

# WYSING ARTS CENTRE

## PRESS RELEASE

Wysing Arts Centre presents *They Call It Idlewild*, Helen Cammock's first new work following her Turner Prize award; and launches Test Space with Naomi Harwin's new exhibition, *Encounter*

Previews: 5:00pm-7:00pm, Saturday 29 February 2020

Exhibitions: 2 March 2020 – 3 May 2020



Helen Cammock, *They Call It Idlewild*, 2020 (still)

Wysing Arts Centre presents **Helen Cammock's** first new work since winning the Turner Prize last year. *They Call It Idlewild* is a new film and billboard text work developed by the artist following her residency at Wysing during the Autumn and Winter of 2019/20, and commissioned as part of their 30<sup>th</sup> birthday programme in 2019.

Inspired by the forgotten histories, photographs and artworks uncovered in Wysing Arts Centre's archive, Cammock's new film acts as a reflection on the politics of idleness and what it means creatively, emotionally and culturally to be idle at a time when the questions are being asked more widely about the physical and emotional cost of hyper-productivity required by Neoliberalism.

Presented as a large-scale installation in Wysing's main gallery, *They Call It Idlewild* begins with an evocative account of the artist's explorations in Wysing's archive; intuitively opening boxes and searching through photographs and other documents. Reflecting on these findings, Cammock's poetic voiceover begins to see

Wysing in new terms, as a place where artists are free to engage with idleness, and to take things at their own speed. She sees this as the foundation of a thirty-year history of creativity at the arts centre; a constant in a time of sweeping societal and political change.

Cammock explores the processes of idleness through visual and poetic intertextuality drawing on writers such as Audre Lorde, Mary Oliver, James Joyce and Jonathan Crary, to consider what it means to be idle. Part way through the film, Cammock begins to sing Johnny Mercer's depression-era song "Lazy Bones", drawing an explicit link between several historical periods, a reminder of the pervasiveness of racial stereotypes around laziness and the hypocrisies of the slave, business and land-owning classes. *They Call it Idlewild* asks; who gets to be lazy.

Accompanying Cammock's installation is a new billboard text work by the artist, sited in the grounds of Wysing. Expanding on the themes of the film work, two new text pieces ask passersby about their own relationship to idleness.

In parallel to *They Call it Idlewild*, Wysing Arts Centre presents *Encounter*, a new solo exhibition by Naomi Harwin, which launches Test Space, the Centre's new programme strand and public platform for their studio artists to test out new ideas and directions. As the first Test Space artist, Harwin continues her recent investigations into materiality and form to create an ambitious, immersive installation in a new small exhibition space in Wysing's main studio building. Re-purposing collaging techniques for a 3D environment, *Encounter* draws together abstracted photographs, drawings, sculptures, video and lighting to create multi-layered perspectives reminiscent of theatrical stage design. Series of objects with ambiguous sources, reference machine-made and corporeal forms in a deceptive interplay of line and form, surface and object.



Naomi Harwin, *Translations*, 2019

On 29 February, Wysing Arts Centre also launches *MOTHER...*, a new site-specific artwork by Heather and Ivan Morison of Studio Morison that engages with the connections between the natural world and mental health. Created specifically for Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire, *MOTHER...* is a sculptural structure reminiscent of the remarkable hayricks once found in this area, and is inspired by writer Richard Mabey's book *Nature Cure*, in which he recovers from severe depression through walking, watching and writing about East England's beautiful and unexplored landscapes.

Helen Cammock's residency and exhibition are supported by Arts Council England and Art Fund.

*MOTHER...* is commissioned by Wysing Arts Centre and supported by Arts Council England and the National Trust as part of the region-wide arts commissioning programme, *New Geographies*, which aims to bring contemporary art to unexpected places in the East of England.

**For images, interview requests and further information please contact Janette Scott Arts PR on [janette@janettescottartspr.com](mailto:janette@janettescottartspr.com), or 07966 486156.**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

Helen Cammock: *They Call It Idlewild* and Naomi Harwin: *Encounter*, 2 March 2020 – 3 May 2020, Wysing Arts Centre, Fox Road, Bourn, Cambridge, CB23 2TX. Open daily, 12:00pm – 5:00pm (during exhibitions only). Free admission. T: 01954 718 881 E: [info@wysingartscentre.org](mailto:info@wysingartscentre.org)  
W: [www.wysingartscentre.org](http://www.wysingartscentre.org)

*MOTHER...*, 1 March 2020 – Autumn 2020, Wicken Fen, Lode Lane, Wicken, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5XP. Open daily, dawn to dusk. Free admission. Café: 10:00am – 4:30pm, Shop and Visitor Centre: 10:00am – 5:00pm. For further information about *MOTHER*, T: 01954 718 881. E:[info@wysingartscentre.org](mailto:info@wysingartscentre.org) W: [www.wysingartscentre.org](http://www.wysingartscentre.org) <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve>

### About Helen Cammock

Helen Cammock was the joint winner of the Turner Prize 2019 and her exhibition *The Long Note*, has been presented at Turner Contemporary, Margate as part of Turner Prize, 2019. She was winner of the 7th Max Mara Art Prize for Women. Her subsequent exhibition, *Che Si Può Fare (What Can Be Done)* premiered at Whitechapel Gallery, London from June – September 2019 and is currently on view at Collezione Maramotti, Italy until 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Cammock's forthcoming film *Concrete Feather and Porcelain Tacks*, has been commissioned with Film and Video Umbrella, London; Touchstones Museum, Rochdale, and The Photographers' Gallery, London and will be exhibited in solo exhibitions at The Photographers' Gallery and Rochdale Museum in July and October 2020. This summer, Serpentine Gallery, London will present Cammock's project *Radio Ballads*, a radio programme and series of live performance events.

*The Long Note* premiered at VOID, Derry, Northern Ireland; and showed at The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, 2019. Other solo exhibitions include *The Sound of Words*, Reading Museum, UK (2019) and *Shouting In Whispers*, Cubitt, London (2017). Cammock's work has been included in group exhibitions at; Somerset House, Hollybush Gardens, London and FirstSite, Colchester and she has staged performances at The Showroom, Whitechapel Gallery and the ICA in London. Cammock was born in Staffordshire, UK in 1970 and lives and works in Brighton and London. Helen Cammock is represented by Kate MacGarry, London.  
**[www.helencammock.co.uk](http://www.helencammock.co.uk) [www.katemacgarry.com](http://www.katemacgarry.com)**

### About Naomi Harwin

Naomi Harwin (b. 1992, Winchester, UK) is an artist based in Cambridge and has been a studio artist at Wysing Art centre since 2015. Her sculptures, drawings and installations move through a self-generative process of translating information and images extracted from the investigation of an object. Harwin's work has been shown nationally and internationally, and recent exhibitions and features include: *To be an object is to possess a boundary*, 1961 Projects; *In Personam*, Singapore (2019); *Like-minded*, Minimal Zine issue 01 (2019); *Non-working hours*, 1961 Projects, Singapore (2018); *We:You,Me*, Firstsite, Colchester (2017), *AD HOC + TRADE Swap Editions*, Art Licks, SET and Castor Projects, London (2017); *in between things*, Nunns Yard, Norwich (2016) and *O*, Airspace Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent (2015). **[www.naomiharwn.com](http://www.naomiharwn.com)**

### About Studio Morison

The Morisons, Heather Peak Morison (b. UK, 1973) and Ivan Morison (b. Turkey, 1974) have established an ambitious collaborative practice over the past fifteen years that transcends the divisions between art, architecture and theatre. They are co-directors of STUDIO MORISON, their artist led creative practice, which supports and realizes their ideas and the people they work with. Central to their work is the involvement with spaces of human coexistence and with the communities that exist or may exist there. They have often engaged with public space, including in 2010 with Plaza. Commissioned by Vancouver Art Gallery Offsite the artwork considers the failure of modern cities to accommodate the needs of all people. Other works, like *Sleepers Awake* (2014) at Museum of Modern Art, Sydney are transitory works, whose alteration and ephemerality create starting points for open narratives. **[www.morison.info](http://www.morison.info)**

## About Wysing Arts Centre

Established in 1989 and celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2019, Wysing Arts Centre's large site in rural Cambridgeshire encompasses artists' studios, a large gallery, a music recording studio, educational and project spaces, onsite accommodation, ceramics facilities, and an outdoor space with sculpture. Wysing hosts experimental residencies for UK and international artists and delivers a critically acclaimed public programme of gallery exhibitions and events including conferences, symposia, workshops and music events. Through its innovative work, Wysing influences the development of the visual arts sector in the UK. As a respected and well-connected institution operating outside the usual gallery system and urban context, Wysing is uniquely positioned to develop programmes that provide opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and ideas, and which reflect on the role of art, artists, and arts organisations in society. Wysing is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, and part of the Plus Tate network. [www.wysingartscentre.org](http://www.wysingartscentre.org)

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