

Carte de Visite

Helen Cammock, Claudette Johnson, Ingrid Pollard

Curated by Lubaina Himid

Preview 3 December, 6.30 - 8.30 pm.

Exhibition 4 December - 23 January

Closed 20 December 2015 - 8 January 2016

A conversation between Lubaina Himid and Christine Eyene will take place on 5 December at 2 pm.

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We are delighted to present *Carte de Visite* curated by Lubaina Himid, featuring new work by Helen Cammock, Claudette Johnson and Ingrid Pollard.

This project has unfolded over the space of a year in different locations including the print room in the School of Art, Design & Fashion at the University of Central Lancashire where Lubaina Himid is professor of contemporary art, leading the *Making Histories Visible Project* - an exploration of the contribution of black visual art to the cultural landscape. Our desire to be able to present work mostly unseen and spend time with it inspired this invitation. Himid's answer was informed by life-long knowledge of the artists Claudette Johnson and Ingrid Pollard, choosing to expand on this duo with the more recent voice of Helen Cammock. Forebears and successors, a dialogue that must be continued.

Carte de Visite is a show, a meeting point - a conversation. Himid notes 'It has been deeply intriguing to observe what happened when each artist encountered questions about the past and how this will impact upon what they hope may develop in years to come. I now have a better understanding of how these artists work between and beyond an exhibition; they navigate the silences between our histories, either by pinning coloured markers to a three dimensional map or by leaving exquisite cards on a silver tray'.

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It is the approach that matters.

That of the artist of course, this goes without saying, but also that of the viewer.

It is the gaze that counts, in the slow unveiling of unknown forms, telling yet untold stories.

To look, not with innocent, but fresh eyes; and listen to what the image has to say, our minds cleared of preconceived ideas. To lose oneself in the realm of what French author Georges Bataille once called the non-knowledge, embracing the many possibilities allowed by unconditioned modes of interpretations.

Carte de Visite: Helen Cammock, Claudette Johnson, Ingrid Pollard.

Some of us might know their names. Others might not. To all this exhibition serves as an introduction, as a snapshot of that moment in time. Like those mid-nineteenth century cartes de visite, calling cards whose purpose was to assert the sitter's identity while establishing the photographer's practice.

A carte de visite encapsulates the very act of representation. A double-sided medium, with a recto and verso of equal importance, it offers the dual perspective of the subject and the maker, of the scene and backstage.

An act of courtesy, a token of friendship, a marker of social status: undeniably. A sign of the affliction that saw Greek mythological figure Narcissus drown in his own image: far from it.

These calling cards may announce the artists in response to an invitation by their peer, the artist and curator Lubaina Himid, it is not their portraits that one finds on the front of the visual plane. The images are theirs not because of the staging of their own body. They are by virtue of their authorship and, to some extent, of the personal narratives embedded within.

Extract from *In the comfort of aesthetics* by Christine Eyene, a text that accompanies the exhibition.

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We gratefully acknowledge the support of UCLAN for this project.

Please contact karin@hollybushgardens.co.uk
for images and further information.

Gallery open: Tuesday - Friday 11 - 6 pm, Saturday 12 - 5 pm
or by appointment

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