtesy AKINCI



with plants both in terms of imbibing the medicine and just generally keeping their company? Do you have plants at home? Do your plants sing and do you listen?

MB: This is the core practice. The spiritual practice is in the everyday: the details of how you organize your daily life, relate to the people around you, take care of yourself and others, your boundaries. I want to be really careful how I relate to consumption because it's so dominant and overwhelming. Morally, it's not the place I usually align with, and yet still depend on for needs like food. It's also about your thoughts – and how your body is your church, your garden. **In terms of plant meditation, I allow plants to be my teachers, they take me to a place of silence and I access portals that are usually only opening with an intensely deep, probably monastery meditation practice.** The plants can offer a short cut to showing divine paths that are - given our western diet and lifestyle - very difficult to reach. It also requires space for integration and a certain slowness. Otherwise it's this one boost thing that's not an integrated experience in your personality and in your community. **Solidarity and challenging inequities arising along racial, gendered and species boundaries, imagining healthier relationships and simplification of lifestyle resisting identity-related consumerism are really important for me at this point. We want to be so safe that we actually create a very unsafe world. The world is far weirder than the maddest among us. I am not afraid of madness anymore. There is no direct connection between economy and a sense of wellbeing and to take more then we need is a phallusy.**

KC: Hunting for a lost female legacy is also a long-term obsession of mine as well #metoo. I think this is a prerequisite of being a feminist artist. I noticed that Night Soil is considered a "semi-documentary." Having lived that feminist underground life, I'm wondering, is the feminist art community the Black Moon Lilith of the art world or just it's angry, acne-prone stepsister? I heard during Miami Basel now, if you are not a model, they put a mask on your face. Sometimes I feel like stepping up to bat at all in the Fine Art world is only perpetuating the most ugly forms of elitism and white supremacy masked by the fetishization of Otherness – for sale. And as women looking to be "liberated," we often end up spinning out of control in a system we only really see in totality when it's too late (And we're too old looking to be seen anymore). I've seen angels' ribs cracked like keys on a baby grand and girls shoot Listerine for a buzz. But like you said "Healing is the New Punk." How do you approach the paradoxes of the MATRIX BONTANICA vision with respect to your own Shadow side as a woman still humbled by the millennial culture psychopathologies?

MB: First of all, I believe it's important for women to stay in conversation with subjects that are annoying them about other feminist views, as we are all in it for the same ultimate goal – equality.

**"THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH BEAUTY OR YOUTH IN ITSELF AND ENJOYING THAT FRESHNESS OF THE BODY."**

Practice self-investigation where there is judgment towards the approaches, ideas or tactics of others in relation to the common objective of female empowerment and equality among people. It's important for me that feminism doesn't align with capitalism. It's not only feminism but holding the future of the planet safe; it's important for me to come from that perspective. There may be forms of feminism that seek empowerment through structures of power and wealth and all that which is mostly based on a glorification and commodification of the body and youth – elements that are patented. These are not fundamentally sustainable, core elements such as investing in caring relationships with each other, investing in clear communication with each other, investing in self-care and self-love, investing in reflection. A kind of study in these non-material, non-capitalizing realms of humanity. Every individual is obliged to educate themselves, and mostly that entails making a lot of mistakes. If you put yourself out there in a way that you think is empowering but for others is perceived as naïve or actually tapping into the system, the only thing we can do is give our view and then hopefully, support this person in her own empowerment and respect that journey. No journey is without pain and trouble. What I hear in your question is almost like "Is there a form of purity through which we can bring this message across?" We can contextualize things in the flow and keep fine-tuning them. There is nothing wrong with beauty or youth in itself and enjoying that freshness of the body. **I just want to put out there that everybody that is in that just keeps on doing that.** Let's not hide behind judgments against





Home Coming Queen 2017 videostill

aging. How about outing your vulnerability there – when your body is changing – rather than changing your method? The only way to change the system is looking into your own values and to keep identifying your own relationship to the establishment. Grouping with other people with similar ideas to establish a counter-commentary place. It's all true – this whole narcissism running as a red line through culture. How are we going to grow old with this as a value? I see it's a very vulnerable place to be if you put your identity aligned with your beauty and not something sustainable **inside**.

KC: The last film in the Night Soil trilogy "Nocturnal Gardening" highlights female voices in considering how communities come together through alternative and pre-colonial uses of land in relationship to notions of divinity, sexuality, relational eco-feminism, indigenous land rights and the psychopathologies of late-capitalism. Prior to the influence of white male patriarchal religions the world over, in the time of Mother Rites and rituals,



Night Soil - Economy of Love, 2015, courtesy AKINCI

the living connections between human, land and life force were not only acted out in culturally-mandated sacred arts, they were linked to the notion that a human being has a soul that is more than matter and beyond time. How do you hope that the Night Soil dialogue will help to shape urban planning and a more communal ethics with regards to technology and commerce? Is art a fertile ground for the marriage of female leadership, education and the return of the eco-spiritual?

MB: All the women that are voicing their ideas in the films are excellent examples of how this can take shape and how, for example, the belief in a higher spirit (or non-material non-secular presence) is a way for them to feel and be supported in their countercultural activist practices. **The African American farmers who work with historical land trauma caused by slavery in urban communities or the indigenous rights movement advocate or the woman who works with slaughterhouse animals – all of them work with such tremendously**

**conflicted and immense issues.** Limitations of sexism and violence that are for me personally so beyond any type of normality. Having the ability to fight all that with an optimistic approach that is in dialogue with the oppressors – people they disagree with – it's tremendously inspiring how these dialogues can be held. It's not just an idea in their head, it's a practice that's growing and influencing others. It's so much bigger I believe than what we can get from our personal source as an individual and almost needs to be fueled by these connections we have all together in relation to spirit or soul or something that is simply bigger than our human understanding. Practicing humility and perceiving the other person as a reflection of ourselves (and in that way also part of ourselves and our environment) – reveals our good side and our shadow. It brings us back to how we create our inside and outside, and that we have responsibility and agency. We have the ability to change.





# GO! PUSH POPS

## EARTHING INSTRUCTIONS

### MUD JOY WITH GRANDMOTHER WILLOW

Where we come from, there is community in the total sense. Where we come from, all the village comes together to clap hands when a child is born. We count time by new moons, corresponding to the moon-womb as a symbol of the entire life cycle. Where we come from, ritual dance synched to the waxing and waning of the moon entails the body as medium of the spiritual universe. Where we come from, women dictate the temporal structure of communal life through synchronized menstruation and menstrual synchrony amongst women ensures the accumulation of FEMALE POWER ETERNAL. Where we come from, we are in touch with our cycles, our communities and our Earth.

What Gandhi refers to in his autobiography as the "Earth Cure" or what some people call "Earthing" can be done using Indian Healing Clay "Bentonite Clay" or simply dirt. Bentonite clay is a "healing clay" used in ancient cultures throughout the world that cleanses and detoxifies the body. It can be applied to the skin or taken internally. In addition to removing build up of environmental toxins and processed foods, any healing ritual done with the right intention should effectively clear the body of emotional toxins, because body, spirit and mind are inseparable. Bentonite clay is particularly good as an earth cure because when mixed with water it has the ability to produce a charge that is electrical in nature. Charged Bentonite clay naturally seeks toxins in the body it can then bind to, and the organic removal process ensues from there. The clay can remove heavy metals and other impurities from the gut, skin and mouth. It can be applied topically to heal rashes, eczema, or poison ivy. It can also be added to the bath. Bentonite clay helps increase the oxygen count in our cells, includes alkalizing minerals that bring the body's ph level back into balance, and promotes the growth of good bacteria and probiotics, which elevates our mood and brain function. It can remedy nearly any digestive issues, and boosts immunity in the body by targeting harmful bacteria and viruses. Generally speaking this and other "Grounding" or "Earthing" practices have been demonstrated to defuse inflammation and improve or eliminate inflammation-related disorders and chronic pain, improve sleep and increase energy, lower stress hormones, normalize the body's biological rhythms, improve blood pressure and flow, and protect the body against the potentially health-disturbing environmental electromagnetic field (EMFs) emitted from electronics. If you do not have any healing clay available to add to your bath or mix in water and rub all over your body before a dip in the ocean or lake, simply rub soil on your body. It's free and available in most places. Touching your feet to the bare grass offers a similar affect.

2016 collaboration with Laura Weyl (photographer), featuring UNDAKOVA

# THE SICK ROLE

SAMANTHA CONLON

Samantha Conlon's *The Sick Role*, 2018, is part documentation and part ritualistic photography accompanied with text composing a contemporary portrait of the mundane reality of mental illness. From a new body of work developed in Kuvataideakatemie, Helsinki, *The Sick Role* interrogates the experience of physical and mental illness in female bodies and the institutionalized gender politics at play within the care systems from which females seek healing. The development of systems of Western Science and Medicine displaced the age-old lineages of female practitioners. Midwives with generations of healing knowledge connected to the kingdom of plants and collective spiritual life were ousted from clinics, if not brutally violated in earlier eras involving mass genocide of women healers. Women in general were made victims of segregation, and limited access to higher education marginalized their work, making it unlawful to practice holistic healing modalities that carry important insight into women's complex systems.

The divorcing of women's embodied knowledge from healthcare has deeply affected the way in which women's bodies are viewed, cared for, and unfortunately, now often seldom individuated in a system with profit as a motivating factor above health. Serious illnesses that disproportionately affect female bodies have inefficient methods of prevention and cure compounded by epidemic levels of Breast Cancer, Female Anxiety/Depression, C-section, Eating Disorders and infections of the womb. Birth control still has side effects that disturb women's hormonal patterns, day-to-day emotional lives and relationships – wreaking quiet havoc on their mental and physical wellbeing.

Women and girls are currently fighting for autonomy over their own bodies when it comes to reproductive health. *The Sick Role* is an art piece that presents alternative health solutions and preventative care measures. It necessitates the fair dissemination of vital women's health information that has been obscured by the lack of female authority in healthcare, politics, religion and society at large. Tapping into witchcraft and holistic modalities of healing passed down through generations of women, this project aims to seek alternatives to capitalist systems and to pose questions like: *Can sickness be an anti-capitalist gesture? In these times of constant attention and movement, is taking to bed a radical act? Can documentation of illness be a therapy in itself? What hope do queer/female people have in medical systems, if any? How can we use our own systems to distribute ideas of care / cure / prevention?*

About Samantha Conlon

Samantha Conlon is an interdisciplinary artist born 1990 in Ireland making work concerned with class and gender struggles. Conlon is founder and curator of Bunny Collective, a feminist collective of 18 women artists living in Ireland, Britain and the United States who work mostly on the Internet. Samantha founded the collective in 2013 when she was in Art school in Cork, Ireland. The Bunny Collective's videos, installations, photography and collages explore the Internet and female identity and agency on the web (which they consider a generative space for not only showing but making Art); including grappling with the demonstrated rise





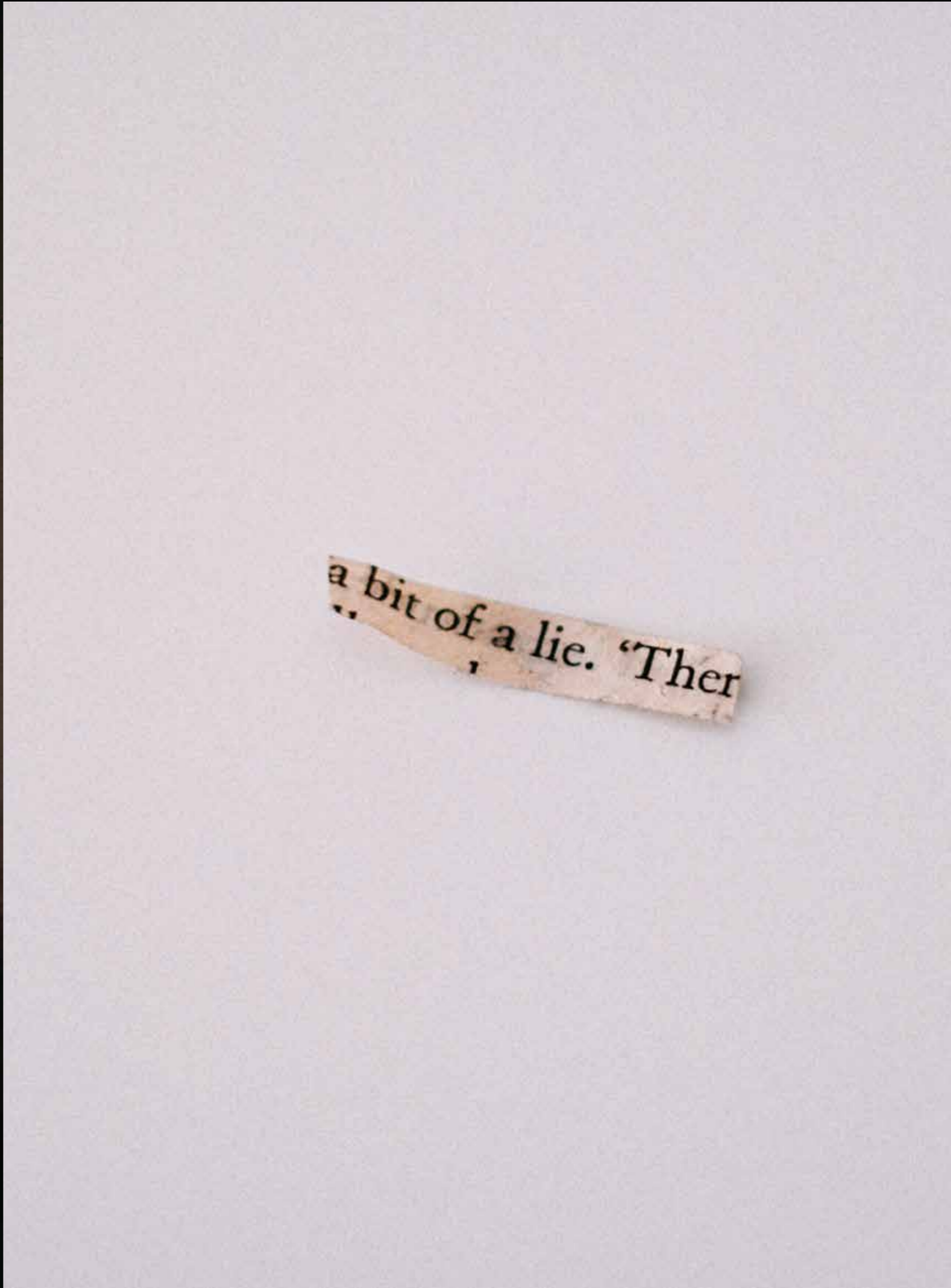


of depression in women associated with social-media use and how the corporate engines capitalizing upon feminist media users (and makers) also presents one of the most potentially harmful and exploitative virtual armatures advanced capitalism has dealt generations of young women to date. Bunny Collective has been named by *New York Times* and *Dazed Magazine* as a feminist group at the forefront of all-female web collectives. The name is ironic. "It was a cute name, and we knew we were going to subvert that," Ms. Conlon told the *New York Times*. At the heart of Bunny's mission are the emancipation of girlhood from its association with weakness, and the reclaiming of femininity as a strength.

During the Spring of 2016, a handful of Bunny Collective members met each other for the first time during the Pankhurst in the Park Residency with Alexandra Arts. The engagement with Pankhurst in the Park was a crossroads for the collective – coming

together as a cohort of 10, the Bunny Collective's courageous feminist aims and ideals blossomed into real-life praxis as never before. Sharing their feminist art tactics with the community of Manchester, particularly younger generations of female creatives, the Bunny Collective breathed new life into the concepts that had gestated in the transpersonal matrix of cyberspace. Bunny Collective's engagement included a one-day exhibition of sculptural installations in the wooded area of Alexandra Park and workshops with teenage girls from the local non-profit Hideaway Youth on photography and producing DIY web zines.





a bit of a lie. "Ther  
"



# GENEALOGY OF THE KAWAII TWERK RAVE

HIGH PRIEZTEZZ OR NAH



**Or nah :** Japanese Ganguro Girls or "yamanbe" are considered "blackface" also translated to "heavily sunburned face." As a subculture they challenge the official sanitized, sweet and subservient image of Japanese women in endless service of male patriarchy. Highly controversial, considered animalistic and racially "Other" ganguro Girls trace back to the original ruler of ancient Japan, a powerful shamanic Empress and are likewise associated with #magic #myth #fairies #witchcraft #MountainWomen and #folklore #Goddessworship #FemalePower #BadBitches #Radical #Tricksters #BlackMotherWorship #GAIAMatrix #Shamana

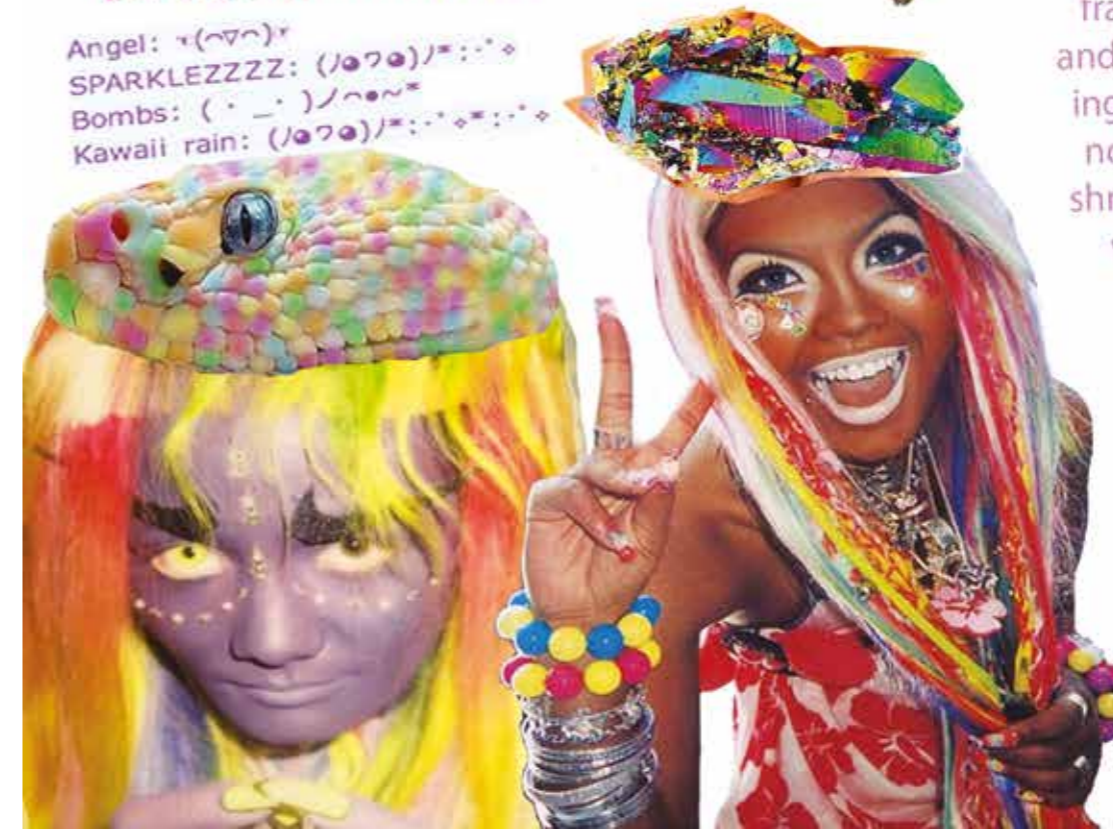


おしゅれだいに× ングシユシユ

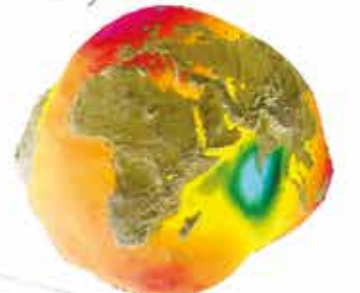
"HIRA HIRA" is a term of spiritual importance running thru anime, early religious rites, todaiis kawaii-Freakk-Kingdoms of fashion, & the untouchable world- f-Girls.



Angel: ♪(ˆ▽ˆ)♪  
 SPARKLEZZZZ: (ノ◡◡)♪\*:~\*~\*~  
 Bombs: ( . \_ . )ノ~\*~\*~  
 Kawaii rain: (ノ◡◡)♪\*:~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~



(☒ ☒☒☒) HIRA HIRA = movement, swaying of ribbons, frills of lyrical-Word-Chains that flutter in the breeze as never-Ending flow of signs\*:~\*: Colors, fragrances and sounds float and dance thru a secret glittering World-of-Dreams sighing notes of the piano. SHINTO shrine Maidens called sarume waved their garments to Call-On-Gods\*:~\*: These wavering movements express the soul's call for the faraway Sky\*:~\*:





おしゃれダイニ×ングシユシユ  
**野生を祈る**

Ancient civilizations were sex positive communities that had much reverence for sexual symbols of profound sacred power. Idols used in ancient fertility cults, amongst the oldest of sculptural forms, depict venuses in the position of what we could today call twerking, or in Yoga "Devi-Asana" (Goddess Pose). Idols of this figuration have been found throughout the World. Imagery of the ass/buttocks represents the cosmic egg motif developed by the Greek philosopher Pythagorus, who studied the Hermetic Laws in Egypt for twenty-two years. The Cosmic-Egg creation story states that In the beginning there was a cosmic egg representing the Oneness of potentiality. It split in two halves representing primal-Duality. What arose from the egg is #eros or #Love, the urge to reunite. Pythagorus was burned alive by the Greeks for the things he taught.

Alarmed table-flip: (لَطْفٌ لَدَيْهِمْ)



GO!  
PUSH  
POPS

**HERMETIC LAWS**  
**EGYPTIAN Spiritual TRUTH**

- 1. mentalism
- 2. correspondence
- 3. vibration
- 4. polarity
- 5. gender
- 6. rhythm
- 7. causation



\*Blood of yellow & white hordes  
 diluted the ancient black blood of India but her eldest Buddha sits back, with kinky hair\* ~W.E.B. DuBoise

K~a~|~iiiii

BlessingWAY مؤسسة مستشفى سرطان الاطفال

SPARKLEZZZZ: (ノ70)ノ\*:°◇  
 Bombs: (ノ70)ノ\*:°◇  
 Kawaii rain: (ノ70)ノ\*:°◇



Y  NI



= Hey إلهة!



Shout out to My real Mother the Black Madonna.

She is still worshipped in Italy today by Feminists radicals and peasants as a celebration of the Great-Earth-Mother and old-Europe in rejection of Church Orthodoxy. In Italy, veneration of the indigenous goddess of old Europe merged with African, Middle Eastern, and Asian dark goddesses including Isis of Egypt, Cybele the reknown Asiatic-King-Woman and Hindu Kali. The gypsy festival in Southern Italy celebrating the Three Marias honors a black female divinity named Sara-a-Kali. Poor italians who make pilgrimage to the Black-Madonna say "We are ALL #Equal because we have the same Mother" or sing the festive protest song ...

"Yes! I am Black, and Radiant"

ガングロ

MY OVARIES: (\*'d') 11/17 Am I kawaii? (可愛い) The kawaiest: (可愛い)

In traditional JAPANESE

Fan-Dance the fan symbolizes the



"space-Between" the

world of the Gods & Earthly-Realm  **ORiGIN of THUG**

नीचे बकवास करने के लि

The word thug comes from a roguish robber/murderer tribe of Ancient India said to have prospered and worshipped the Black-Warrior-Goddess Kali for at least 500 years before being eradicated by Christian men of the British Empire that called them 'thugs.' Deeply threatened by the activity of the secret "thug Life" and its relationship to the greater power structure of India, Christian men of the British East India company developed a campaign to obliterate the thugs. The worship of Kall, the "Black one," The Black Goddess, is primordial-dark-Spirituality, developed by sages of South Asia – it facilitates passage into the highest levels of

consciousness and **deepest levels of** Spiritual-POWER

Amaterasu the-Sun-Goddess  (あまてらす)





# 美少女戦士セーラームーン

セーラー9戦士集結! ブラック・ドリーム・ホールの奇跡

In the Land of the Rising SUN Goddess I AINT DONE UNTIL I HAVE DA OLD BOYS OF EVERY RELIGION ON MY AZZ. LADIES TO THE FRONT! WE HAVE A NATION TO BIRTH! HERE IN THIS TOKYO PACHINKO SPOT, CALLED GAIA, HUNDREDS COME EVERYDAY TO REVEL IN THE MAGIK OF TWERKING ANIME VIXENS WITH MOUNTAINOUS BOSOMS AND CASCADING HEART CHAKRA SPLOOGE = LET'S ROCKET THIS VIRTUAL REALITY INTO THE 4-D NOWMASTE! 1,000,000,000 TEAR\$



The Erotic as B~R~I~D~G~E Between the Political & the \$piritURL

Version: 1.0

(づ。わ。)づ %202シ 0o000ooo

(o。o)

So kawaii: o。o Soliciting a Hug: (ノ\*ω\*)ノ

**GANGURO #JapaneseBlackFace** is transcultural Goddess Archetype as inherited mode of psychic functioning... When you embody the sacred, your body carries sacred Authority. YAMAMBA or "Ganguro" are among the lineage of pre-civilized mountain Witches and shamanic folk healers of Japan, ruled by a powerful Empress. These modern day Shibuya party Girls offer a resurgence of indigenous values in which spirituality is an expression of the clan. Thru song + dance, the tribes of old escalated to the conscious zero point of ritual-Ecstasy and collective-Effervescense. Ganguro with their dark skin/light eyes channel the Ainu people, the original inhabitants of Japan, of Tibetan + Indian origin. The white stripe lightly painted from Third-Eye to nose resembles the face paint of Yogis.

**SOLARI SATURNALIA**  
Kawaii Kabi REDUX  
女性パワー



## नीचे बकवास करने के लिए The Rainbow-chakra-system and the snakelike kundalini-Shakti

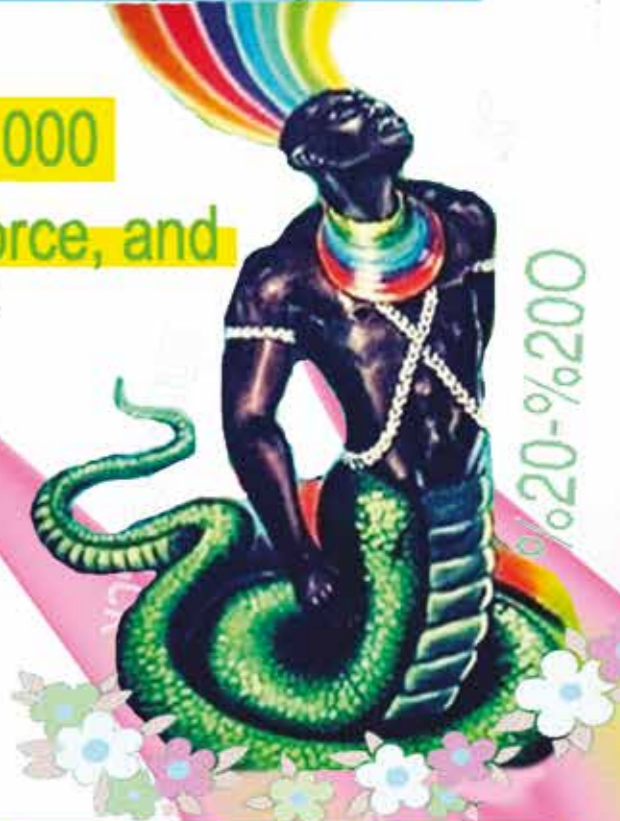
in hinduism derives originally from the rainbow celestial sky flyer gender-ShapeShifting Oshumare of the west-African Yoruba Orisha tradition - taken to Egypt and later India where existed the Indigenous Black Andamese, Adivasi (believed to be descended from the Silvan "Gods of the Woods") and other tribes that would become practitioners of folk-Hinduism's Mother-Cults - the Kulu tribe of northern India called the rainbow Buddhi-Nagin meaning "old-Female-Snake." Related is Ix Chel the Mayan Rainbow Deity and lunar snake Goddess, who promotes fertility. The rainbow and the serpent share a special relationship in mythology throughout the world. They are the Dragon-Of-Consciousness the uroboros snake biting its own tail expressing the divine masculine and divine feminine elements united. Relics of serpent worship exist in major religions and folklore throughout the globe, although in most cases, have been diminished or maligned by patriarchal religions.

The "celestial snake," still holds a special place in the Chinese Zodiac. शिवजी

The nectar that drips from the 1000 petaled lotus, controls the life force, and kindles kundalini ...

When people forget their songs, they forget their melody & essence of Life. If you want to destroy a nation, take away their songs and they will suffocate and die. As long as your songs live, you will live and everything will come to you. As long as you Sing-Your-Songs, you will cut through all Clouds Of Destiny. These songs have been given to you. Sing them as a human and god will walk behind you.

~Yogi Bhajan



**KAWAII-Freak-Kingdoms**  
(crotch Detail)



**WE ARE 38% STAR STUFF & 53% WATER**



# SPIRALLING SMOKE

BY CLAIRE ZAKIEWICZ

I met SOL KJØK in May 2017 at her loft in Brooklyn when I became one of her artists in residence. Her studio is the size of two tennis courts, and you can see both the Empire State and Chrysler buildings through a pair of factory windows. Acrobatic swings, harnesses and platforms dangle from 20ft ceilings. A full-sized tipi sits off-centre in the space where a Shaman performs drum journeys. World-class physicists, artists, academics and eccentrics regularly pass through. Her world is an inspiring, cross-pollinating place of collaboration and interaction. From the roof you overlook one of the most polluted pockets of America's post-industrial wasteland – a mad dystopian scene set against one of the most inspiring skylines in the world.

Like Sol's other spaces, The Mothership and The Last Frontier, women dominate in number and leadership. She invites friends to nude-model for her: an exchange of intimacy in her dream studio. To draw another human is to meditate on and depict the shadows and brightness that arise. Sol directs her subjects to gaze far ahead and place full attention on their body as they manage challenging airborne positions. Their faces mutate into an ethereal homogeneity. I think of Reich's 'You are wherever your thoughts are'. Her figures, though in movement, are shells, without clothing or sense of identity – somewhat futuristic and humanoid. I imagine should they look at me – perhaps with a smile – that the fourth wall would be broken. They would need a

spark of life to be switched on. The machines are off, but the substance they are floating in keeps moving. Is it liquid, air or silicone, perhaps? The colours seem more synthetic than natural.

One of the men is African American yet, like the others in the painting, his skin is as white as paper. His lips and nipples, red against the white, appear almost decorative. Spiralling braids echoing the spirals of the bodies add orange accents. The translucent skin might be the only physical membrane, yet the contours imply strong muscle and bone underneath. Their physicality doesn't belong to this world; they float in a strangely shallow realm where gravity seemingly ceases to exist.

The marks are deliberate and worked: a highly developed drawing and painting technique is at hand here. No spontaneous gestures are evident, although the composition as a whole implies the presence of something greater holding it all fluidly together.

Born in Norway and adopted in New York, Sol has lived in Paris, Colombia, Vienna and employs five languages at her command. She has Masters degrees in Painting, Art History and Literature. Her earlier works depict similarly interconnected masses of human bodies, albeit arranged in circular formations with more expressive faces. The new work evidences a significant shift for the artist.

In KJØK's library, the titles speak to a new world emerging – signalling that we are in a point in history where humankind will either flourish or become extinct. Contemporary Science is lining up







Spiraling Smoke 3. 2017-2018  
Mixed media on panels

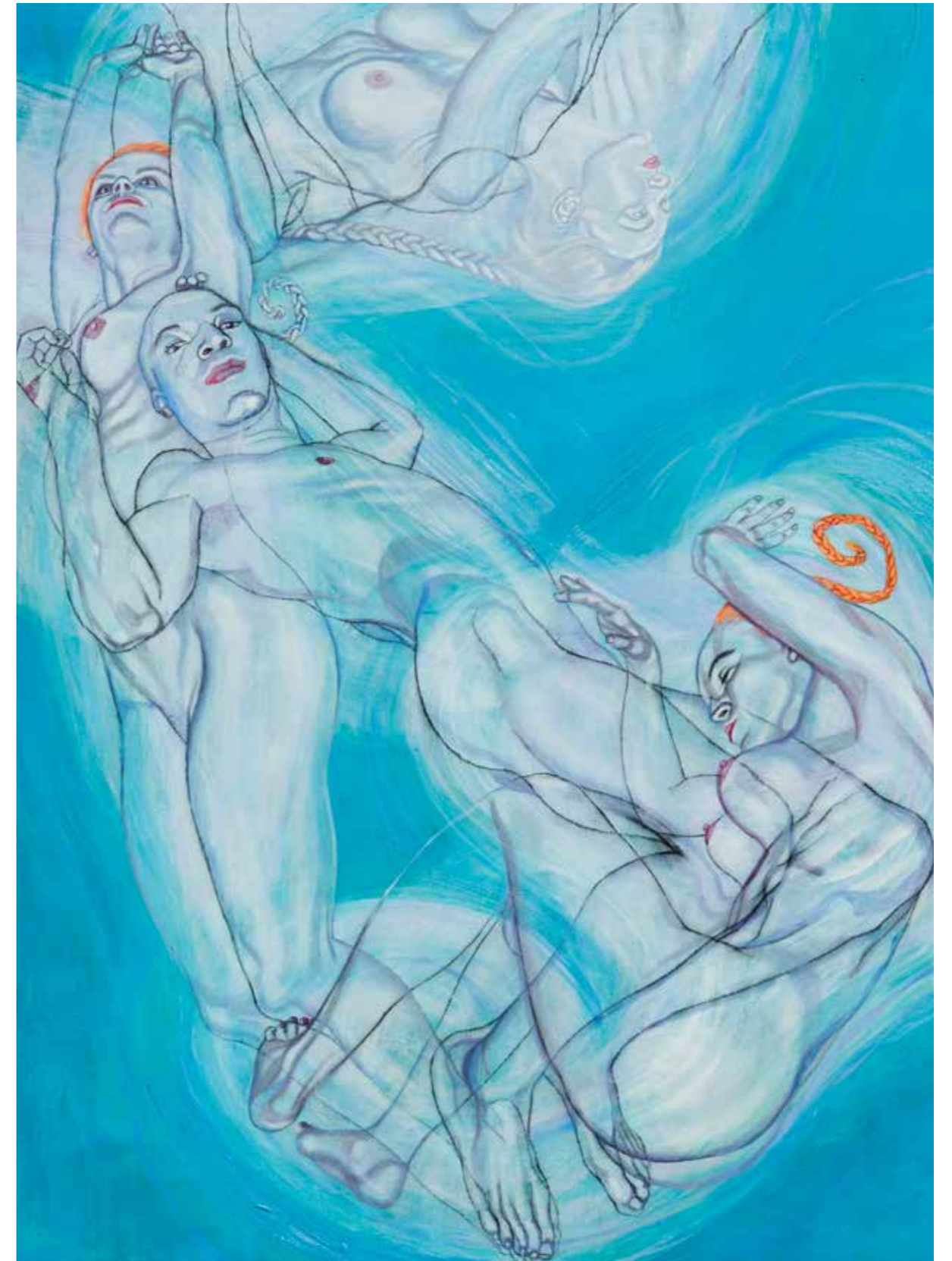
with Eastern Mysticism to understand consciousness and the ultimate nature of reality. Historian Yuval Noah Harari suggests that a new religion might be emerging: 'Dataism'. The human species seen as a single data processing system where people are the chips – an information flow. Categories of human emotion don't have intrinsic value unless they can be shared. Experiences within us that are not shared have no meaning. In Harari's future, the output of this data processing is the creation of an Internet-of-all-things, where everything is connected, linked and bridged. Once digital, we become immortal. The concept of Individualism will seem strange in this fundamentally shared system, and it would make no sense to copy or destroy versions of ourselves.

When I look at the paintings I think of Burning Man-type parties attended by tech CEOs – an intelligent sexuality and playfulness. Misfits and geeks who have found a freedom of expression outside of mass popular culture yet have created some of the most powerful institutions mankind has perhaps ever seen – Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple.

Some of our respected thinkers foresee a future where a small number of elites upgrade themselves through biotechnology and genetic engineering, leaving the masses behind and creating a godlike species where super-intelligent robots consider the rest of humanity to be superfluous.

Sol talks of lyrics in connection with her works, which say 'in every lifetime we meet the same circle of souls, to say thank you or sorry', an idea that implies that resolution is stronger than tension if we let go of trying to control – and perhaps that free will exists after all. It's a compelling idea. For me, Sol's paintings and the process by which she paints is deeply social, political, feminist, intellectual, anti-fashionable and radical. Are those knowing, vacant eyes issuing a warning – or are they the gatekeepers to the greatest show the World has ever seen?

Spiraling Smoke 4. 2017-2018  
Mixed media on panels







# WOMEN HOLD UP HALF THE SKY

A LOOK AT BRITISH  
ARTIST EKUA BAYUNU

BY KATIE CERCONI

Ekua Bayunu just finished mounting her first solo exhibition at Manchester's Chuck Gallery. Aptly titled *Re:Birth*, her show centers around a body of sculptural work reflecting women's power and draws on aesthetic motifs of her African cultural heritage. After receiving a few rave reviews of her show, she was selected in February to be artist-in-residence in Alexandra Park for the final season of Alexandra Arts' Pankhurst in the Park Program. Recently, I had the opportunity to connect with the artist personally and dive more deeply into her background and the motivations behind her trans-disciplinary, social-justice oriented creative practice.

Ekua was born in 1961 in a small town called Yateley, south of London. Her home for a mere 6 weeks, her early years were shaped by the impact of Maori culture upon White English Middleclass sentiment delivered to an African dual heritage child. She recalls somewhat bitter-sweetly how her mother's overflowing creativity dynamically shaped her childhood. She still has one of her mother's original

watercolor paintings dating back to the 1940s, which her mother made while living in China working as an English Christian Missionary. Although Ekua's mom started painting again in her 70's, she never seriously pursued her craft. She infused Ekua's upbringing with ample creativity – "the freedom to draw and glue and whittle and sing and dance," says the artist. Her mother likewise always chided her, "We aren't the type of people who are artists." Paradoxically, as evolution sometimes goes, it was the way her mom steered the rebellious young Ekua away from Art – often with statements like "it isn't our place" – that ultimately drove Bayunu to become the artist she is today. Ekua simply had to challenge the limitations imposed. "I couldn't bear not being one. I think [my Mother] couldn't bear not being one either."

Bayunu's formal Arts Education began at Nene College, now Northampton University. She completed her Foundation in Art and Design at Gloucestershire College of Art and Design before entering her BFA, Sculpture, through a prestigious



Honours program at St. Martins School of Art and later Hornsey School of Art, both in London, in the early 1980s. Ekua reflects that at St. Martin's they always worked from a life model, a practice which greatly influences her work to this day, certainly reflected in the visceral tactility of her sculptural renderings as well as her humanistic approach. Into adulthood, as a single mother, Ekua worked in arts education and management, including developing a sculpture curriculum for adults that dovetailed on her undergraduate studies. Living in Manchester since 1993, she has delivered a number of highly acclaimed public art projects including the Sensory Garden in Hulme Park and the Anansi Mosaics at Royce Primary School. As a project manager, she has been instrumental in making art accessible to young people from all backgrounds in Manchester's increasingly diverse city center. In 2011, Ekua made the decision to return to her personal art practice full time. Her current body of work includes drawing, film and sculpture in card, fabric, wood and clay – air dried and fired. Moving forward she intends to begin working in metal, casting and welding, as well as carving wood and stone (skill areas not touched since her undergraduate days).

Her recent body of work *Re:Birth* explores the condition of being human, and creates dialogue around looking and being seen – particularly as a Black Female – underlined with the artist's steady commitment to three principles she articulates as "Change. Equality. Love." Her show at Chuck, the only UK Art Gallery outside of London specializing in Modern and Contemporary Art of the African Diaspora, was created in response to selected works in the Chuck Gallery's permanent collection over a year-long engagement in the space in dialogue with its roster of contemporary masters.

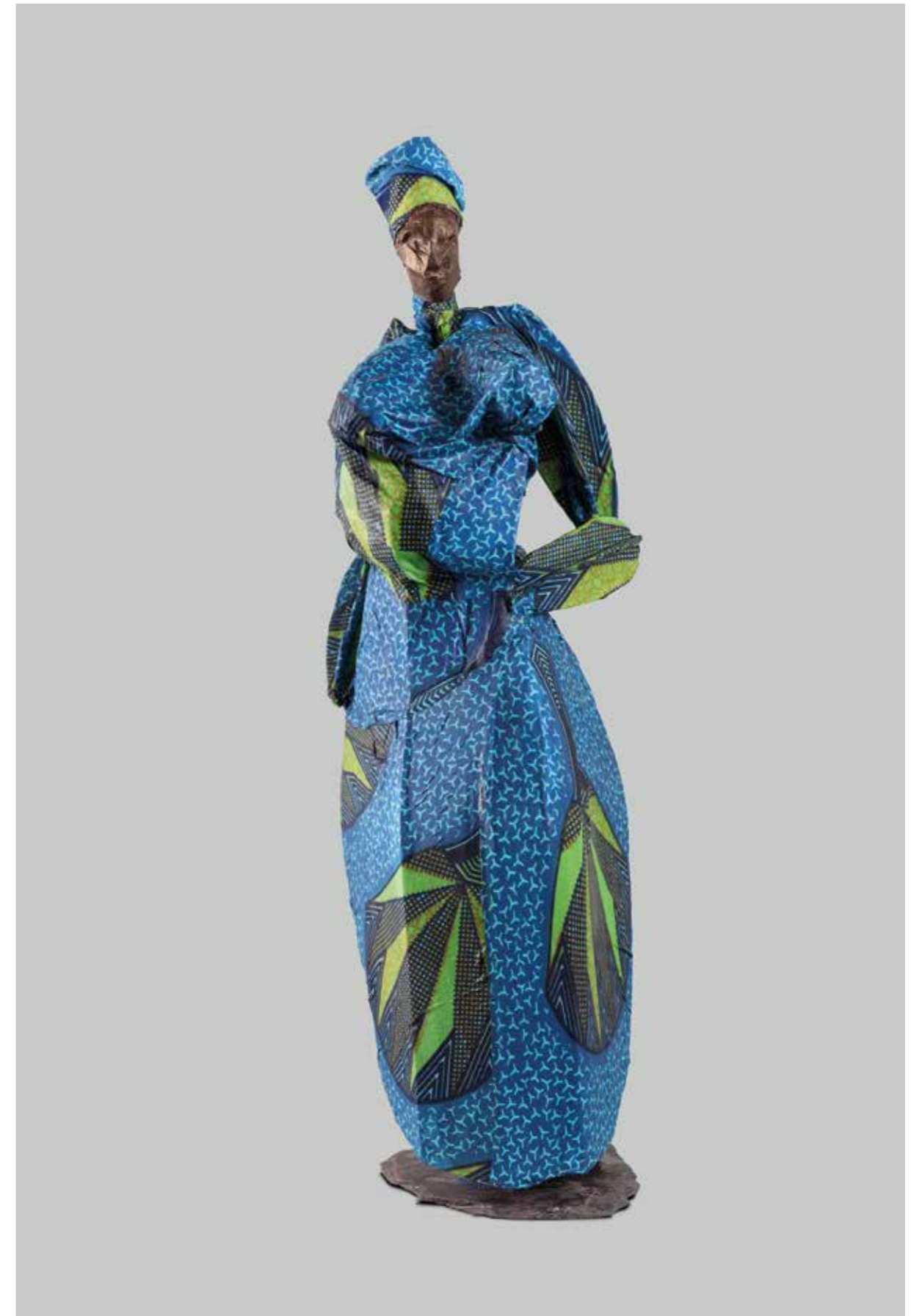
Three female figures (the artist's *Okoh Women series*) respond to Nelson Okoh's painting Poetic Expression – "highlighting the weight and volume and strength of women's bodies; our breasts, bellies, hips as the vessels to carry us forward to stand in our power." Her work expands on a feminist polemic insisting that women's beauty and embodied freedom "will not be defined or minimized just for the sexual gratification of the

other." Ekua's *Leadership Series* features a pair of elongated, two-faced figures produced in response to the painting *Elder Statesmen* by Abayomi Sokenu. "I am exploring the current need in the world for leadership that can support humanity against the rising tide of extremism from the Racism of Trump, the Sexism of Putin, the Classism of May, the Intolerance of Wahhabism and Zionism and Right-Wing Christianity." In a globalized, media-saturated culture still overwhelmed by limited and too often negative depictions of black and brown folks, paralleling perhaps, the global BLACK LIVES MATTER movement, her pieces infuse African faces with the values of leadership, Intelligence, Honesty, Compassion and Integrity.

The final piece from this new body of work, titled *Her Smile*, is still in process. It is in response to the work of Damola Adepoju, an artist whose mixed media pieces depict cityscapes of urban Lagos. Although Adepoju is an artist Ekua personally loves and has collected the work of, *Her Smile* is created in reaction to three paintings of his in the Chuck collection that depict the female form. Ekua takes issue with his depiction of the women who appear in the work as coy objects, veiled behind strands of hair they offer a stereotypical come-hither appeal to the viewer. "Pieces that, for me, appear created purely for a male gaze." In response, the artist created a sculptural figure of a woman with an unflinching stare. Straight, bold lines and strong vertical and horizontal planes articulate the female subject's commanding presence. "*You have touched the women*" and "*you have struck a rock*" are textural inscriptions Ekua has layered in to enhance the surface of the work.

Enjoying the public engagement aspects of her solo show at Chuck in collaboration with Global Arts Manchester and PANDA, she aims to offset the challenges older women artists face (and particularly those from cultures not traditionally supported by the Fine Arts in her country), helping them return to or enter creative practice. The overall mission of Global Arts Manchester, of which Ekua is a founding member, is to ensure that the visual arts in Manchester are diverse, sustainable, accessible and inclusive. Ekua is working with Global Arts to

**"BEING IN A COMMUNITY  
OF ARTISTS IS SO IMPORTANT  
TO MY PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND MY  
CREATIVE AND EMOTIONAL  
WELL BEING."**





develop an offer through a health and wellbeing initiative to train artists to share their practice to vulnerable individuals in community settings and secondly, exploring how to give career support to young creative graduates from backgrounds underrepresented in the arts.

Ekua draws from Steve Biko when situating her oeuvre generally, quoting him "...the greatest gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face." Her sculptures about leadership reflect what is needed in the world today and put an African face on power and authority. Her observation that the Fine Art world is not necessarily a welcoming space for women and people of color is certainly a familiar feeling for many. In one sense, there's the statistical reality of the way in which non-white, non-male, non-cis-gendered voices are continually marginalized within the canon and economically kept out of the loop, and on the other, Afrocentric logic broadly speaking offers such an overwhelmingly more robust definition of Art we might imagine why the work of contemporary African Diasporic artists doesn't easily translate to a Eurocentric system. Take, for example, Senegalese poet and philosopher Léopold Sédar Senghor's primordial intuition that African Art is a total philosophy. It is the "vitalism" at the core of African spiritual beliefs that found expression in the Arts. It's intricately woven into the social fabric of life itself.

The *Western\** white-male dominated field of Fine Art and art marketplace – (Western here denoting more of a mindset than a geographical

location at this point) – poses several peculiar problems for an artist wielding the sword of Afrocentric logic. The "Art World," in my opinion, being at best an elite ego racket, at worst a parasitic Cyclops suckling the reckless libido of generations of young creatives (who pledge their faith in materialism and fame) to obscure the laundering of money in a nepotistic black market money game. Although Afrocentrism is a vast constellation of beliefs in and of itself, the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa – unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith – highlight the ways in which Art just can't and shouldn't be separated out from the life blood of the clan. Art should ensure the longevity, vitality, cohesion and prosperity of the group, and I think this is where women like Ekua are needed so dearly as leaders – to ensure there is an ethics around the production, commerce, education and dialogue that happens around Art. Ekua, although trained in the highest and most honorable echelons of the Euro-sphere, stays close to the principles for which and by which she makes Art – for the betterment of her society and community – and likewise finds congruency doing social practice work in collaboration with local non-profits.

That being said, "not-for-profit" clearly poses its own limitations living in one of the world's most expensive nations. In the midst of her many creative projects, Ekua recently received notice that her studio space at Artwork Atelier (located in an old warehouse in Salford, Greater Manchester) has been sold to

developers who have plans to knock the creative complex down and build luxury apartments as soon as August. "Being in a community of artists is so important to my professional development and my creative and emotional well being," remarks Ekua, who is frustrated to see her space and communal atelier disbanded in this way. Like many artists, resources, space, and an ongoing internal dialogue vacillating between self-confidence and self-doubt – pose the greatest challenges for her in terms of continuing to make work.

Despite any setbacks, she's rocketing ahead into new projects including recently finishing a new sculptural work which premiered at the Manchester Museum during an event celebrating FESTAC77. As early as March, Ekua will be collaborating as an actor on a new film project with Rwandan Theatre practitioner Emanuel Bajiji.

Ekua was selected for the Spring residency at Alexandra Arts largely due to her steady and ongoing engagement building art networks that transgress Manchester's varied communities and focus on supporting women's creativity, leadership and livelihood. "I know so many people who live locally and haven't felt engaged with the park over the last few years," says Ekua, who is excited to step into her position at Alexandra Park, where she will be participating in an 8-week, interdisciplinary and socially engaged project culminating in a series of site-specific, visual totems: "Guardians of the land and community." The social practice component of the project will involve instruction of all-ages workshops in the Chorlton Lodge and collecting a women's oral herstory reflecting the overall mission of Alexandra Arts – which celebrates women's fight for suffrage rights and agency in light of Alexandra Park being the historic stomping ground of Europe's suffragettes and home of Emmeline Pankhurst.

Having frequently hosted people from all ends of the globe while supplementing her income with AirBnb, Ekua feels inclined to celebrate the diversity of women's voices she has come to know and love, living in Manchester for nearly three decades, in this new work. "The overall aim of my project is to inspire people from all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to vote and play an active role in shaping cultural and political life in Manchester. "Women Hold Up Half the Sky" inspires more Women in Leadership through the creation of dialogue and networks of mutual support that span class and race, sexuality and disability. I truly believe Culture and Creativity are at the heart of women's Active Citizenship," explains the artist. She's planning to call upon her connections with local libraries, senior centers, youth clubs, art centers and other service providers to fully get this project off the ground.

Stay tuned as Ekua's "Women Hold Up Half the Sky" takes shape in Moss Side Manchester's Alexandra Park this Spring during the final installment of Pankhurst in the Park (funded by Arts Council England) to celebrate the centenary for UK women winning the right to vote. Come September Alexandra Arts' will be teaming up with Art 511 for a grand art salon here in New York City, continuing its mission to support female artists and their paradigm-shifting practices. If you live locally, stay abreast of this project via the Alexandra Arts website and blog. You can follow on instagram @alexartsmcr. Ekua's looking to engage women, as co-creatix, videographers, herstorians (and more!) during her 8-week long "Women Hold Up Half the Sky" initiative this Spring.



<sup>1</sup>There are over 300 languages now regularly spoken in Great Britain (Diane Abbott, The Guardian, 2016) and population stats show that in the early 2000's over 3 million immigrants were admitted into the U.K. by way of controversial Labor & Immigration Laws (Sir Andrew Greene / Daily Mail, 2011)

<sup>2</sup>Souleymane Bachir Diagne, African Art A Philosophy University of Chicago Press, 2012

<sup>3</sup>Kwanzaa is a feast of gift giving originating in the United States in the 60s observed today by as many as 18 million African Americans from December 26 to January 1 as a celebration of their cultural heritage and traditional values. Each day of Kwanzaa emphasizes one of the seven principles, or Nguzo Saba, a set of ideals.

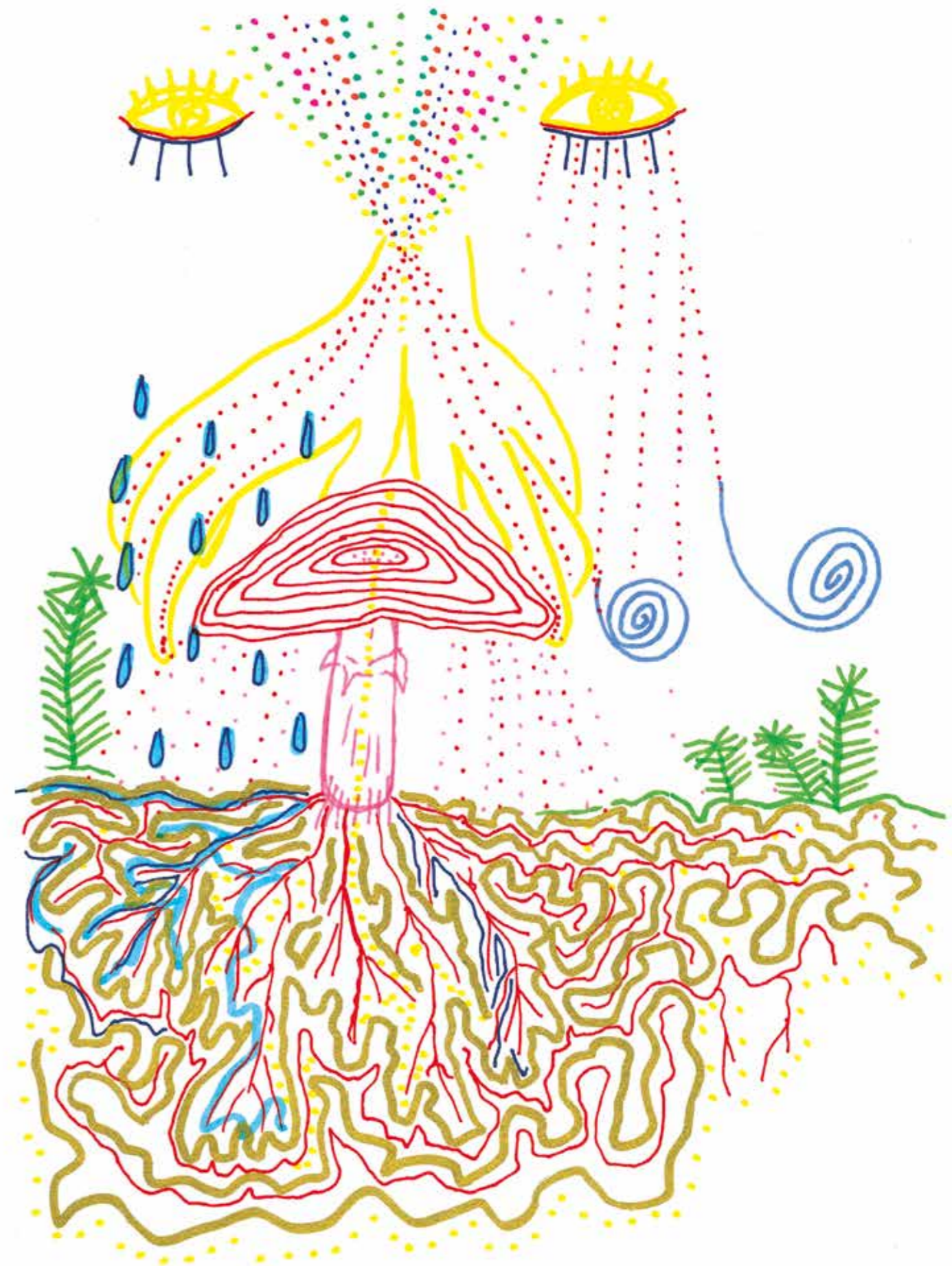
Image credit - Rod Leon



# ELISA GARCIA DE LA HUERTA

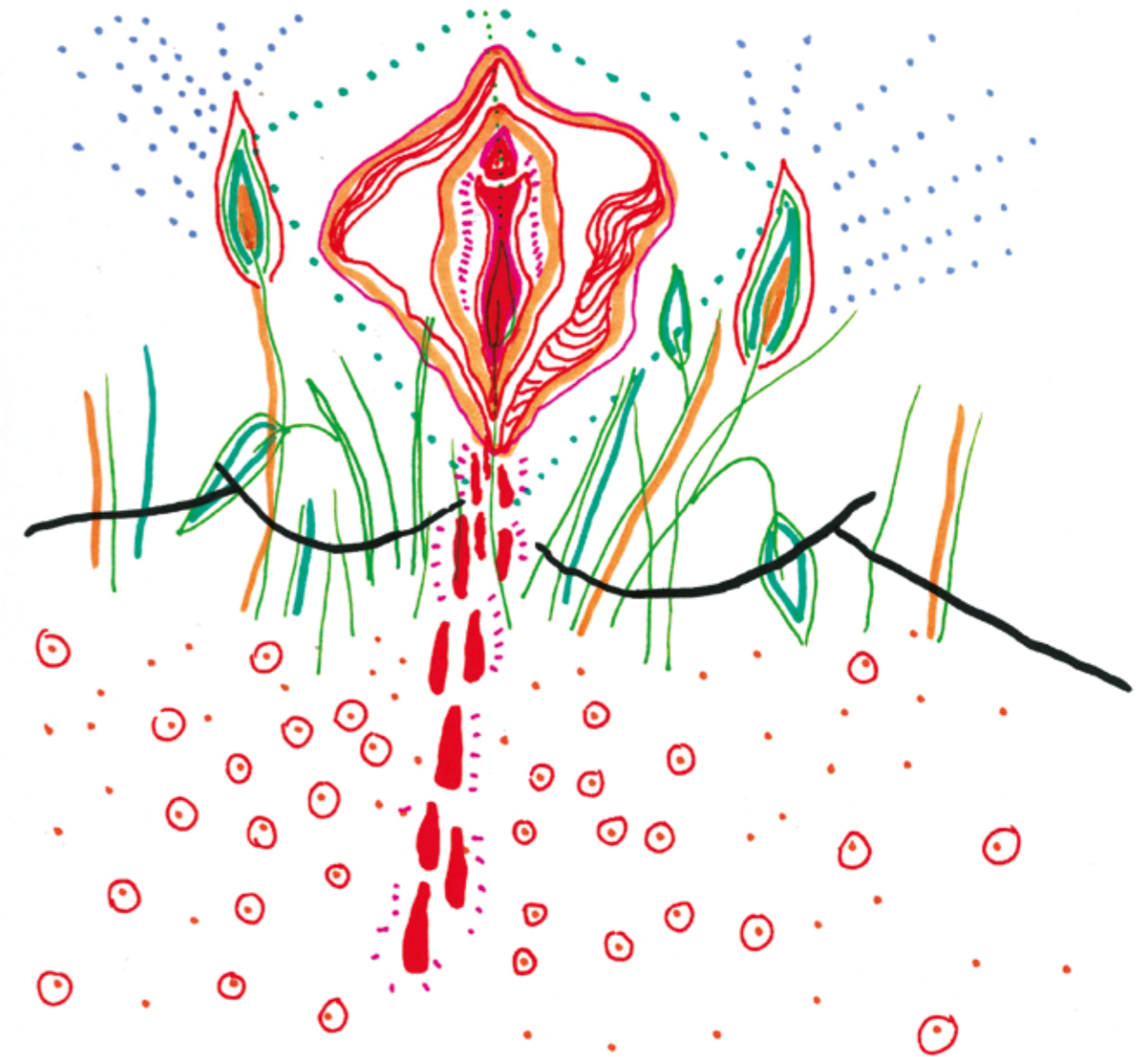
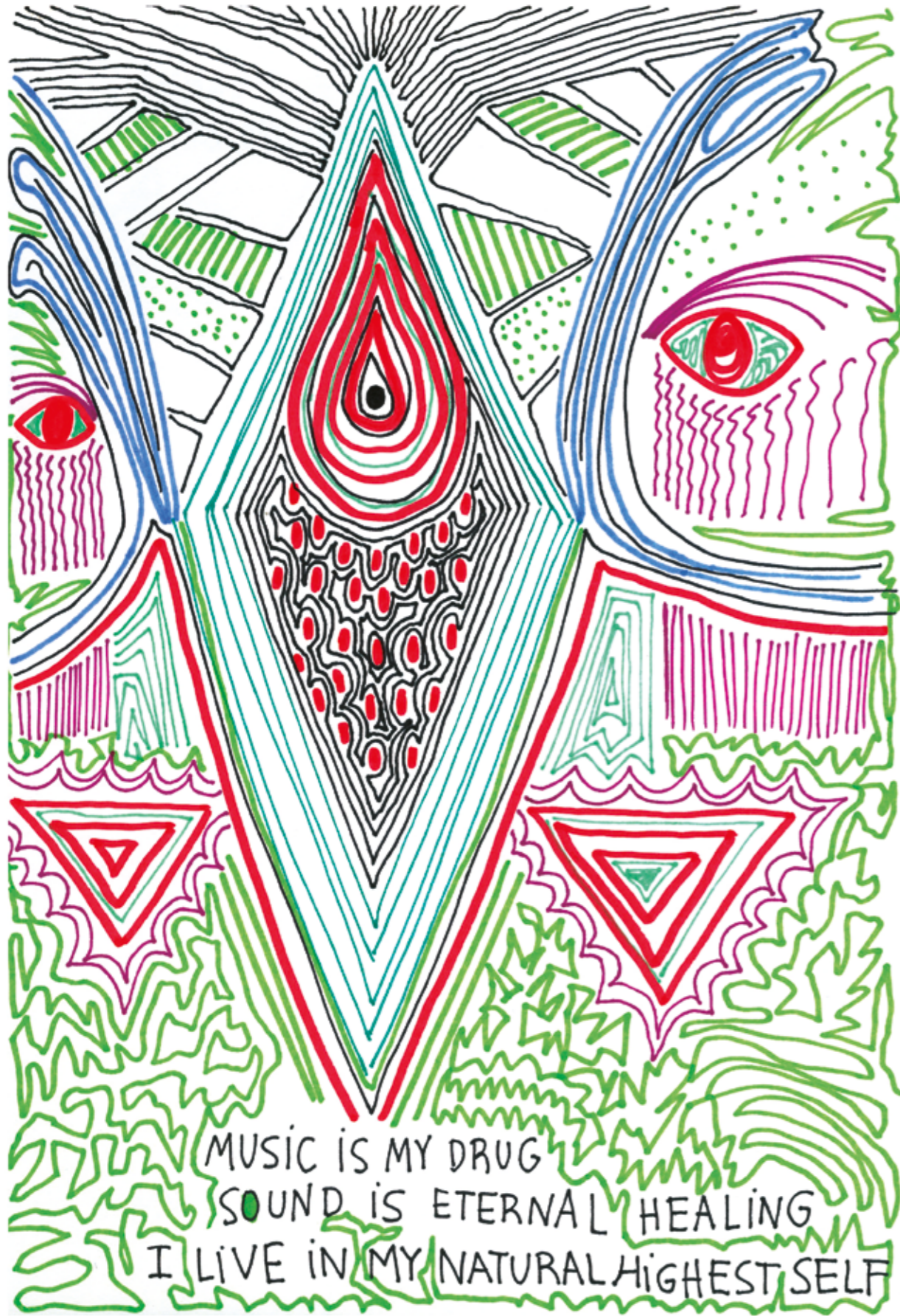
Elisa Garcia de la Huerta was born 1983 in Santiago, Chile and is an interdisciplinary artist and holistic Ayurveda Practitioner. She received her BFA at Universidad Finis Terrae, Chile in 2006 and her MFA Fine Arts at the School of Visual Arts, New York in 2011. She is also co-leader of Go! Push Pops, a queer, transnational feminist performance art collective. Elisa has shown her art/performance at the Brooklyn Museum, Bronx Museum, Whitney Museum, Untitled Space, C24 Gallery, Momenta Art and Soho20 Gallery in New York, USA and Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Museo Historico Militar, Galeria Artespacio in Santiago, Chile as well as Select Art Fair for Miami Basel, Changjiang Museum of Contemporary Art in China, CA2M Center in Spain, Canada and Korea among others. She has been nominated for the Rema Hort Mann Visual Arts Grant, has obtained a Brooklyn Arts Council Grant and the Culture Push Fellowship for Utopian Practice with Go! Push Pops. Her work has been featured in Dazed and Confused, Bowery + Bedford, ART 21 Magazine, Bust, Frontrunner, Nakid Magazine, SHE/FOLK, Huffington Post, Japan Times, BUSTLE, ArtSlant, Slutist, Hyperallergic, The Wild Magazine,

NY Observer, Paper Magazine, Interview Magazine, Milk Media, Art Fag City, Art Net TV, Bushwick Daily, BOMBlog, CatchFire, BronxNet TV, Abiola TV, El Mercurio, Mas Deco, Artishock and Arte al Limite Magazine. Garcia has been an Artist-in-Residence at Alexandra Arts in Manchester, UK, Soho20 Chelsea in NYC, The Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore as well as in Havana, Cuba 2003 and London, UK 2007 and performed in Tokyo Japan with Go!PushPops as part of US/Japan exchange fellowship this 2015.



"Refuge" serie, Elisa Garcia de la Huerta  
scanned hand drawings on acid free paper,  
part of a serie of work as artist book format, 2016-18









# TURNING AROUND AND BACK AGAIN

BY LAUREN VELVICK

The overarching theme of this year's Wonder Women radical feminist festival in Manchester has to do with women's representation and influence in our political and cultural institutions, responding to the centenary of the Representation of the People act. 1918 was the first time that any women were able to vote in Britain, but as we must be careful to acknowledge, it was only property-owning women over thirty who were granted this basic right with the act. As such, it is important to commemorate and respond with nuance, something that the research-lead art practices of Hannah Leighton-Boyce and Ruth Barker are able to do by virtue of their methods and structure. As part of the festival, Leighton-Boyce and Barker have been commissioned to produce new bodies of work to be presented in a two-person exhibition at Castlefield Gallery, part of the gallery's long-running 'head to head' series, whereby two artists whose work corresponds are placed in juxtaposition. Over the past year, both artists have been supported in conducting research residencies, allowing for the time and space to become embedded within their respective institutions and communities, and to explore unanticipated avenues.

Barker, usually based in Glasgow, was working with Salford University and the university's

art collection, whereas Leighton-Boyce, a Manchester based artist, has been in residence at the Glasgow Women's Library. The Salford University collection is a remarkable resource, comprising works of Chinese contemporary art, artists' film and prints amongst much more – at a time when many public collections are being plundered in order to plug the deficits created by austerity measures. The Glasgow Women's library, on the other hand, is an equally vital resource as the only accredited museum in the UK dedicated to women's histories, functioning as a counteraction to the patriarchally and colonially influenced collections of the majority of the UK's museums and libraries. The distinctive nature of the two collections is relevant in considering the work that each artist has produced. Both Leighton-Boyce and Barker have approached broad, familiar themes and near-universal symbols, and yet their work can simultaneously be understood in terms of the personal and particular. Comparably, a university art collection wouldn't always have been unusual, and one that still collects is sadly exceptional, whereas women's histories are obviously intrinsic to history in general, but have had to be set apart in their own library due to omission.





Hannah Leighton Boyce\_Consequences of progress; remnants for the future 1

It is also relevant here to draw attention and to question the clichéd, if not purposefully antagonistic, ways in which women's artistic and literary production is often defined as confessional and intimate. This tendency is interesting to consider in the context of both Leighton-Boyce and Barker's practices as well as the wider Wonder Women festival in general. With both artists, their new bodies of work are interpreted using reference to recent personal experiences, but deal with themes that are archetypal and mythic, and as such needn't necessarily be framed in these terms in order to be meaningful and effective. The impulse to require confessional intimacy from those who have been historically underrepresented, as though by taking so much from a few it will make up for previous exclusions, is one that this exhibition and the wider festival offer an opportunity to scrutinise and unpick. As previously alluded to, this centenary is promoted as an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the Suffragettes, but in gaining a vote and a voice for some, many were still excluded. This has edged the commemorations so far with a justified bitterness, and so in questioning how we can shape the future

of Manchester and support women's struggles the world over, it is imperative to admit discourse and critique.

Within this context, in which the way things ought to be with regards to equal representation are not reflected in the way they are, and idealistic tendencies bump up against pragmatism, research-driven art practices are especially relevant and useful. Leighton-Boyce described how in working with an archive she had imagined finding some specific document or figure to focus on, but whilst in residency at Glasgow Women's Library was instead drawn intuitively to widely resonant objects and themes, whereas Barker's work has ostensibly grown out of her own experience of Motherhood, but is also richly informed by philosophy and theory that deals comprehensively with the psychoanalytic notion of the mother and femininity, as well as voice and kinship. In an era characterised by bubbles of agreement and influence, when the purported proof offered by statistics can clearly be manipulated to suit ideologies and agendas, it seems that the forms of research afforded by artistic practice can be effective in a way that quantitative research is not. As Graeme

Sullivan contends: "If a measure of the value of research is seen to be the capacity to create new knowledge and understanding that is individually and culturally transformative, then criteria need to move beyond probability and plausibility to possibility."

Although at the time of writing the exhibition in question has yet to take place, from brief conversations with and research around the practices of both artists, some fascinating linkages have emerged that hark back to classical and biblical representations of womanhood whilst bearing witness to, and critiquing, the present.

**"IF WE ARE ABLE TO SEE THE PARALLELS BETWEEN WHAT THEY DID AND WHAT WE ARE DOING, WE WILL NOT ONLY PREVENT A NEW CATASTROPHE FROM OCCURRING, BUT ALSO CHANGE THE 'CHARACTER OF THE PAST'.**

This simultaneous ability to draw from the past whilst scrutinising current and future possibilities is epitomised by two female characters from western cultural history whose stories coalesce around a supposed infraction that doomed them: Eurydice and the wife of Lot. In the case of Eurydice, the infraction was not hers, but it was still the act of turning and looking back by Orpheus that sent her to the underworld, whereas for Lot's unnamed wife, her own inability or refusal to follow a command not to turn had her transformed into a pillar of salt. Barker has referenced Kaja Silverman as an influence on her thinking, and in the introduction to 'Flesh of my Flesh' (2009), Silverman speaks of Eurydice

and the idea of turning back and of claiming what or who went before us: "If we are able to see the parallels between what they did and what we are doing, we will not only prevent a new catastrophe from occurring, but also change the 'character of the past'."

In the work that she has produced towards the Castlefield exhibition, Barker does not explicitly point to the aforementioned references, but will include an image of Ishtar, the Mesopotamian goddess who, unlike Eurydice, escaped the underworld and left her husband in her place. The image of the goddess is a child's drawing, that will be made into a rug at Salford University's fibre workshop by artists' assistant Alena Donely. This is a relevant detail due to the way in which Barker has brought collaborators and the expertise of others into this body of work, which has been described as responding to a loss of voice triggered by traumatic birth experience and the general conditions in British society. This is indicative of the way that the artist views collaboration and kinship as a way to communicate more broadly, rather than as a dilution of her authorship. On this topic Barker refers to Silverman's contention that human beings are not autonomous, but rather exist within a web of connections, and the philosopher Mary Midgley who has written extensively on the sociality of selfhood. As Barker also notes, both of these stances are at odds with the traditional concept of the solitary artist that, despite denunciations, still holds sway along with the characters of Orpheus and Lot, one of whom is punished for turning and ostracises himself as a result, and the other who forges onward without hindsight.

For Leighton-Boyce the unnamed Lot's wife is central, both in terms of her weary anonymity and her transformation into the symbolically rich substance of salt. The artist highlights ways that salt has played an active role in human history, as a currency, a tool of oppression, a method of food preservation and of healing, whilst on a molecular level, it splits in water, dissolving and disappearing to the naked eye. For Leighton-Boyce this substance epitomises the energy and contradiction of division and attraction. The artist's other research focus, the round table, is similarly familiar and yet marked by historical specificity, representing a communal rejection of hierarchy but also having been used by specific figures and in specific contexts. Leighton-Boyce describes being drawn to the round table at The Glasgow Women's Library, later discovering another round table at The Pankhurst Centre in Manchester that had been used for Suffragette meetings and the 'Table of Sentiments' from the first convention of women's rights in Seneca Falls,



New York. In its evocation here the round table emphasises how the symbols and structures of equality and equality, whilst powerful and worthwhile, can also be used to reproduce hierarchies.

Launched on International Women's Day, March 8th, it will be fascinating to observe how the interplay between specificity and universality in the work of Barker and Leighton-Boyce may influence the character of the Wonder Women festival. The commemorations for 1918 have already been marred by governmental incompetence, leaving just four days for community groups to apply to fund their projects, which is a detail reminiscent of Barker's assertion that the economic conditions of contemporary Britain are coalescing with other factors to render her publically mute. Therefore it is imperative to consider these two bodies of work, alongside the wider discourse around 1918 and contemporary feminism, as part of a complex network of community and kinship where the research and work is ongoing, but looking back, claiming what went before and reckoning with history is just as important.

Hannah Leighton Boyce  
Studio view, work in progress



## INTERVIEW WITH HELEN WEWIORA, DIRECTOR OF CASTLEFIELD GALLERY

Helen became the Director of the Castlefield Gallery in central Manchester at the end of 2016. Here she speaks to Amy Clancy about Manchester's place in the art world, addressing challenges and a new artistic exchange programme.

Q. You were born in Manchester and are now at the helm of its Castlefield Gallery, an organization whose mission is to nurture talent, explore cultural trends and deepen audiences' relationship to contemporary art. How do you turn that mission into a reality?

A. Manchester as a city has transformed over the last 30-40 years – economically, socially, and culturally. The city has long been famed for its vibrant independent music scene, from which many names have launched international careers. A history of independence is something Manchester is steeped in – it's certainly what I have been proud of growing up here, and the message I have always taken with me wherever I go. Castlefield Gallery is focused on

the visual arts, and was founded by graduates of Manchester School of Art in 1984. The gallery was a significant catalyst to a period of activity across the city that gave rise to the birth of multiple studios and an influx of artistic talent from across the UK, many attracted by the availability of low cost work space and a growing and dynamic visual arts community. Castlefield Gallery's work is dedicated to ensuring Manchester, the region and the North of England, are places where artists can successfully live and work whilst also experiencing national and international success. Our commitment is underpinned by our mission: *To nurture talent, explore cultural trends and deepen audiences' relationship to contemporary art.* Castlefield Gallery has long provided some of the first opportunities for artists living and working in Manchester to access formal, recognised exhibition opportunities, alternating and placing exhibitions by high-profile established professionals alongside regional graduate and postgraduate artists. This

programme strategy has proved especially effective in communicating the strength of these artists' works regardless of art world status. It is a strategy we employ today, and will continue to do so long into the future. As well as exhibitions, commissions and a public programme at our main gallery, Castlefield Gallery operates 'New Art Spaces' across Greater Manchester, a programme of pop-up, project and production space made available to our 200-plus Castlefield Gallery Associate members to incubate their practice at minimal cost and share new contemporary art with the public in a very immediate way. The Castlefield Gallery Associate membership scheme also provides opportunities for information and skills sharing, CPD opportunities, resources, promotion and a context for critical dialogue.

Q. From your perspective, what space does the city occupy in the art world today, and how has that changed?

A. After an exciting period of rapid growth

of the independent artist-led scene in 80s and 90s Manchester, there came a significant increase in galleries and venues in the 2000s. Manchester was regenerating. Ironically, over the last few years, as developers have acquired land for redevelopment, visual arts production and Manchester's vibrant independent scene (including music), has come under threat. Some of our largest and most promising studios have closed, and many face uncertain prospects. Momentum is thankfully now gathering towards collaborative action designed to address the need for alternative solutions for affordable production and project space. It is being slowly recognised that big venues and festivals alone do not give cities a distinctive cultural edge, and certainly do not make them a mecca for the next generation of people looking to develop a career in the creative industries. The talent drain hasn't happened yet, and indeed with some creative thinking, balancing a need for some city centre artist production facilities



with a new look at the role of the city region (Greater Manchester), we have an opportunity to transform challenge into further cultural growth.

Our exhibition and commissions activities extend off-site and into the public realm, and we are increasingly delivering local, national and international residency, exchange and research opportunities where possible, dovetailing these to our exhibition and showcasing work. We drive talent development through all of our work and even our structure – as a result of our volunteer, intern and apprenticeships, working wherever possible in partnership to do this. Our partnerships, formal and informal, extend across the arts and cultural sector, but also higher education, local government, community, voluntary and corporate sector. Partnerships are important to our work and can be critical to facilitating in-depth ways of working with artists whilst also enabling Castlefield Gallery to broaden the constituency of artists we work with. Vitally this underpins our ability to engage with a diversity of creative practice and artists, critical to ensuring the quality and dynamism of the programme, and delivering our charitable aims.

Q. How do you view the opportunities and challenges facing artists in Manchester?

A. There are many opportunities for artists in Manchester and across the North of England. Whilst studio and production space is feeling the squeeze, there are still many vibrant studios around and they are relatively affordable. Where studios have closed, key stakeholders are working together and with artists to identify long-term solutions. Also, pop-up, project and short-term production spaces remain accessible and affordable. The cost of living is certainly more manageable than being in the capital, therefore quality of life likely better, and whilst it certainly isn't possible for many to make a full-time living from their practice, there are countless freelance, teaching, academic and cultural opportunities available that can facilitate a successful portfolio career. The small-scale sector and particularly that of the artist-led and focused has taken quite a hit since the financial crash in 2008 and subsequent public sector funding cuts, so at a city level the ecology is less than complete. However, there does exist a strong network of organisations like Castlefield Gallery, right across the North of England, and many of whom are active in working together to deliver greater opportunities and impacts for the artists they support, especially in working as effective and vital bridges from the grass roots to mid and large-scale programmes. There are also some fantastic commissioning programmes actively supporting artists and their practice, and steady growth in residency opportunities that are well placed to develop the work of artists on the ground here and usefully network artists.

Q. What role does gender and diversity play in the art world today and what advice would you give artists trying to forge their own path in what has historically been such white, European male-dominated landscape?

A. The work of artists in England's regions can be overlooked, something too often than not fuelled by a fetishising of the arts and cultural scene in London. Don't get me wrong, I don't for one minute believe it is easy to 'make it' in London, that an artist can move to the capital and that will lead to instant success, quite the opposite. It's tough in London – a highly competitive and indeed over-saturated market. It can, though, be challenging for artists in the regions to grow their careers, for a host of reasons, some including historic imbalances regarding investment, the perennial challenge of enticing press and critics out of London, and collectors and collections flocking to London and abroad to buy when they have a wealth of collecting opportunities on their own doorsteps, but not the market ecology around this talent to instil confidence to collect work by artists operating outside of the capital – this creates a bit of a vicious circle. These opportunities form part of a vital set of conditions that enable artists to successfully develop their work and their careers. Some of the challenges that artists face stem from the way in which their local ecologies operate, however. The cultural strategies and key messaging adopted by some of our major cities up and down the country are too focused on venues, festivals and major cultural events. There is a failure to highlight to the world and celebrate vibrant, independent artist and production scenes, the very elements of a cultural ecology that can make a place feel exciting from the outside in, somewhere to be explored and discover, somewhere with a potentially unique offer. Under-representation is clearly more acute for some, and it is clear that challenges for women artists and many diverse artists remain rife right across the art world, in this country and abroad. It is right to be concerned about entire generations of artists not being collected and therefore missing from collections, because the histories they communicate and powerful stories they can tell won't be available to future generations. However, this is even more heightened when we consider women and diverse artists. There also remains, as with many other sectors, significant pay imbalances. Our upcoming exhibition of the work of Ruth Barker and Hannah Leighton-Boyce, whilst is first and foremost concerned with showing the strength of these two artists' practices, does equally aim to contribute to addressing these imbalances.

Q. The gallery is undertaking an exciting collaboration with the University of Salford and Glasgow Women's Library to mark the start and end of 2018 – the anniversary of the Representation of the People's Act. Please can you tell us more about the initiative, and the significance of the centenary year in its conception?

A. During 2017, Castlefield Gallery has supported Ruth Barker (Glasgow) and Hannah Leighton-Boyce (Manchester) to undertake research residencies, Leighton-Boyce in Scotland with Glasgow Women's Library, and Barker in Salford with the University of Salford and University of Salford Art Collection. Their residency periods

have informed newly commissioned works for presentation at Castlefield Gallery Manchester, tour to Glasgow Women's Library, and acquisition into the University of Salford Art Collection. On 8 March 2018, International Women's Day, to mark the launch of their exhibition, Castlefield Gallery will premiere new performance work by Ruth Barker developed especially for the exhibition. It is significant that we are launching this show in 2018, as this year marks the 100-year anniversary of The Representation of the People's Act, brought in to reform the electoral system in Great Britain. The act was a key moment for women, marking the beginning of a journey towards suffrage by extending franchise to 8.4 million women. Co-commissioned with the University of Salford, the institution's Chancellor and 'writer in residence', the distinguished, award-winning writer of fiction, poetry and plays, Jackie Kay MBE, will write a commissioned poem inspired by the exhibition.

Q. What were you drawn to about these artists work and how will the exchange work in practice?

A. Castlefield Gallery itself is very much focused on exchange as we believe exchange programmes are a great way to attract artistic talent to Manchester and the regions, but in a connected way that levers opportunities for artists on the ground to work nationally and internationally, importantly encouraging legacy outcomes for all involved. One of the best opportunities Manchester can offer is that it is a place that welcomes people, and where it feels as if you can achieve anything if you put your mind to it.

Ruth Barker specialises in performance and performative-writing, she has an ongoing engagement with the 'voice'. She creates strange poetry that throws together autobiographical sketches with echoes of humanity's oldest stories, creating hypnotic ritualised events, often accompanied by lavish costumes. As a mother of two young children, Barker is clear that her recent experience of traumatic birth precedes her new body of work for Castlefield Gallery, and aligns this with the emotional impact on her of current world politics – a fear of voicelessness in the face of what she terms as rapidly changing and brutal politics. With this in mind, the central figure in her new body of work, *If this is the last thing I say*, is 'the pulley-woman', a stand-in for Barker herself, and for her own body. This ambiguous figure perhaps stands for absence, a way for Barker to talk about her own mortality and an anxiety centred on not being able to speak anymore. Motherhood, illness, physical vulnerability, and the economic conditions of contemporary Britain are, Barker feels, rapidly coalescing to render her publically mute. If this were the last time that you could make your voice heard, she wonders, what would you use it to say?

Hannah Leighton-Boyce explores historical narratives through site-specific actions, sculpture, drawing, sound and installation. Her recent works are derived from museum archives and found objects that explore the politics of labour and industrial legacy. During her residency with Glasgow Women's Library, the artist has explored the relationship between the body and the archive. She was especially struck by the daily use of the library and the welcoming embrace as you arrive there. Leighton-Boyce's upcoming presentation takes inspiration from a large circular table centrally placed in Glasgow Women's Library, one used for meetings, tea, lunch breaks and conversation. The circular space of the library's table reminds her of a round table at Emmeline Pankhurst's house (now The Pankhurst Museum), once used for WSPU meetings, and 'The Table of Sentiments', a domestic parlour table used by Elizabeth Cady Stanton to draft 'The Declaration of Women's Rights' at Seneca Falls in 1848. For Castlefield Gallery, Leighton-Boyce's new works will echo her experiences, specifically through her decision to work with salt, drawing on its inherent properties of healing, energy, and the charge of 'coming together' she encountered at Glasgow Women's Library.

Q. Where and when can people view the work?

A. The exhibition will be open to the public at Castlefield Gallery from 9 March 2018 until 29 April 2018, launching on 8 March at 6pm. It will then tour for exhibition at Glasgow Women's Library from 1 - 23 February 2019, launching on 31 January 2019.

**"WE BELIEVE EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES ARE A GREAT WAY TO ATTRACT ARTISTIC TALENT TO MANCHESTER AND THE REGIONS."**



# SHIVA'S LINGA

HE'S THE LORD OF THE DREADLOCKS  
CUZ HE'S SKOOLIN YOU WITH HARD KNOCKS  
SO YOU BETTER GET TO STRETCHIN' BITCH  
MY MAN'LL MAKE YOU FEEL RESTLESS BITCH  
KAMA SUTRA FOR BREAKFAST BITCH  
DON'T ACT ALL PERPLEXED N' SHIT  
WHEN I'M THROWIN UP THE HEX LEGIT

HE'S THE LORD OF THE WAVES  
STRAIGHT DANCIN' ON YOUR GRAVES  
LORD SHIVA HEAR MY PRAISE  
CUZ I SEEN BETTER DAYS  
MY GOD HE A DESTROYER  
PUNCH YOU BLIND YOU LITTLE VOYEUR  
DON'T ACT LIKE YOU OFFENDED  
I'M SO HIGH I HAVE TRANSCENDED  
SCORPIO SEASON IS MY REASON  
IMMA STING YA ON THE LINGA  
THROW UP MY MIDDLE FINGER  
FOR LORD SHIVA'S URDHVA LINGA

HE'S THE LORD OF THE DANCE  
MAKE U SHIT YOUR PANTS

SO YA BETTER GET TO STRETCHIN' BITCH  
MY MAN'LL MAKE YOU FEEL RESTLESS BITCH  
KAMA SUTRA FOR BREAKFAST BITCH  
YOU AINT ALL THAT PRECIOUS, SHiiiiiT

I HOPE YOU'VE DONE YOUR YOGA  
CUZ LORD SHIVA'S GONNA COME FOR YA!



Shiva's Linga by ULTRACULTURAL OTHERS  
November 5, 2017 performance during TRANS-ville,  
curated by Milk and Night at Catinca Tabacaru, New York, NY





photo credit:  
Olimpia Dior



Hindus have elegant traditions of inscribing myth upon earth so much that India is a living landscape. A poem about the Wild God begins like this:

In the beginning is the word sung by the gods, the celestial intelligence, compassionate witness of primal passion. Shiva is the archer, he is fire, and Fire is a hunter. He is the primordial action that evoked consciousness and what we call Cosmos... "Celestial intelligence" is the guardian of the world of sacred order – a rhythmic structure that is Art, cosmos. The Celestial intelligence is Shiva... Shiva is Celestial intelligence, he is the Wild God whose many names and forms interlace. Wild God Shiva who is Lord of Animals. His body is made of the "fire of yoga," called Agni. He is the cloud with lightening and the seasons and the seas... He is all anxieties, diseases, and the destroyer of diseases, and disease itself.

He is lust, he is subtle, he is gross; he is the golden seed... he is food, he is eater... all the senses are his doors... Shiva, the destroyer who leads man out of the cosmos, is the Great Yogi who within

himself annihilates the world of experience; he is the ferryman and the ferry leading from this world to a nameless beyond... Shiva speaks to a long tradition of shamanic yoga practice, its ecstasy glows with the fire and drink of him – the Wild Archer of the pre-cosmos.

Shiva pours forth the universe as its creator and withdraws the universe as its Destroyer.

His mantra of praise is five-fold: OM – NA – MA – SHI – VA – YA.

*I bow to Shiva. Shiva is the supreme Reality, the Inner Self. It is the name given to consciousness that dwells in all.*

Very often, Shiva Lingas are but simple stones or rocky outcroppings said to be natural lingas and spontaneous, miraculous, appearances of Shiva. Smooth, river-polished stones are said to be natural manifestations of Shiva and are the most prized of lingas. Pouring water over a linga recapitulates ritually the falling of the rivers from heaven. During water-carrying rituals, pilgrims converge at the bank of the River and carry the sacred waters home in

pots, to pour it over their own Shiva lingas. The fire of Shiva and the cooling rivers waters are inextricably linked... all the great lingas are associated with divine waters. Springs, streams and wells that bring the heavenly waters to the Linga of Shiva.

The pillar of the linga is Shiva while the circular base, called a pitha or yoni, the "seat" is Shakti. Shiva is timeless transcendence; Shakti, the active energy of time and creation. Together, they form the whole of what is worshipped as the linga – Shiva + Shakti, Male + Female. Shiva-in-action is shakti, the energy that creates and nourishes the manifest universe

The river is the emblem of divine love, mutually shared... Without shakti, Shiva is shava, "corpse." The goddess is sometimes depicted dancing on the corpse-like body of Shiva, wielding the weapons and emblems of her power and putting on full display the energy that is hers. Such power the Goddess has here she verges on spinning out of control, and only by standing or dancing on Shiva does she balance that energy.

**A Performative Lecture & freestyle by Or Nah & UNDAKOVA of ULTRACULTURAL OTHERS**

November 5, 2017 during TRANS-ville, a feminist performance art salon curated by Milk and Night at Catinca Tabacaru, New York, NY

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# PANKHURST IN THE PARK

BY NAOMI KASHIWAGI

I am an artist, musician, turntablist, independent creative producer and a quotidian origami wizard. I produce visual art, sound works, music, installations, performances and events that often draw upon my dual heritage, an intrinsic fusion of two cultures - British and Japanese. Through my interdisciplinary work I bring together things that don't easily coexist, invoking something new and playfully unexpected through juxtaposition. I provoke the fringes of disciplines and genres, straddling the intersections of visual art, music and everyday life.

The arts have the potential to show that the everyday can be reinvented and that the ordinary is usually extraordinary - and can often provide a wonderful interruption to everyday life. Empowerment, kindness, empathy and compassion are core values I hold closely. These values are embedded in my work and life. Creative, thoughtful, everyday acts have the potential to bring joy, enchantment, liminal moments where people can experience the extra in the ordinary. I aim to show the power of thoughtful acts of kindness to enhance and vivify ordinary life. I believe that authentic empowering energy and passion, together with care and kindness, can catalyse positive change.

In 2014-2015, I became involved in producing some of the Pankhurst in the Park events in Alexandra Park with director Lotte Karlsen, performing a new Gramophonica commission as well as producing new work for the Alexandra Arts webshop. In 2018, I sat on the advisory board for the appointment of the Spring Artist-in-Residence.

I produced a Thursday evening event at Manchester Art Gallery around the time of International Women's Day. Taking inspiration from the gallery's fashion collections and exhibitions, the event explored the fashion activism integral to the Suffragettes' movement, particularly the use of their notorious green, purple and white color symbolism (green for hope, purple for dignity and white for purity).

This event also coincided with Wonder Women, an initiative that aims to inspire, celebrate and empower women in the city of Manchester today, albeit being inclusive of all gender orientations. During Wonder Women, people were invited to dress up for the event, taking inspiration from the Suffragette's classic green, purple and white scheme as well as from the gallery's vast collection of contemporary art. A hands-on workshop guided visitors in making their own wearable art objects to take home.

For the Gramophonica commission, I created Gramophonica (Pankhurst Remix), performed live on 30th August 2014 in Alexandra Park. This involved gramophone glitching on a wind-up gramophone turntable with the trees in the park serving as a naturally bedazzling backdrop. I played the 78rpm shellac record, It Always Rains Before the Rainbow sung by Vera Lynn, re-appropriated with radiating strips of electrical tape in the Suffragette colours.

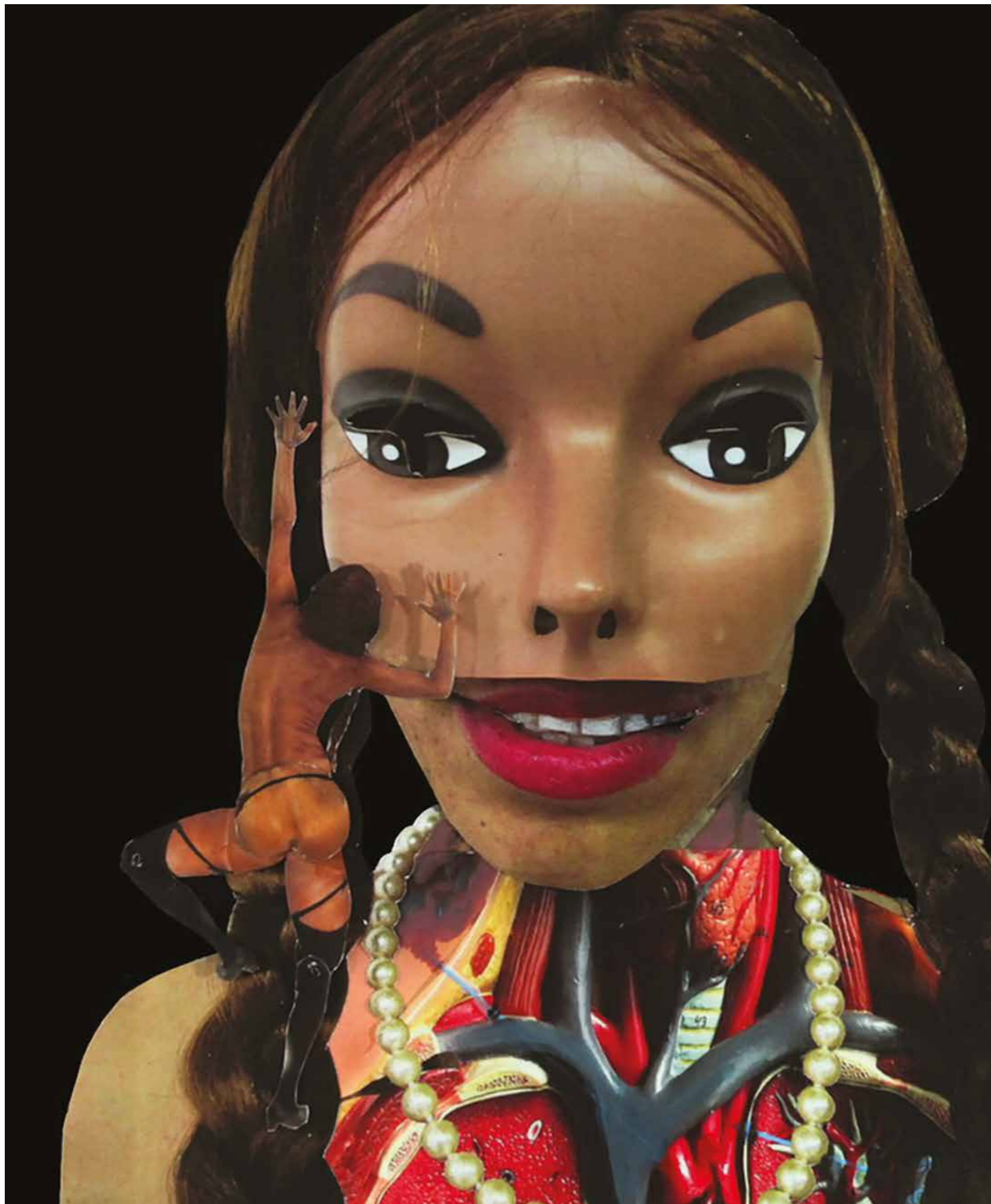
The electrical tape added an additional tactile layer that in turn created unexpected percussive discordances, harmonies and manually maintained

locked grooves when the record was played. My approach to gramophone turntablism explores the potential to transform audio from a specific era into post contemporaneous sound, like Detroit House Music or Ambient Techno.

For the Alexandra Arts webshop, I produced Unfolding the Pankhurst Legacy, a series of unfolded origami squirrel monoprints in the Suffragette colours, a limited edition series that whimsically pays homage to Emmeline Pankhurst and Alexandra Park. As part of a comprehensive community program, these Pankhurst in the Park events were inspired by the life and work of Emmeline Pankhurst, evidence of her historical impact and lasting relevance today, which continues to inspire and empower a large number of us women making gender equality manifest through our creative acts.







# NARCISSISTER ORGAN PLAYER

*Narcissister Organ Player is a hybrid performance/documentary film that explores how ancestral data is stored in our bodies, impacting the lives we lead. On a personal level, the film investigates how the artist's complex family history compelled her to create the masked, erotic performance character Narcissister.*

All images, film stills from Narcissister Organ Player













# TASHA WHITTLE



Tasha Whittle is a multidisciplinary artist based in Manchester, UK. Her practice involves, drawing, mural painting, screen printing, site specific installations and interactive analogue sound sculptures through collaborative practice. Founder of Outhouse - an outdoor project space for public art based in various locations around Manchester's Northern Quarter.

"As a practicing artist and illustrator I like to incorporate as many different mediums as possible, as I believe that by challenging myself to work on new surfaces and with different materials my work can naturally develop and constantly evolve."

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