



more of an avalanche

11 February–8 April 2018

Preview: Saturday 10 February, 6–8pm (including a performance by Liv Winter)



2018 at Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridgeshire, UK, begins with an exhibition that asks – what does it take for people in marginalised positions to speak out and what are the mechanisms that stop them from doing so?

The exhibition takes the term "snowflake" as a starting point, a term used pejoratively by the political right to code dissent as whining, vulnerability as over-sensitivity and the right to protest as a willingness to take offence. Works displayed begin from a position of sensitivity and fragility before seeking strength in numbers and strength in networks.

The artists in *more of an avalanche* are: **Helen Cammock, Ilker Cinarel, Jesse Darling, Maryam Monalisa Gharavi, Juliet Jacques, Isaac Julien, Carolyn Lazard, Zinzi Minott, The Newsreel Collective, Harold Offeh, Raju Rage, S1 Portland (Women's Beat League), Syllabus III** and **Liv Wynter**. *more of an avalanche* includes new commissions alongside existing and historical work, some of which has not been seen since the 1990s. Alongside traditional material forms, the exhibition also includes references to the ephemeral "work" produced at Wysing such as DJ sets, conversations, workshops and experiments.

A new installation and performance by **Liv Wynter**, *Housefire* (2018), considers the absurdity and fatigue of constantly having to speak out. *Meanwhile, Character Building* (2008) a video from **Helen Cammock** presents street scenes from the artist's life in London and overlays them with narrative accounts of racial abuse. The video is accompanied by two lino-cuts *Untitled (Over-Sensitive)* and *Untitled (De-Sensitised)*, (both 2015).

Historical works by **Isaac Julien** and **The Newsreel Collective** refer to the origins of the term "snowflake" in insults like "the loony left" and "political correctness gone mad" and point to the long history of culture wars through the 70s, 80s and 90s. These works from **Wynter**, **Cammock**, **Julien** and **The Newsreel Collective** suggest that the rise of the political right (and attempts to silence a "sensitive" voice) has historically been tied to an expression of toxic masculinity where toughness trumps sensitivity and where brutality can be character building.

Both **Ilker Cinarel** and **Harold Offeh** propose new possible formations of masculinity while **Raju Rage**, **Syllabus III**, **Jesse Darling** and **S1 Portland/Women's Beat League** look at strategies for finding strength, power and safety in collectivity.

For **Ilker Cinarel's** *Adopting A Father* (2015–) project, the artist posted an advert in a local paper to find a father to adopt. *Lounging* (2018) while a series of test images from **Harold Offeh**, subverts the a pose of sexual longing from 1970s album covers. **Jesse Darling's** *#neoliberal Agitprop Poster* (2014) acts as a rallying cry for those marginalised by a political and economic system that seeks to punish anybody displaying signs of physical or mental illness.

Under/Valued Energetic Economy (2018) is a new installation from **Raju Rage** that maps out the tangled ecology between the artist's concerns such as "activism", "arts", "conversation" and "white-centric patriarchy".

In June 2017, **S1 Portland/Women's Beat League** led a study week at Wysing that explored female and non-binary views in electronic music. For this exhibition, the collective will now present a genre-spanning series of mixes that can be listened to in the gallery or online at wysingartscentre.org.

You Will Be Free (2017), a film by **Juliet Jacques**, was made in response to **Cookie Mueller & Vittorio Scarpatti's** "Putti's Pudding", a series of drawings and texts made together as the two lovers were dying from AIDS-related illnesses in 1989. In *Get Well Soon* (2015), **Carolyn Lazard** re-imagines a patient's travails with the US biomedical industrial complex as a text-based computer game as a gowned figure moves through an ambiguous landscape.

Maryam Monalisa Gharavi's video *Contain Contain* (2017) reenacts *Parangol' Helium* (2017) a single-shot film experiment by Ivan Cardoso. Gharavi's reenactment transposes the source from Brazil in a period of military dictatorship to contemporary Ramallah in occupied Palestine. Split across the gallery and the open studio, the work is interested in the reenactment and choreography of what was once spontaneous and improvisational.

Zinzi Minott's *Gun Fingers and Opaque Bullets* (2017) was commissioned to open "Opaque Poetics", the eighth edition of Wysing's annual music festival, in 2017, which was curated by DJ and producer Nkisi. A soundtrack (also from Nkisi) blends the evocative synths of classic jungle with the brittle percussion of contemporary club sounds and accompanies abstract imagery of the sea, telephone wires and a dancing

figure. Presented with posters from the festival, the video suggests the emancipatory potential of music and dance and their role in fostering temporary communities of resistance.

For *more of an avalanche*, Wysing Arts Centre's **Syllabus III** programme's ten participating artists have designed and produced a zine of new writing and reading references that respond to the themes of the exhibition.

John Bloomfield, Assistant Curator, Wysing Arts Centre, said, "*As Wysing transitions from the Polyphonic (many voices) year in 2017, to a year in which we're looking at collaboration and the importance of networks for artists and society, we're excited to present an exhibition exploring the role of networks in giving voice to people who are often marginalised. One of the recurring themes over the last year has been the need for intergenerational conversations and to learn from recent history, so we felt it was particularly important to connect work produced at Wysing with historical work by the Newsreel Collective and Isaac Julien. These works in particular have been little seen since the 1980s and 1990s.*"

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- **For press information contact Nicola Jeffs – nicolajeffspr@gmail.com / 07794694754**
- **An image pack is attached to this release and a catalogue text is available.**
- **Artists are available for interview and media travel to Wysing can be arranged on request.**
- **Wysing Arts Centre** is just an hour from London. On the evening of the preview transport will be available from Kings Cross and Cambridge station.
- Through its innovative work, Wysing Arts Centre 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; acting as a testing ground for new ideas.
- Established in 1989, Wysing's large site in rural Cambridgeshire has been significantly developed and encompasses artist studios, a large gallery, a music recording studio, educational and project spaces, onsite accommodation, ceramics facilities, outdoor space with sculpture, and a café.
- Artists who have worked at Wysing in artist residencies over recent years, developing and making new work, include Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, Ed Atkins, Jesse Darling, Michael Dean, Cécile B Evans, Evan Ifekoya, Harold Offeh, Imran Perretta, Elizabeth Price, Charlotte Prodger, Laure Prouvost, James Richards and Cally Spooner.

- During 2018 **Wysing Arts Centre** has offered their site and resources to artists working across a range of practices who wish to develop new work within an atmosphere of collaboration.
- **Syllabus III:** Now in its third year, Syllabus provides a programme for artists over a nine-month period and is supported using public funding from Arts Council England, with additional support from The Fenton Arts Trust. It is developed collaboratively with the participating artists, partner institutions and lead artists, who this year are **Jesse Darling** and **Harold Offeh**. The Syllabus III artists are from many areas of practice including photography, painting, sculpture, installation, writing, performance, poetry, and interdisciplinary and collaborative work that defies a genre. They live and work across the UK, including Cardiff, Folkestone, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Norwich and St. Ives.
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