

Many voices, all of them loved

John Hansard Gallery
1 February to 11 April 2020

#JHGVoices

John Hansard Gallery is pleased to present **Many voices, all of them loved** from 1 February to 11 April 2020.

Featuring: Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Kader Attia, Laure Prouvost, Willem de Rooij, Liza Sylvestre, Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa

Curated by Dr Sarah Hayden

Many voices, all of them loved explores the plurality of ways in which contemporary artists are activating the voice as sonorous, conceptual, metaphorical, and political material. It solicits a recalibration of presumptions about what constitutes a voice, and how it might operate. The voice is commonly conceived as a channel linking speakers and listeners; via technological prostheses, voice connects us across space and time. Underlining the relationality implicit in vocality, *Many voices, all of them loved* investigates the voice as agent of sociality and exclusion. Fantasies of direct communication are contested, listening is politicised. Attentive to how power differentials, sensory capacities, and linguistic competencies determine how particular voices are 'heard', the exhibition sets the audible voice in play with its legible counterpart. Stretching the voice to encompass much more than just humans talking, this exhibition aims to amplify the sounds of inanimate materials, and other-than-human species, as voice. In the works brought into conversation here, vocality is made present as rhythm, as visibly discernible pattern, and as carrier of meaning that extends from, and exceeds speech.

Lawrence Abu Hamdan's *Conflicted Phonemes* (2012) examines the weaponisation of linguistic analysis as a crude, punitive tool in the policing of borders. The wall-based work graphically renders the results of accent and dialect testing imposed by immigration authorities upon Somali asylum seekers. Contesting the arrogation of pronunciation as proof against the right to sanctuary, Abu Hamdan maps the infinite, unfixable complexity of voice as an index to biography.

Kader Attia's *Oil and Sugar #2* (2007) brings two of the world's most freighted, historically charged materials into active, kinetic contention. As oil is absorbed, the sugar-cube edifice inevitably, organically, collapses. In their interaction, these ostensibly mute substances voice their implication within an ongoing history of geopolitical power struggles, extractivist violence, enslavement and displacement.

In *DIT LEARN* (2017), **Laure Prouvost** marshals the voice as agent of power and control as well as intimacy and consolation. In a film that delights in the arbitrary nature of linguistic reference, sounds, words and images become unfastened from each other, their interrelations deranged. Through the choreographing of sensory and semantic overload, we are reminded of the pleasures, horrors and comedic consolations of language-learning and, indeed, of learning to speak.

Willem de Rooij's *Ilulissat* (2014) is a 12-channel audio installation, collaged from field-recordings of the thousands of sled dogs in one Greenland town. Their polyvocal chorus confronts us with vocality beyond humanity. In listening, we are reminded of the sensuous and social pleasures of embodied vocalization as collective, connective practice. As the dogs call to each other across this place where human and 'working animal' lives are unusually enmeshed, we are made newly conscious of our mutual entanglement as sounding co-inhabitants of a shared, threatened world.

Liza Sylvestre's *Captioned: Twentieth Century* (2018) uses closed captions to articulate how their seemingly routine omission excludes D/deaf audiences. Sylvestre's superposition of a silent but distinctively voiced commentary over a 1934 screwball comedy film meditates on her experience of profound hearing loss and elucidates the eloquence of non-verbal communication in cinema. Her captions re-orient focus from the onscreen dialogue to below-screen monologue, directing attention to the many ways that a film can be 'read'.

In **Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa's *Promised Lands*** (2015, 2018), sonorous voice and onscreen text interact disruptively. This essayistic film simultaneously ventriloquizes and contests the rhetorical strategies of the colonialist imaginary. In a reflection on the legacies of population displacement between the European and African continents, the political potentiality of the artist's role as (vocal) observer is tested. *Credits as at 24/10/2008* (2008) presents a chronologically ordered record of Wolukau-Wanambwa's formative influences as perceived on a particular date. Eight centuries of human thought and making are distilled into the form of scrolling credits – resonant voices haunting a film that does not exist.

Many voices, all of them loved is curated by Dr Sarah Hayden, as part of the 'Voices in the Gallery' Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Leadership Fellowship project (2019–2021) and supported by the AHRC and Mondriaan Fund. For more information visit www.voicesinthegallery.com

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The exhibition is accompanied by the Interruptions/Disruptions public programme, devised by Dr Eleanor K. Jones and Dr Priti Mishra at the University of Southampton, in conjunction with Sarah Hayden. Interruptions/Disruptions features free workshops by Sandra Alland (with film by Bea Webster), The Museum of Dissent (Donata Miller, Lisa Kennedy and Emma MacNicol), Dr Tom Rice, Dr Christine Okoth and Esthie Hugo, Dr Sophie Holmes-Elliott, and a Listening Session at which we will present Lawrence Abu Hamdan's audio-documentary, *The Freedom of Speech Itself* (2012). Workshop discussions will encompass global environmentalisms, radical inclusivity, auditory surveillance, and the role of art in resistance.

As part of Interruptions/Disruptions, we are delighted to host Nisha Ramayya as poet-in-residence for *Many voices, all of them loved*. Ramayya will lead four free creative writing workshops culminating in a collaborative performance of writing devised in response to the exhibition.

Interruptions/Disruptions is funded by the Public Engagement with Research Unit at the University of Southampton.

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Notes to Editors

Lawrence Abu Hamdan is a 'Private Ear'.

His interest with sound and its intersection with politics originate from his background as a touring musician and facilitator of DIY music. The artist's audio investigations have been used as evidence at the UK Asylum and Immigration Tribunal and as advocacy for organisations such as Amnesty International and Defence for Children International together with fellow researchers from Forensic Architecture. Abu Hamdan received his PhD in 2017 from Goldsmiths College London. In 2019, Abu Hamdan was jointly awarded the 2019 Turner Prize alongside his three fellow artist nominees.

Kader Attia (b. 1970), has developed a dynamic practice that reflects on aesthetics and ethics of different cultures and interrogates the concept of Repair as a constant in human nature, about which the Western and non-Western worlds have always had opposing visions. Repair is deeply connected to traumatic experiences from the past that live on in the collective human psyche. In 2016 he founded La Colonie in Paris, a space for decolonizing discourses that extends his praxis from representation to action.

Kader Attia's work has been shown in group shows and biennials such as the 12th Shanghai Biennial; the 12th Gwangju Biennial; the 12th Manifesta, Palermo; the 57th Venice Biennial; dOCUMENTA(13) in Kassel; Met Breuer, New York; Kunsthalle Wien; MoMA, New York; Tate Modern, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris, or The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Notable solo exhibitions include Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley; The Hayward Gallery, London; Fundacio Joan Miro in Barcelona; The Power Plant, Toronto; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; SMAK, Gent; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt a.M.; Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts de Lausanne; Beirut Art Center; Whitechapel Gallery, London; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin.

Laure Prouvost was born in Lille, France and is currently based in Antwerp. In 2002, she received her BFA from Central St Martins, London and studied towards her MFA at Goldsmiths College, London. She also took part in the LUX Associate Programme. Solo exhibitions have been held at venues including 'AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON', M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, Belgium (2019) Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2018); BASS

Museum, Miami (2018); *They Are Waiting for You*, Performance for stage at the McGuire Theatre, Minneapolis (2018); SALT Galata, Istanbul (2017); Kunstmuseum Luzern (2016); Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan (2016); Museum Für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt (2016); Red Brick Art Museum, Beijing (2016); Haus Der Kunst, Munich (2015); New Museum, New York (2014); Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City (2014); Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Whitechapel Gallery, London and Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (2013); and The Hepworth Wakefield (2012). In 2011, Prouvost won the MaxMara Art Prize for Women and was the recipient of the Turner Prize in 2013. Prouvost was selected to represent France at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019.

Willem de Rooij investigates the production, contextualization and interpretation of images through a variety of media. Appropriations and collaborations are fundamental to De Rooij's artistic method and his projects have stimulated new research in art history and ethnography. With Jeroen de Rijke (1970–2006) he represented the Netherlands at the Venice Biennale (2005). De Rooij is Professor of Fine Art at the Städelschule since 2006, and visiting advisor at the Rijksakademie since 2015. In 2016, he co-founded BPA // Berlin programme for artists.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Whiteout* at Kunstwerke Berlin (2017), *Ebb Rains* at IMA Brisbane (2017), *Entitled* at MMK Museum of Modern Art, Frankfurt/Main (2016), *The Impassioned No* at Consortium, Dijon (2015) and *Bouquet IX* at the Jewish Museum, New York (2014). Recent group exhibitions include *Mindful Circulations* at the BDL Museum, Mumbai (2019), *Stories of Almost Everyone* at the Hammer Museum Los Angeles (2018), the Jakarta Biennale, Jakarta (2017), EVA International – Ireland's Biennial, Limerick (2016), 10th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai (2014) and *Hollandaise* at Raw Material Company, Dakar (2013).

De Rooij's works can be found in the collections of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, MUMOK in Vienna, Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, Centre Pompidou in Paris, MOCA in Los Angeles, and MOMA in New York.

Liza Sylvestre is an artist and academic. She is the co-founder of Creating Language Through Arts, an educational arts residency that focuses on using art as a means of communication when there are language barriers present due to hearing loss. In 2014 she was awarded both an Artists Initiative and Arts Learning grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. Recently she has been the recipient of a VSA Jerome Emerging Artists Grant, a fellowship through Art(ists) on the Verge and an Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Her work has been shown nationally at venues including The Plains Art Museum, the Weisman Art Museum, Roots and Culture, Lease Agreement Gallery, Land and Sea Gallery, and Soo VAC. Her work has been written about in *Art in America*, *Mousse Magazine*, *SciArt Magazine* and the Weisman Art Museum's Incubator Web Platform. Most recently Sylvestre has served as the artist in residence at the Center for Applied Translational Sensory Science and the Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis, MN. During the 2019/20 academic year Sylvestre is a Kate Neal Kinley fellow completing work at Gallery 400 and the University of Chicago, and a lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa's recent exhibitions include: Bergen Assembly (2019), 62nd BFI London Film Festival (2018), *Women on Aeroplanes* at The Showroom Gallery in London and Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (both 2018–19), 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2018), *A Thousand Roaring Beasts: Display Devices for a Critical Modernity* at Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo – CAAC in Seville (2017) and *Kabbo Ka Muwala* at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Makerere University Art Gallery and Kunsthalle Bremen (all 2016). Her essay *Margaret Trowell's School of Art or How to Keep the Children's Work Really African* was published last year in *The Palgrave Handbook of Race and the Arts in Education* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

John Hansard Gallery

John Hansard Gallery is an internationally recognised and locally engaged contemporary art gallery in Southampton. Being part of the University of Southampton, the Gallery aims to change the world for the better through great art. To realise this the Gallery creates innovative and critically acclaimed contemporary art exhibitions, events, engagement and research projects that excite, challenge, represent and reach the widest possible public audience. From 1979 the Gallery was located on the University's Highfield Campus. In 2018 the Gallery relocated to a new purpose-built arts complex in Southampton's city centre, significantly increasing the space available for exhibitions, events and integrated programming. Learning and engagement are at the heart of the Gallery and underpin all its activities. The innovative education and public programme is accompanied by special community-focused projects, including activities for all ages and levels of experience. John Hansard Gallery is supported using public funding as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

www.jhg.art

University of Southampton

The University of Southampton is one of the UK's leading teaching and research institutions, with a global reputation for research and scholarship across a wide range of subjects. The University combines academic excellence with an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to research, supporting a culture that engages and challenges students and staff in their pursuit of learning.

www.southampton.ac.uk

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Arts at University of Southampton offers a wealth of inspiring cultural experiences and opportunities, showcasing emerging talent and renowned international artists. From visual arts, music and literature, to theatre and film, there's something for everyone.

The University of Southampton has rich heritage and long-standing commitment to arts and culture as an essential part of university life. The University is proud of its unique relationship with three Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. The Nuffield Theatre opened at its Highfield Campus in 1964 and was joined by

the University's concert hall Turner Sims and John Hansard Gallery in the 1970s. The relocation of the John Hansard Gallery to its new purpose-built home in the heart of the city's Cultural Quarter increases the University of Southampton's presence in that area, close to its Mayflower Halls and administrative offices in Guildhall Square. The opening of Studio 144 symbolises an extraordinary moment for Southampton and the University will be working closely with John Hansard Gallery, City Eye and NST Nuffield Southampton Theatres to deepen public engagement, to share its research and present inspiring and accessible cultural opportunities for all.

www.southampton.ac.uk/arts

The Arts and Humanities Research Council

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects: history, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, languages, design, heritage, area studies, the creative and performing arts, and much more. This financial year the AHRC will spend approximately £98 million to fund research and postgraduate training, in collaboration with a number of partners. The quality and range of research supported by this investment of public funds not only provides social and cultural benefits and contributes to the economic success of the UK but also to the culture and welfare of societies around the globe.

www.ahrc.ukri.org

Mondriaan Fund

The Mondriaan Fund is the public fund for visual art and cultural heritage in the Netherlands. It enables plans, projects and programmes of artists, exhibition makers and critics, museums and other art and heritage institutions, and publishers and commissioners.

All contributions reinforce the production or presentation of art and heritage from the Netherlands, both at home and abroad, where the market doesn't do this (yet): precisely there, art and heritage prove themselves as valuable havens of the imagination. The fund stimulates the public commitment and the development of these havens.

www.mondriaanfonds.nl/en

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