

ABUNDANCE ~ IN ~ TOGETHERNESS

A SCREENING PROGRAMME OF ARTISTS' MOVING IMAGE WORK

12TH JANUARY - 24TH FEBRUARY - OPEN WED - FRI - 12 - 6PM

AYO AKINGBADE ~ BLACK OBSIDIAN SOUND SYSTEM ~ HELEN CAMMOCK

UFUOMA ESSI ~ EVAN IFEKOYA ~ KYRONE OAK ~ SISTREN THEATRE COLLECTIVE

A screening room of selected artist's moving image works which explore collective practices and cooperative methods of art making while centering the work of contemporary Black British women artists and their artist testimonies; presented in the form of mediatheque and multi-screen installation, these works showcase methods and tools for self-organisation, resistance, reflection, healing and togetherness, backdropped by a landscape of social adversity, uprooting and isolation.

- *"Between us we have everything we need"* (B.O.S.S.)

Abundance ~ in ~ Togetherness is curated by artist and filmmaker **Kadeem Oak**; Cubitt's Communications and Programmes coordinator.

WORKS FEATURED:

AYO AKINGBADE ~ FIRE IN MY BELLY

(11min)

How do you come to feel part of a community? Over six months, in the making of this documentary work, Ayo Akingbade collaborated with Whitechapel Gallery's youth collective Duchamp & Sons in London to explore ideas of place and belonging through workshops, screenings, and fieldwork in the local area.

BLACK OBSIDIAN SOUND SYSTEM ~ COLLECTIVE HUM

(6min)

A short film exploring the polyphony of collectivity in the desires, motivations and stories that foreground the histories and present(s) of Black British sound. *Collective Hum* documents a collective in practice through the operation of B.O.S.S using multiple narration, overlapping voices and the sound of group interviews, meetings and events to create a polyphonic score to soundtrack images of the 'collective bodies, kinaesthetic experience and gestural language' of sound system culture.

HELEN CAMMOCK ~ CHANGING ROOM

(14min)

Changing Room is a video piece centred around the ceramic works made by George Cammock throughout his life, set in a space that has been his home for the last twenty five years. At the age of 90, George Cammock is frail and nearing the end of his life, a life that has borne witness to huge social and political change and upheaval. Some of

these moments inform the script that has been constructed from both existing texts and the artists' own poems and narrative that give shape and meaning to the work.

UFUOMA ESSI ~ FROM WHERE WE LAND

(19mins)

From Where We Land is an experimental film which examines a group of second-generation Black British women and their relationship with identity, feelings of cultural displacement, and their shared histories. Informed by contributions of the 1980s Black feminist movement in England and the legacies of first-generation children of African and Caribbean immigrants, the film incorporates archive, VHS and 16mm footage.

EVAN IFEKOYA ~ UNDERCURRENT 528

(15min)

Undercurrent 528 draws on Stephen Dwoskin's [experimental filmmaker b.1934, Brooklyn US and founder of the London Film-makers' Co-operative in 1934] complex relationship with care, desire and everyday rituals as made visible in his vast oeuvre and reorients it from Ifekoya's perspective. A series of invitations were sent out by Ifekoya to their extended black, queer and trans community for a dancer, a drummer, a gathering around breath and breathing and a sonic response to these images. This new video work explores the relationship between documentation and liveness, opening portals of intimacy by bringing people together through different spaces and time. It is part of a series of works exploring the reparative dimension of sound and its potential as a gateway to alternate aspects of our reality.

KYRONE OAK ~ HOME VIDEO

(10min)

'Home Video' brings together two moments in the artist's family history captured on camcorder where the artist is present as a child. One scene observes his sister's participation in a traditional Crowning of the May Queen Ceremony, taken place in the local Mount View Methodist church, Sheffield, South Yorkshire. A later event takes us to a Christmas celebration for the elderly nursing home residents of Heeley Sheffield, where the artist's mother is manager. Featuring a narrated extract from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The work looks to bear witness and archive the personal journeys and strength of west Indian minorities' integrational efforts in Anglo traditions. It presents to the viewer visual testimony of undetermined/perceived Black inclusion and vulnerability, noting the common void between its principles and lived experience whilst questioning the apparatus of black and feminine stereotypes.

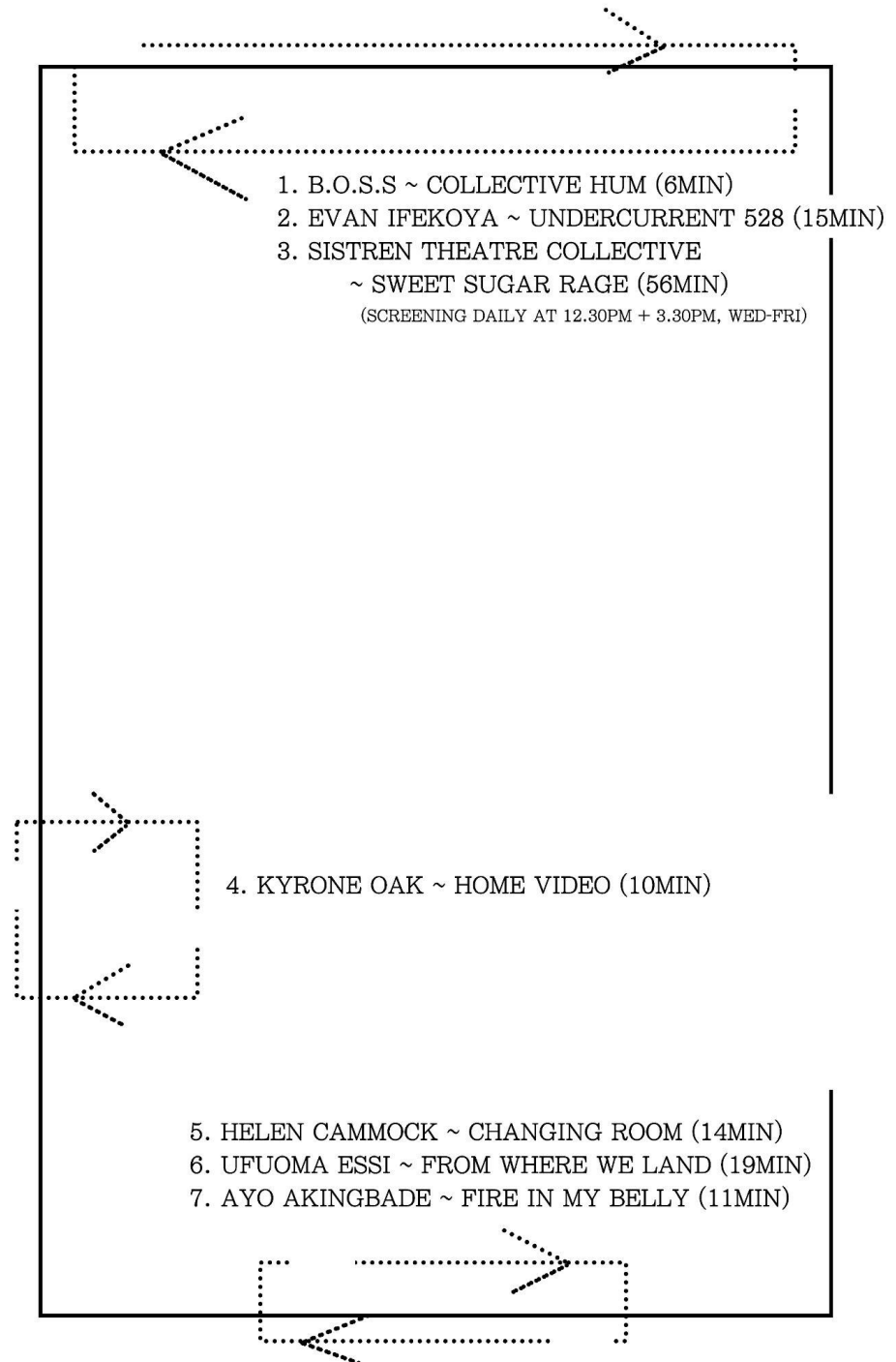
SISTREN THEATRE COLLECTIVE ~ SWEET SUGAR RAGE

(56min)

Sweet Sugar Rage documents the themes and methods of Sistren's workshops and theatre in the context of their wider efforts. This takes the testimony of women that worked in the sugar cane fields as the basis of drama workshops bringing rural and urban women into dialogue to address the exploitation of working class women's labour and the patriarchal attitudes of employers and unions alike. Following the methods of Freire's 'conscientization' and drawing on Caribbean storytelling and ceremonial traditions, we see the women collectively and performatively take charge of staging and re-staging ways to challenge the systems that oppress them and offers a methodology of learning together to effect social change.

Total Screening Runtime: 130 min

SCREENING ROOM PLAN:



ARTIST BIOS:

Ayo Akingbade is an artist, writer and director who lives and works in London. Her selected exhibitions include: *Show Me The World Mister* currently on show at Chisenhale Gallery; *Duette*, Towner Gallery, Eastbourne; *Jitterbug*, Museum of the Home, London (both 2022); *A Glittering City: Ayo Akingbade with Duchamp & Sons*, Whitechapel Gallery; *An Infinity of Traces*, Lisson Gallery, London (all 2021). Her films have been shown at Cannes Film Festival,

Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, MoMA Doc Fortnight and International Short Film Festival Oberhausen among others. Akingbade is a recipient of the Kleinwort Hambros Emerging Artist Prize, Brewers Award and Loewe Foundation X Studio Voltaire Award.

Black Obsidian Sound System (B.O.S.S) is a London based QTIBIPOC sound system formed in 2018, bringing together 15 individuals who work in radical sound, art and activism. Building upon the rich legacy of sound system culture both locally and across the African diaspora, whilst making a mark in what has been an overwhelmingly straight cis male dominated space. Their work includes renting the system to the community at subsidised rates or for free, technical workshops, live performance events, club nights, art installations and various creative commissions. Their primary aim is to provide amplification of the collective struggles within our communities and beyond. B.O.S.S were nominated for the Turner Prize in 2021.

Helen Cammock works across film, photography, print, text and performance. She produces works stemming from a deeply involved research process that explore the complexities of social histories. Central to her practice is the voice: the uncovering of marginalised voices within history, the question of who speaks on behalf of whom and on what terms, as well as how her own voice reflects in different ways on the stories explored in her work. Cammock's practice is characterised by fragmented, non-linear narratives. Her work makes leaps between different places, times and contexts, forcing viewers to acknowledge complex global relations and the inextricable connection between the individual and society.

Ufuoma Essi is a video artist and filmmaker. Essi works predominantly with film and moving-image as well as photography and sound. Her work revolves around Black feminist epistemology and the configuration of displaced histories. The archive forms an essential medium for her as an artist and it's through explorations with the archive that she aims to interrogate and disrupt the silences and gaps of political and historical narratives.

Evan Ifekoya is an artist and energy worker who, through sound, text, moving image and performance, places demands on existing systems and institutions of power, to recentre and prioritise the experience and voice of those previously marginalised. Their practice considers art as a site where resources can be both redistributed and renegotiated, whilst challenging the implicit rules and hierarchies of public and social space. Through archival and sonic investigations, they speculate on blackness in abundance. Their ongoing investigation considers the somatic experience of listening, the healing potential of sound and the spiritual dimension of sexuality. In 2018, Ifekoya established the collectively-run and QTIBIPOC-led Black Obsidian Sound System (B.O.S.S.)

Kyrone Oak is a London based artist and musician working across moving-image and installation. Their work is concerned with documenting personal journeys of overcoming, belonging and obstruction. With a discerning eye for examples of everyday heroism within the mundane. Kyrone's practice hopes to offer subtle points of contemplation and social political excavations into the Black experience.

Sistren Theatre Collective, (*'sistren'* which means *'sisterhood'*) was founded in 1977 in Kingston, Jamaica by working class women during the social, cultural and political context of Jamaica's socialist experiment of the 1970s following their first decade of independence. 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. Sistren's plays and workshops were a place to stage the histories and experiences of black Caribbean women at the intersection of patriarchal oppression, racism and social class, to promote education, employment rights, unionisation, reproductive rights and decolonisation.

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**Screening Room: Abundance ~ in ~ Togetherness** is curated by artist and filmmaker **Kadeem Oak**; Cubitt's Communications and Programmes coordinator. Kadeem is currently undertaking a year-long artist residency at Somerset House Studios; prior to his role at Cubitt, he co-coordinated the Artist's Moving Image Network at ICA, London. Recent exhibitions/screenings include: *Image Behaviour*, ICA London (2022); *Reel Axis, Not Poles*, Cubitt (2022), Nicoletti Gallery, Birkbeck Institute of Moving Image, *Transmissions, Somerset House*