



***Long time we've been working / Tamall fada atá muid ag obair***

**8 September - 11 November**

**Jay Bernard, Renee Helena Browne, Jacqui Duckworth, L. Franklin Gilliam, Onyeka Igwe, Rene Matic, Christopher McMullan, Adriana Monti, Francis O'Mahony, Alice Rekab, S. Pearl Sharp, Sistren Theatre Collective, Soft Fiction Projects**

**Chapter One: 8 September - 30 September**

**Chapter Two: 2 October - 21 October**

**Chapter Three: 23 October - 11 November**

**Public events: 25 and 26 October**

*Long time we've been working / Tamall fada atá muid ag obair* is a new exhibition and public programme organised by Project Visual Arts in partnership with Cinenova, a volunteer-run organisation preserving and distributing the work of feminist film and video makers, and aemi, a Dublin-based initiative that supports and regularly exhibits moving image works by artists and experimental filmmakers.

The programme includes films from Cinenova's project *The Work We Share* – newly digitised films from the Cinenova collection addressing representations of gender, race, sexuality, health, and community – and contemporary works from Ireland and beyond that have a resonance or rhyme with the historical works. The exhibition and public programme will feature works by Jay Bernard, Renee Helena Browne, Jacqui Duckworth, L. Franklin Gilliam, Onyeka Igwe, Rene Matic, Adriana Monti, Francis O'Mahony Alice Rekab, S. Pearl Sharp, Sistren Theatre Collective, and Soft Fiction Projects within an exhibition space designed by Christopher McMullan.

*The Work We Share* gathered a number of films that previously existed in precarious conditions; in some cases, with negatives being lost or distribution film prints being the only copy. This programme intends to acknowledge our interdependency: from organisation, to filmmakers, cultural workers, communities, and individuals. How can we acknowledge our interdependent relationships? How can we recognise our place in a network of

communications, relationships, and resources, particularly as an un-funded volunteer organisation? What different strains of labour does our work rely on? How do we sustain this work mutually?

### **Chapter One: 8 September - 30 September**

The first set of works in this three-part exhibition deals with historical circulations and interventions.

#### ***Now Pretend*, L.Franklin Gilliam** (USA, 1991, 10 mins)

*Now Pretend* is an experimental investigation into the use of race as an arbitrary signifier. Drawing upon language, personal memories, and the 1959 text, *Black Like Me*, it deals with Lacan's "mirror stage" theory of self-perception and the movement from object to subject.

#### ***Specialised Technique*, Onyeka Igwe** (UK, 2018, 6:57 mins)

William Sellers and the Colonial Film Unit developed a framework for colonial cinema, this included slow edits, no camera tricks, and minimal camera movement. Hundreds of films were created in accordance to this rule set. In an effort to recuperate black dance from this colonial project, *Specialised Technique*, attempts to transform this material from studied spectacle to livingness.

#### ***All in time*, Alice Rekab** (2021, Black Clay, Metronome, rattan chair)

Alice Rekab will present a reading of new work in response to *Long time we've been working / Tamall fada atá muid ag obair*. The bilingual/dátheangach performance 'time too-muh-fak-shuhn' explores questions of agency and legacy through the experiences of two Irish and Sierra Leonean women. Bringing together the lives of the artist's grandmothers in a single narrative, the installation in the gallery will be activated by the performance on 26 October.

The exhibition design by **Christopher McMullan** consists of a series of fabric baffles to block the light, and seating made of reclaimed materials from Project's storeroom. McMullan's colour palette and use of material creates a warm space and invites movement throughout. References and concepts include archival practices and spaces, tactility, and circulation and communication even within a space designed for focused viewing.

### **Chapter Two: 2 October - 21 October**

With S. Pearl Sharp, Renee Helena Browne, Francis O'Mahony

### **Chapter Three: 23 October - 11 November**

Jacqui Duckworth and Jay Bernard

## **Public Programme**

### **Event 25 October**

With Adriana Monti, Sistren Theatre Collective and Soft Fiction Projects

### **Event 26 October**

With Alice Rekab and Rene Matic

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aemi is an Arts Council-funded organisation. For more information visit [www.aemi.ie](http://www.aemi.ie)

For further information about Cinenova, visit <https://cinenova.org/>

Visual identity by **Rose Nordin**.

**Socially Distanced Opening Hours:** Wednesday, Thursday, Friday | 10am – 11am

Join us for a socially distanced viewing of the exhibition, visitor numbers will be limited. Visitors during this time are required to wear a face mask and there will be one member of staff present wearing a mask. Please e-mail [box-office@projectartscentre.ie](mailto:box-office@projectartscentre.ie) before 5:30pm the previous day to book your place.

## **Artist Bios**

**Jay Bernard** is a writer and interdisciplinary artist whose work explores issues of queerness, race, and archiving through a critical lens. Their short films, artwork, and literary collections have been exhibited at film festivals and galleries around the UK, and they were the recipient of both the 2020 Sunday Times / University of Warwick Young Writer of the Year award, and the 2017 Ted Hughes Award.

**Renée Helène Browne** is an Irish artist working across film, text, drawing, and spoken word. Their practice is rooted in the biopolitical power of deviant bodies as an alternative strategy to being in the world. They create dense, multi-layered artworks that harness storytelling as historical revisionism, angsty fandom, and collaborative world-building. Recent exhibitions include *A Strange Eight*, a solo exhibition at Intermedia Gallery, Centre for Contemporary Art Glasgow produced with contributions from Oreet Ashery, Sharlene Bamboat, Aaron Goddard, Mason Leaver-Yap, Tako Taal, Roy Claire Potter, Hamshya Rajkumar, and Aman Sandhu (2022), 'One Work: Renée Helène Browne', with LUX Scotland produced with contributions from Sharlene Bamboat, Hannah Fitz, and Mason Leaver-Yap (2021), 'Am I an Object, part IV' with David Dale Gallery at P/////AKT Amsterdam (2021), and the European Media Art Festival No. 34 (2021). They are 2021–23 resident with Talbot Rice Gallery and a shortlisted artist for the 2023 Margaret Tait Award from LUX Scotland.

**Jacqui Duckworth** was an independent filmmaker, born in Warrington in 1948. All of Jacqui's film and photography work arose from an instinctive and original cleverness rather than a traditional academic approach and she made several searching films before the MS diagnosis in her early 30s prevented her from carrying on with her plans for further film projects. These included: *An Invitation to Marilyn C*, *Home Made Melodrama*, and *A Prayer before Birth*, the latter shown on Channel 4 as part of a series exploring the relationship between mind and body.

**L.Franklin Gilliam** (they/them) believes that, in a broken world, the vision and creativity of artists are critical to transformative systems change. Gilliam's creative practice is research-based and multidisciplinary. It has taken the form of film/video art, installation, games, and illustrated lectures. Gilliam's projects explore the interplay between obsolete technology formats and the faulty transmission of historical knowledge and difference. Their projects have been screened and presented at the 1997 Whitney Biennial, the New Museum, Oberhausen Short Film Festival, and featured in Anäis Duplan's *BLACKSPACE: On the Poetics of an Afrofuture* (2020). Gilliam's role-playing game, *Lesberation*, premiered at New York University Game Center's *No Quarter* exhibition in 2015.

**Onyeka Igwe** is a London-born and based moving image artist and researcher. Her work is aimed at the question: how do we live together? Not to provide a rigid answer as such, but to pull apart the nuances of mutuality, co-existence, and multiplicity. Onyeka's practice figures sensorial, spatial, and counter-hegemonic ways of knowing as central to that task. For her, the body, archives, and narratives- both oral and textual – act as a mode of inquiry that makes possible the exposition of overlooked histories. Her works have been shown in the UK and internationally at film festivals and galleries. She was awarded the New Cinema Award at Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival 2019, the 2020 Arts Foundation Fellowship

Award for Experimental Film, the 2021 Foundwork Artist Prize, and has been nominated for the 2022 Jarman Award and Max Mara Artist Prize for Women.

**Rene Matic** is a London-based artist and writer whose practice spans across photography, film, and sculpture, converging in a meeting place they describe as "rude(ness)" - an evidencing and honouring of the in-between. Matic draws inspiration from dance and music movements such as Northern Soul, Ska, and 2-Tone as a tool to delve into the complex relationship between West Indian and white working-class culture in Britain, whilst privileging queer/ing intimacies, partnerships, and pleasure as modes of survival.

**Christopher McMullan** is a Dublin-based artist, who recently graduated from the National College of Art and Design where he was awarded a First Class Honours for his studies in sculpture and critical cultures. Working with such materials as harvested clay or aromas extracted from plants and detritus present in a space, he uses materiality as evidence of existence, to communicate memory and to explore ideas of permanence. Christopher was awarded High Commendations for the NCAD Staff Prize in 2023 and has been shortlisted by the RDS Awards for his graduate work, *Perfumer's Organ*, which was a part of the group exhibition, *Softening a Room* (2023). An article written by John Reily about this work is featured in the Autumn 2023 issue of *Irish Arts Review*.

**Adriana Monti** is an Italian-Canadian independent producer, feminist filmmaker, and author. She started her career in Italy in the late 1970s by developing a collaborative and experimental style that allowed the women who were the subjects of her research to take an active and creative role in her films. Monti is the founder of the experimental film school Laboratorio di Cinematografia – Albedo, where she taught and managed while she was finishing *Scuola senza fine* in 1983. She also taught film history and film production at the Women's Free University and at the Film and Television School in Milan. Monti moved to Canada in 1996, where she worked for fifteen years as a reporter and story producer at OMNI Television Rogers Media, and started her own company A&Z Media Ltd.

**Francis O'Mahoney** is a transgender, Irish-based filmmaker and artist. His films are focused on themes of gender and identity. Francis graduated in 2021 from the National College of Art and Design in the Fine Art Media department. During college Francis completed an artist residency in Digital Art Studios in Belfast where he made his award-winning film *Cat vomit*. Upon graduation, Francis has gone on to screen *Cat vomit* and his graduate piece *Nettle bush*, at First Cut! Youth Film Festival, Gaze Film Festival, Dublin International Film Festival, and Cork International Film Festival.

His main career goal is to direct a feature film from one of his original scripts and he is currently working on building up a body of work.

**Alice Rekab's** work reflects on a shifting and expansive understanding of family and personal identity. A range of idiosyncratic references emerges through their sculptures and images, which combine hand-made clay objects, found and reclaimed furniture and ornaments, and digital collages using their family photographs and writing. These disparate items are drawn together through Rekab's Irish-Sierra Leonean heritage, as a way of re-forging a distinct family portrait. Their work is collaborative and by inviting, hosting, and mentoring other artists Rekab reinforces an attitude of inclusivity and a broad perspective of what it means to be family.

**Pearl Sharp's** work focuses on cultural arts, health, and Black Diaspora history including the poetry short *Back Inside Herself* (1984 and 2009 Re-mix), the semi-animated *Picking Tribes* (1988), the celebrated *The Healing Passage/Voices From The Water* (2004) and directing numerous documentaries for the City of Los Angeles' CH 35. Her films have screened in Norway, China, Britain, the Caribbean, and at FESPACO. Instigating through art and activism she authored the non-fiction books *Black Women For Beginners* and *The Evening News*, four volumes of poetry, and in 2021 she released the short poetry video *Blood Bank*.

**Sistren Theatre Collective**, which means 'sisterhood,' was founded in 1977 in Kingston, Jamaica by working-class women in the social, cultural, and political context of Jamaica's socialist experiment of the 1970s following the first decade of independence. Since 1977, Sistren has used art as a tool for social change for the discussion and analysis of gender-based violence and to provide solutions through organisational networks. The founding members included Vivette Lewis, Cerene Stephenson, Lana Finikin, Afolashade (then Pauline Crawford), Beverley Hanson, Jasmine Smith, Lorna Burrell Haslam, Beverley Elliot, Jerline Todd, Lillian Foster, May Thompson, Rebecca Knowles, and Barbara Gayle. Assisted by the actor and director Honor Ford-Smith, the Collective was forged through a government initiative to improve employment in Jamaica's poorest communities. Plays like *Downpression Get A Blow* (1977), *Bellywoman Bangarang* (1978), *Nana Yah* (1980), *QPH* (1981), and *Domestik* (1982) along with community drama workshops, presaged the documentary *Sweet Sugar Rage* in 1985.

**Soft Fiction Projects** is an initiative run by artists Alessia Cargnelli and Emily McFarland. Based in PS2 Studios in Belfast, Soft Fiction Projects is dedicated to producing digital and printed matter on film and artist moving image culture. The printed project acts as a forum for presenting new collaborations, artworks, research, and writing from invited artists and contributors. Revisiting recent history in moving image practices, Soft Fiction Projects' research focus is an exploration of underrepresented voices, oppositional histories, and geopolitical narratives underpinned by intersectional feminist perspectives that challenge and reframe dominant hegemonic power structures.