

Institute of Contemporary Arts

PRESS RELEASE

Ain Bailey, Congregation

December 2018 – January 2019

Congregation: Club Night, 14 December 2018

Congregation: Sonic Round Table, 15 December 2018

Congregation: Performance, 18 January 2019



Courtesy Ima-Abasi Okon

The Institute of Contemporary Arts presents Congregation, a new live commission by sound artist and DJ Ain Bailey, culminating in a series of live events produced by the ICA. Bailey takes up residency at the ICA, developing her ongoing research into how people use sound to create a sense of place and creating a new work. Central to the commission is the idea of a ‘sonic biography’, the personal constellation of sounds that form an individual identity, and a consideration of the ways in which communities are formed through the sharing of sounds.

During her residency Bailey will develop a new work, to be premiered at the culmination of Congregation on 18 January 2019. Prior to this performance, the artist presents a club night and a sonic round table.

Congregation: Club Night, 14 December 2018, 9pm–12am

Ain Bailey congregates her dearest sonic allies, DJs she has partied with, mentored and organised alongside, for a night of back-to-back battle of eclectic sounds, from lovers rock and rare groove, to jazz, house, Latin and pop. Joining Bailey is DJ Levi, DJ Marlon aka The Church Lady and ORETHA, who are all sonically connected to Bailey’s practice and broader DJ life story.

Ain Bailey says: ‘This is about memorializing nights that have come and gone – the Sewing Circle at the Ritzy, Precious Brown at the Candy Bar, Shugs, Lambeth Women’s Centre, blues dances – and mourning the loss of parties that we used to go to.’

Congregation: Sonic Round Table, 15 December 2018, 11.30am–4pm

Bailey frequently employs the sonic round table as part of her work, inviting a group of people to collectively share and discuss sounds that relate to their own personal histories. This event marks the first time Bailey invites an audience to listen to the tracks and sounds the participants have selected.

Participants include academic Gail Lewis; writer Nana Adusei-Poku; curator Amal Khalaf; and artists Jimmy Robert, Ian Stonehouse, Sonia Boyce and Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski – all whose work bears a direct relation to Bailey’s own sonic practice.

This sonic round table builds on events undertaken by the artist at Wysing Arts Centre and follows a commission by Serpentine Projects.

Congregation: Performance, 18 January 2019, 8pm

Bailey premieres a new work alongside musician Jockel Liess. A sonic comrade of Ain Bailey, Jockel and Ain have studied and gigged together. Liess makes generative and minimalist work, creating audio-visual compositions that derive from artistic traditions of visual and musical minimalism. For their collaboration, Liess has invited Bailey to respond to a new composition, which will be released on Resterecords in 2019.

[Ain Bailey](#) is a sound artist and DJ. Her current practice involves an exploration of sonic autobiographies, architectural acoustics, live performance, as well as collaborations with performance, visual and sonic artists. Among these is performance/visual artist Jimmy Robert, who commissioned Bailey to create a composition for his 2017 show *European Portraits* at PEER Gallery, London. *Oh Adelaide* (2010), her collaboration with the artist Sonia Boyce, has shown widely, including at Tate Britain; the Whitechapel Gallery; and The Kitchen, New York. In 2016, Bailey was commissioned by Art Basel Miami Beach to compose for the Soundscape Park. Bailey also devised a Study Week at Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge, which considered the role of sound in the formation of identity. In addition, in 2017, Bailey collaborated with Gaylene Gould on the creation of a Sonic Trail for Tate Britain, London. She also performed at *Guest, Ghost, Host: Machine!*, the 2017 Serpentine Marathon. Bailey is a research student at Birkbeck, University of London (on a break in studies) and was guest professor in sound at Kunsthochschule Kassel for the winter semester 2017/2018. Following a commission by Serpentine Projects, Bailey is currently conducting sound workshops with LGBTI+ refugees and asylum seekers.

[Nana Adusei-Poku](#) is an independent scholar, writer and educator whose work primarily centres around three themes: cultural shifts and how they articulate themselves through the intersections of art, politics and popular culture; artistic productions from the Black diasporas; and critical pedagogy in relationship to decolonial aesthetics.

Sonia Boyce is a British born artist who lives and works in London. At the heart of Boyce's work are questions about the production and reception of unexpected gestures, with an underlying interest in the intersection of personal and political subjectivities. Since the 1990s, she has been working with the improvised actions of others to create multimedia artworks.

Amal Khalaf is a researcher, curator and currently Projects Curator at the Serpentine Galleries. She is also Commissioning Editor (Projects) at Ibraaz and a founding member of the GCC Collective, a multi-disciplinary collective that explores questions of identity and institutions across the Gulf.

DJ Levi is a DJ based in London.

[Gail Lewis](#) is Reader in Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck. Her academic interests centre on psychoanalysis, black feminism, experience as a site of knowing and knowledge production, and social policy and welfare practice.

[Jockel Liess](#) lives and works in London and studied at the Electronic Music Studio at Goldsmiths University of London in 2012 and Byam Shaw School of Art in 2000. Liess exhibits his large-scale audiovisual installations and compositions in gallery environments, as well as at festivals and concerts nationally and internationally. In addition to his solo work, he collaborates on a variety of projects with other artists, musicians and filmmakers.

[ORETHA](#) is an artist and DJ based in London. Recent performances include Wysing Polyphonic Festival, Shambala Festival, 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning (all 2018), ICA, NTS Radio, StudioRCA, Rich Mix (all 2017), Auto Italia, Corsica Studios and ICA (all 2016).

Jimmy Robert is an artist born in Guadeloupe, currently living and working in Berlin. His multidisciplinary practice encompasses performance, photography, film, video and drawing, frequently collapsing distinctions between these mediums.

Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski is a Minneapolis-based, London-born, Nigerian mixed-media artist/designer, archivist and organiser who DJs under the moniker DJ Marlon aka The Church Lady. Her work and research explore the relationship between feminist, queer, decolonizing theories/spaces and organizational, curatorial, artistic (self-)archiving practices.

Ian Stonehouse is Head of the Electronic Music Studios at Goldsmiths. He is an artist and has worked variously as a film, sound, video and animation tutor at the Light House Media Centre in Wolverhampton, the University of Wolverhampton and Middlesex University.

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