



LARRY ACHIAMPONG & DAVID BLANDY
FF GAIDEN: ALTERNATIVE

Private View: Tuesday 3 May 2016 / 5.30 to 7.30pm

Exhibition: 4 May – 16 June 2016



The Gallery, Tyneside Cinema, is proud to present the first collaborative solo exhibition by artists **Larry Achiampong** and **David Blandy**. Since first embarking on their joint practice in 2013, the artists have performed and presented their work nationally and internationally but have not, until now, been the subject of a singular exhibition.

Opening 4 May 2016, *FF Gaiden: Alternative* is a major new moving image piece commissioned from Larry Achiampong and David Blandy by The Gallery. The work forms part of the artists' on-going Finding Fanon series inspired by the lost plays of Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), a politically radical humanist who supported the decolonisation struggles after World War II.

Fanon, who served in the Free French Army during WWII, later became Head of Psychiatry at the Blida-Joinville Hospital, Algeria, where, whilst treating Algerian and French soldiers, he observed the effects of colonial violence on the human psyche. He saw violence as the defining characteristic of colonialism and conversely as a cathartic reaction against oppression.

FF Gaiden: Alternative uses the virtual gaming world of 'Grand Theft Auto 5' to explore the writings of Frantz Fanon, whilst also asking what it means to be entering the adult world at this precise moment in time.

Created by a process of collaboration between Achiampong and Blandy with young people participating in The Factory, Tyneside Cinema's free arts programme for young people. *FF Gaiden: Alternative* combines a plethora of material gleaned from their conversations about contemporary identity; thoughts about how relationships and identities are formed through the virtual world; and an original, encapsulating, synth-driven soundtrack that contextualises the intense, high definition visuals and stories of the film.

END

NOTES TO EDITORS

FF Gaiden: Alternative represents the second annual commission offered to mid-career artists-in-residence at The Gallery. It was created by Larry Achiampong and David Blandy with collaboration from The Factory, The Gallery's art programme for 14-19 year olds.

A limited edition vinyl record based on the soundtrack of *FF Gaiden: Alternative* is available from May 2016 at The Gallery, Tyneside Cinema.

The artists will do a one-off performance in The Gallery at 7pm on 3 May 2016.

Larry Achiampong (b.1984, UK) and David Blandy, (b.1976, UK) amalgamated their art practices in 2013 to form a collaborative duo, alongside their own solo on-going art practices. Their combined partnership explores a shared interest in communal and personal heritage and the influence of popular culture. Through their use of performance, they create fictional and often digitised locations in which they invent alter egos and animation-like characters to investigate the self as a fiction and the departure point of their own identities. Their most recent collaborative projects include *Finding Fanon Part 1 and 2*, (2015), and *Biters*, (2014). Their upcoming residencies and exhibitions include: *Praksis: International Artists Residency in Oslo*, (Norway); *Eva International 2016: Still (The) Barbicans*, (Ireland); and *Wysing Poly Residency*, (Cambridge).

The Gallery, Tyneside Cinema opened in 2014 under the artistic curatorship of Elisabetta Fabrizi, former Head of Exhibitions at the BFI and Curator at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and Milton Keynes Gallery.

Since 2014, The Gallery has celebrated the crossover between artists and filmmakers working with moving image, presenting their work within a state-of-the-art gallery dedicated to exhibiting artists' films.

The Gallery has established itself at the forefront of presenting artist moving image and engaging new audiences by bringing some of its most exciting practitioners to exhibit their work in the North East of England. The Gallery has presented 15 artists since opening in 2014, including John Akomfrah OBE who premiered his first ever-solo UK show, *Peripeteia*, at The Gallery.

From 22 June until 21 July, The Gallery presents a major new installation created by influential sound artist Chris Watson, in partnership with BBC Newcastle.

For press enquiries please contact

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Exhibition Opening Hours:
Monday - Saturday 10:00–17:00
Sundays 11:00-17:00
Admission: free, open to all ages



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