

Queer futures and World-building: Panel discussion with Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell

3 May, 3-5pm

Cinema, Richard Hoggart Building

The Centre for Feminist Research and Department of Art are pleased to welcome Toronto artists and co-founders of Feminist Art Gallery (FAG), Allyson Mitchell and Deirdre Logue to Goldsmiths. This panel discussion on queer futures and world-building features Logue and Mitchell's new collaborative video work, *Hers is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Towards a Queer Horizon*, as a point of departure for a discussion between the artists and three panellists: Sara Ahmed (Goldsmiths), Catherine Grant (Goldsmiths) and Nazmia Jamal (teacher and curator). The panel is chaired by Erik Martinson and Nella Aarne (Goldsmiths).

Hers is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Towards a Queer Horizon Allyson Mitchell & Deirdre Logue, 2016, 24:58

In *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, José Esteban Muñoz writes, 'We must dream and enact new ways of being in the world.' *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon* responds to this injunction by bringing an everyday feminist utopia into being. This new world is not a remote planet twinkling in the distance. It is not only then and there—it is here and now, where we already live.

The future in *Dank Cave* is a mash-up of stereotype and utopia; it is not sanitized or sublimated. We won't live in the future without our macramé, our shag, our little animals. The female body will not be cleaned up in this queer future—it will arrive trailing its effluvia: bodily fluids, odours, patches of fur, cellulite, granny panties, that sucking sound. The lesbian feminist body, the fat body, the depressed body—it comes wrapped in context, swaddled in knitwear, and it requires a lot of rest. By remaining horizontal and low to the ground, this body serves as a queer horizon, the warm light of potentiality breaking just beyond it.

Deirdre Logue is a film and video artist who focuses on the self as subject. Using 'performance for the camera' as a primary mode of production, her compelling self-portrait video suites investigate what it means to be a queer body in the age of anxiety. Diving deep into the unconscious, Logue's recorded performances are a tangle of doubt, perversion, duration, sexuality, and psychic unrest. Uniquely located on the golden mean between excess and deficiency, self-liberation and self-annihilation, her works are at once unruly and uncanny.

Allyson Mitchell is a maximalist artist. Maximum politics. Maximum mediums. She works in sculpture, performance, installation, drawing, music and film. She is an associate professor of Gender and Women's Studies at York University in Toronto where she also coordinates the Sexuality Studies Program. Her ongoing *Deep Lez* project has resulted in a coven of lesbian feminist sasquatches, a menstrual hut cinema, a performance troupe called *Pretty Porky and Pissed Off* and several short animated autobiographical films and videos.

Most recently **Mitchell and Logue** presented *Killjoy's Kastle: A Lesbian Feminist Haunted House*. This project was conceived as a way to subvert hell houses built by radical evangelical groups that aim to frighten "morals" into its visitors. Using a 'deep lez' commitment to second wave community skill-sharing and political craft aesthetics blended with an inclusive consideration of current queer identity, Mitchell and Logue created a nightmarish and glorious vision of feminist terror where visitors are expected to form their own interpretations and are encouraged to engage in dialogue about contemporary queer politics. *The Kastle* has been represented in Toronto (2013) London (2014) and Los Angeles (2015).

Sara Ahmed is Professor of Race and Cultural Studies and the Director of the Centre for Feminist Research at Goldsmiths. Her most recent book is *Willful Subjects* (2014). Her next book *Living a Feminist Life* is due to be published by Duke in Spring 2017. This book develops her arguments about the political career of the feminist killjoy, a figure she first wrote about in *The Promise of Happiness* (2010). *Living a Feminist Life* was written alongside a blog *feministkilljoys.com*.

Dr. Catherine Grant is Lecturer in the Art and Visual Cultures Departments at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is currently working on re-enactment in contemporary art, focusing on how to bring histories of feminism to life. The beginning of this research is published as "Fans of Feminism: re-writing histories of second-wave feminism in contemporary art" (*Oxford Art Journal*, 2011). She is also the co-editor of *Girls! Girls! Girls! in contemporary art*, 2011 and *Creative Writing and Art History* (2012).

Nazmia Jamal has been organising and curating events since her arrival in London in 1997. She was a programmer at London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival / BFI Flare from 2009-2014 where she selected and screened the first solo retrospective of Allyson Mitchell's moving image work in 2009 and a version of Allyson and Deirdre's *Killjoy's Kastle* installation in 2014. She co-curated FAG's Axe Grinding Workshop as part of the conference *Civil Partnerships? Queer and Feminist Curating* conference at Tate Modern in 2012. In 2015 Nazmia performed the role of Dr Yoni Ladoo, demented Women's Studies Professor tour guide at the LA incarnation of *Killjoy's Kastle*. IRL Nazmia is an English teacher at an inner London Sixth Form where she has taught for 12 years.

Nella Aarne is an independent curator, writer and currently the Junior Fellow in the Department of Art at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her current research investigates radically democratic social organisation in the context of collaborative artistic and curatorial practices. Drawing from the legacies of feminist and political theories she seeks to develop a feminist curatorial methodology and establish conditions for ethical social encounters. She is also a co-founder of the curatorial collective VERBureau. Recent projects include *The Standard Model: Curatorial Propositions*, co-edited with Lucy Lopez and Adam Smythe (2015), *The Gift, If There Is Any*, Art Licks Weekend, London (2015) and *Pokey Hat*, Glasgow International (2016).

Erik Martinson is an independent curator based in London. He worked in Toronto at Vtape, a not-for-profit artists' video distributor, from 2005-2014 and was a member of the Pleasure Dome curatorial collective from 2006-2014. Selected curated screenings include: The Images Festival, Toronto (2012); Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2015); Chalton Gallery, London (2016), and LUX Artists' Moving Image, London (2016). Recently he was on the selection jury for Videonale.15 at Kunstmuseum Bonn (2015). While living in London he is working toward an MFA in Curating at Goldsmiths College and is Assistant Curator for the Nuclear Culture Project at Arts Catalyst. He will attend a curatorial research residency at Rupert, Vilnius, during the autumn of 2016.

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