

CAMARA TAYLOR: a rant! a reel!

Exhibition: 28 Jul - 19 Sep 2021

a rant, a reel! is the first London solo exhibition by Glasgow-based artist Camara Taylor, curated by Languid Hands.

Camara Taylor's *a rant! a reel!* stems from an ongoing research project that uses 'silt' and the process of 'desilting' as both metaphor and methodology to examine Scotland's intimate entanglement and key roles in the development of the current global order. Negotiating flimsy cultural memories, illegible archives and Black gestures, the exhibition acts as a repository for Taylor's current *Transfixions* (after Shola von Reinhold) as they work towards a film currently situated in the gut. The works in the exhibition are gestures, experiments and nods to these slippery histories and their contemporary manifestations.

The title acts on multiple registers, invoking Scots language definitions of a rant: to romp, roister, a shout, lively tune or dance, gathering or great noise. A reel, takes the artist Hannah Black's reading of 'a word that means both a dance and a preparation for a fall'.

Attending to what theorists Eric A Stanley & Tina Campt have termed the 'lower frequencies of objection' Taylor manipulates registers that elide detection, provide cover or communicate feeling, those that are networked modes of refusal that don't necessarily engage in a direct speaking back/ to power, but rather a talking elsewhere. Think of kissing teeth, eye rolls, cut-eye, nod, complaint, finger snap, a walk, a lean, apathy (performed or otherwise), onto-kinetic gestures, as in 'ways of moving that index ways of being'. Think of gossip, rumour, whispers and conspiracies; those forms of history-making which resist the stoicism and austerity of the typical historical archive.

Using archival material, rumour and (Black) affect, to move beneath (and beyond) dominant discourses, *a rant! a reel!* attends to a historical and contemporaneous Black presence through a frame that rejects the parameters imposed by nation states, toward what artist Imani Robinson has called Black Mass. Whether it's a (mis)reading of the facial expressions in photographs of Black students at the University of Edinburgh in the 1900-1950s, a re-reading of William Davidson's composure and posture before his death in 1820, a re-working of stills from Kenneth Macpherson's 'lost' 1930 film *Borderline* which stars Paul Robeson, or a re-framing of the Scottish landscapes by African American painter Robert S. Duncanson, *a rant, a reel!* brings people, histories and legacies found in archives and anecdotes into contact with contemporary lives and organising practices.

a rant, a reel! is curated by Languid Hands as part of their Cubitt Curatorial Fellowship Programme No Real Closure which will see **Languid Hands curate five major new commissions from UK-based Black artists of Caribbean descent: R.I.P. Germain, Ajamu, Camara Taylor, Zinzi Minott and Shenece Oretha**. No Real Closure is a platform for experimentation and development of black artistic practice across exhibitions, moving image, text, performance and public programming. Absent is the disproportionate emphasis on surface-level survey style programmes and representational focus: when we gather, we do so to manifest collaboration, exchange, dialogue, relationships – a sum greater than its individual parts.

As entry to the exhibition is free, and many of us have a renewed commitment to mutual aid, we ask those that are able to donate any amount, big or small, to Glasgow-based **MORE (Migrants Organising for Rights and Empowerment)**, a group of migrants and members of the community

campaigning for the right to work, study, good housing and to be treated with dignity. Donate to their Climate Justice Is Migrant Justice fundraiser at chuffed.org/project/climatejusticeismigrantjustice

Camara Taylor is an artist and - - - who lives and works in Glasgow. They work with their various selves, collaborators and organisations to produce still and moving images, texts and other things // lately, projects depart from rumour, gossip and ambivalent readings of historical matter | they tend towards the excesses of dominant discourse(s) and lower frequencies of objection - - in the context of -

Recent works include *holus-bolus* commissioned by Edinburgh Art Festival as part of *What happens to desire...* cur. Tako Taal (2021); *suspuration!*, a film organised around queefs and other utterances for The Newbridge Project, Gateshead (2021) and *sorry I missed you*, an epub of collages for The Second Life, Edwin Morgan Trust & Saltire Society (2020/21).

Taylor has undertaken residencies at Market Gallery, Glasgow (2020), The National Theatre of Scotland, Glasgow (2019) and Fresh Milk, St George (2015). Camara previously participated in Curatorial Directions at MAC Belfast (2019); Constellations (UP Projects/ FTHo, 2017-18) and was a Committee Member at Transmission Gallery from 2016 to 2018.

Currently, they are procrastinating on some writing projects; participating in the Satellites programme at Collective Gallery, Edinburgh and looking forward to an Experimental Film and Moving Image Residency at Cove Park.