

Institute of Contemporary Arts

PRESS RELEASE

Black Quantum Futurism: Temporal Deprogramming

13 – 25 August 2019



Black Quantum Futurism, *ShadowGrams 1*, 2019

The Institute of Contemporary Arts presents *Temporal Deprogramming*, a new live commission by Philadelphia-based interdisciplinary artists Black Quantum Futurism, comprising a two-week programme of music, performance, spoken word, talks and workshops set within a new installation in the ICA Lower Gallery.

Black Quantum Futurism is a collaboration between Camae Ayewa (activist, musician and poet Moor Mother) and Rasheedah Phillips (artist, attorney and writer). Their work sits at the intersection of activism, art and speculative fiction writing, and is centred on a radical artistic methodology inspired by Afrofuturism, Afrodiasporan engagements with space and time, and quantum physics. Through artistic research, music, film and community-based writing projects, BQF offer practical techniques to empower marginalised communities. They focus on helping people to overcome social injustices, such as housing and health, and the difficulty of living in a high-tech world oppressed by linear time constructs.

The installation comprises recent works including zines, video works, a listening station and a large-scale Black Quantum Futurism ‘event map’. The map is used as a workshop tool to encourage participants to create their own order and pattern in the universe allowing them to exert control over their personal experiences.

The listening station incorporates a recording device with which audience members can contribute sound and voice recordings to the project. The video works on display – including *All Time is Local* (2019), *Black Space Agency* (2018) and *Sharswood Experiment* (2017) – consider time's intimate relationship to space and locality and recover historical memories of autonomous Black communal space-times.

Events occurring throughout *Temporal Deprogramming* will include contributions from artists whose work addresses themes that include temporality, chronopolitics (which concerns the relationship between politics and time), Afrofuturism, activism, housing and social justice, and the recovery and preservation of communal histories, memories and stories. Black Quantum Futurism have invited artists Barby Asante and The Otolith Group, musicians Nkisi and Elaine Mitchener, and feminist activists Sisters Uncut East End to contribute works to the live programme, which will take place throughout the two weeks.

PROGRAMME

13 August: Black Chronopolitical Imaginaries: Black Quantum Futurism and The Otolith Group in conversation

Inspired by the overlapping historical moments of the civil rights and Black Arts movements and the space race in North Philadelphia during the 1960s, Black Quantum Futurism present a talk with The Otolith Group on the concept of Black chronopolitics (which concerns the relationship between politics and time).

16 August: Grandmother Paradoxes, DIY Time Travel & Quantum Event Mapping

A lecture and workshop exploring the history of linear time constructs, Afrofuturist concepts of time travel, and Afrodiasporan traditions of time and space.

17 August: Black Space Agency and Community Futurisms: Gentrification and Temporal-Spatial Warfare

Black Quantum Futurism present a workshop in partnership with London-based feminist activists Sisters Uncut East End to explore housing issues and the impact of gentrification and redevelopment on marginalised communities in London and Philadelphia. The workshop will integrate local/participants' oral histories and memories, and concepts of alternative temporalities.

18 August – New and Old Sounds by Nkisi and Moor Mother

Performance by producer, live musician and curator Nkisi followed by a performance by Moor Mother.

21 August: A performance by Elaine Mitchener

A solo performance by vocal-movement artist and composer Elaine Mitchener, a previous collaborator of Moor Mother's and an artist whose work melds different vocal styles encompassing free-improvisation, contemporary new music and sound art.

25 August: A workshop by Barby Asante

Artist, curator and DJ Barby Asante is concerned with the politics of place, space, identity and the histories of colonialism.

For further information, images and to request interviews, please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Formed in 2014, **Black Quantum Futurism** is an interdisciplinary creative practice between Camae Ayewa and Rasheedah Phillips, based in Philadelphia. BQF weave quantum physics, Afrofuturism, and Afrodiasporic concepts of time, ritual, text and sound to present innovative works and tools offering practical ways to escape negative temporal loops, oppression vortexes and the digital matrix. In 2016, BQF founded Community Futures Lab, a community arts space in North Philadelphia. BQF is a 2018 Velocity Fund Grantee, 2018 Solitude & ZKM Web Resident, 2017 Center for Emerging Visual Artists Fellow, 2017 Pew Fellow, 2016 A Blade of Grass Fellow, and a 2015 artist-in-residence at Neighborhood Time Exchange, West Philadelphia. BQF has presented, exhibited and performed at Red Bull Arts, New York; Serpentine Galleries, London; Philadelphia Art Museum; Open Engagement; MOMA PS1, New York; Bergen Kunsthall; Le Gaité Lyrique, Paris; and Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, among others.

Camae Ayewa (Moor Mother) is a musician, poet, visual artist and workshop facilitator, and has performed at numerous festivals, colleges, galleries and museums around the world, sharing the stage with King Britt, Roscoe Mitchell, Claudia Rankine, bell hooks and more. Camae is a vocalist in three collaborative performance groups: Irreversible Entanglements, Moor Jewelry and 700bliss. In late 2016, she released her debut album *Fetish Bones* on Don Giovanni Records, and in 2017 she released *The Motionless Present*, commissioned by The Vinyl Factory x CTM. Recent festival performances include Borealis, CTM Festival, Le Guess Who?, Unsound Festival, Flow Festival, Rewire and Donaufestival.

Rasheedah Phillips, Esq. is a Philadelphia-based practising legal services attorney, artist, cultural producer and writer. Rasheedah's writing has appeared in *Keywords for Radicals*, *Villanova Law Review*, *The Funambulist Magazine* and other publications. Rasheedah is the founder of The AfroFuturist Affair, co-founder of Black Quantum Futurism and Metropolarity Queer Spec Fic Collective, and co-creator of the award-winning Community Futures Lab, which utilises themes of oral history, Afrofuturism and communal memory in an area undergoing redevelopment, gentrification and mass displacement. Phillips is a recipient of the National Housing Law Project 2017 Housing Justice Award, 2017 City & State Pennsylvania 40 under 40 Rising Star award, and 2018 Atlantic Fellow for Racial Equity. She is the self-published author of *Recurrence Plot (and Other Time Travel Tales)* (2014), and the editor of the anthologies *Black Quantum Futurism: Theory & Practice Vol. I* (2015) and *Space-Time Collapse I: From the Congo to the Carolinas* (2016).

Founded in 1946 by a collective of artists, poets and their supporters, the **Institute of Contemporary Arts** is an independent organisation and registered charity which supports the most pressing debates in contemporary culture. The ICA stages groundbreaking exhibitions, performances and keynote lectures by many of the world's leading thinkers. Previously home to the Independent Group, the ICA played a pivotal role in the development of Pop art and charted the course of punk, performance art and independent cinema. The ICA staged the first institutional exhibitions by Francis Bacon, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Tacita Dean, Damien Hirst, Mike Kelley, Mary Kelly, Barbara Kruger, Gerhard Richter, Dieter Roth, Cindy Sherman, Nancy Spero, and Cosey Fanni Tutti and early exhibitions by Bernadette Corporation, Robert Mapplethorpe, Steve McQueen and Tino Sehgal; many now historic performances including those by Laurie Anderson, Einstürzende Neubauten and Yoko Ono; legendary concerts by The Clash, Throbbing Gristle, The Smiths, David Bowie and The Beastie Boys; and critical discussions by the likes of Kathy Acker, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Stuart Hall and Homi K. Bhabha. The ICA Cinema and its dedicated artist's film programme continue to showcase independent film and support pioneering filmmakers including Chantal Akerman, Kenneth Anger, Matthew Barney, Derek Jarman, Ken Loach and Laura Poitras. From its home on The Mall – the geographic heart of the UK establishment – the ICA is an organisation in which different modes of cultural production thrive on the mutual engagement with one another, and a programme that speaks to the challenges of the 21st century. www.ica.art

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