

MIRREN KESSLING

Ruskin School of Art,
University of Oxford

The Body Can Be Made and Remade
6 - 25 September 2016



Mirren Kessling, *e work (Body Re-Made)*, 2016

Event: Made and Remade

6 - 25 September

Following Kessling's interest in exploring the performative potential of every day objects, she will be running a project throughout the duration of her exhibition exploring the lives of clothes. Kessling invites participants to come and share stories about items of clothing they own and let her photograph them in that particular item. Kessling will also deliver further projects and workshops related to clothes and extending/exploring the lives of garments. *Dates and times to be confirmed.*

Artist Statement

For *Platform*, Kessling presents a selection of photographs and videos that are traces of a performative exploration into identity. Each work is captured on a digital camera but left unedited to emphasise that the humble objects used alongside the body, such as dust sheets, clay, fabric and paper bags, have been transformed by being fixed in time by the camera or gesture of the body.

Viewing List:

The Beast (1975), (dir.) Walerian Boroczky.
K. (1989), (dir.) Jayne Parker.
La Villa Santo Sospir (1952), (dir.) Jean Cocteau.
Rembrandt's J'accuse (2008), (dir.) Peter Greenaway.

Reading List:

H. Julavits, L. Shapton, and S. Heti, *Women in Clothes: Why We Wear What We Wear*, Particular Books, 2014.
J. Huysmans and Patrick McGuinness, *Against Nature*, Penguin Classics, 2003.
S. Calle, *Take Care of Yourself*, Actes Sud; Nov/DV edition, 2007.
K. Goldblat, *Amor Psyche Aktion: Vienna: The Feminine in Viennese Actionism*, Moderne Kunst Nürnberg, 2013.
C. Strich, *Fellini's Faces*, Henry Holt & Co, 1982.

MODERN ART OXFORD

PL _____ ATFORM

PLATFORM

26 July - 25 September 2016

Project Space

Platform presents new work by emerging artists. Modern Art Oxford has consistently promoted emerging artists throughout its history and in 2012 launched *Platform*. *Platform* is an annual project that nurtures and profiles fine art graduates from local universities across the South East of England.

Five public galleries from the Contemporary Visual Arts Network - Aspex, Portsmouth; De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill; Modern Art Oxford, Oxford; MK Gallery, Milton Keynes and Turner Contemporary, Margate, have each selected artists from this year's graduate shows to exhibit at their respective institutions over the coming months. An artist from each gallery will be shortlisted for the *Platform* prize in which the winner receives a year of bespoke professional development, support and monetary contribution towards their practice. The winner will be announced in November 2016.

Modern Art Oxford has selected a single artist from each of the graduate shows at University of Reading, Oxford Brookes University and the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford.

Each artist will use the Project Space to develop and exhibit their work and present new events. They work closely with the team at Modern Art Oxford on all aspects of the gallery's activity including technical installation, marketing and events planning to gain some invaluable experience of working within an established public gallery.

To accompany their exhibitions, each artist has supplied a statement and a recommended reading list.

Platform has been curated in partnership with Sarah Mossop.

Platform at Modern Art Oxford is supported by:

Contemporary Visual Arts Network (CVAN), University of Reading, Oxford Brookes University, and Ruskin School of Art at the University of Oxford.

ELIZABETH HOLMES

Oxford Brookes University

Manufacture

26 July - 14 August 2016



Elizabeth Holmes, *Skin*, 2016

Event: Artist Talk

Saturday 6 August

2 - 3pm

Join artist Elizabeth Holmes in the Project Space for an informal discussion about her work.

Free. No booking required.

Artist Statement

In my photography I use my own body to illustrate the pressure put on women to adhere to the modern day image of femininity. By modeling items designed to alter the body, I aim to bring to light the extreme practice Western women undertake to temporarily conform themselves to an idealised shape and size. From my own ideas about my body, to observing the way women use and display their bodies in public, I use my work to voice my concerns in which the way women are seen and see themselves. We are becoming more vulnerable to mental instability as the media increasingly controls our thoughts towards beauty and our bodies.

As women, we are born into a pocket of society that restricts our entire adult lives. Taught to continually survey ourselves and persuaded to loathe what we see, as women we truly have no freedom from our own bodies. Multinational companies create products for women to 'solve' this self-loathing, which only acts to further exaggerate the problem, making the natural form aesthetically unacceptable. Clothing, cosmetics and healthcare have become tailored to alter our bodies to an idealised image of beauty. We are now able to 'buy' a second version of ourselves in the form of shape altering undergarments and cosmetic treatments that can be used and thrown away as the fashions for shape and size change. It is such that our psyche has been altered to be disappointed or elated when we are able to force our larger than desired thighs into a pair of jeans considered to be of an ideal size.

Society demands that women remain small in stature and voice. The constructed idea of female beauty created by our phallogocentric society is an issue I confront in my work, depicting the strains and discomfort synonymous with accepted modern and historical feminine practices. By manipulating the female body beyond its natural limits, I aim to represent the pressures on women to fit within the idealised framework of femininity.

Reading List:

N. Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women*, Vintage, 1991.

N. Walker, *Living Dolls: The Return of Sexism*, Virago; Reprint edition, 2011.

S. Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue: A Self Help Guide for Compulsive Eaters*, Berkley Pub Group, 1990.

NACHEAL CATNOTT

University of Reading

The Few Stains of Colour

16 August - 4 September 2016



Nacheal Catnott, *The Few Stains of Colour*, Performance, 2016

Event: The Few Stains of Colour Performance

Saturday 20 August

12pm, 2pm, 4pm (Repeat performances, each performance lasts 15 minutes)

The Few Stains of Colour performance intentionally creates juxtapositions that are both sociological and cultural. It poses the question of where one draws a line between cultural appreciation and appropriation.

Free. No booking required.

Artist Statement

'Where do I come from?' 'Why is my culture important?' 'Do I have a responsibility to maintain ethnic practices and inherited customs and if so, why?' These questions are very much personally derived and reflective of ones I tend to ask myself. Through a combination of various mediums; primarily film, photography, sculpture, text, sound and performance, my practice addresses topics such as race, migration and cross-cultural diversity in Britain.

My approach is inspired by historical and sociological facts alongside conversations, observations, and experiences that I have had whilst living and growing up in South East London. I am especially interested in how black people, who have immigrated to the UK, have been affected by Westernisation. My work also considers both historic and modern interrelationships between Afro-Caribbean heritage and Western society. I intend to critically analyse issues that arise, such as cultural identification, ethnic division and discrimination.

My work adopts documentary-style connotations, presenting a series of genuine accounts given by members of the Afro-Caribbean community. Coupled with a series of investigations titled *yam studies*. Here I have taken yam, a vegetable native to Afro-Caribbean culture and experimented with appropriating its status through various channels. The use of the yam presents a kind of 'ethnic insiderism', a type of inside joke where this staple food has been appropriated and institutionalised to fit a modern aesthetic. The yam is now a personified being that is far more than a vegetable; it has a greater identity that can be seen as a symbol of Black British History.

nachealcatnott.org

Viewing List:

Rootless Cosmopolitans (1990), (dir.) Ruth Novaczek.

Handsworth Songs (1986), (dir.) Black Audio Collective.

Reading List:

P. Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London: Verso, 1993.

S. Critchley, *On Humour (Thinking in Action)*, Routledge, 2002.

A. Levy, *Small Island*, Tinder Press; Revised ed. edition, 2004.