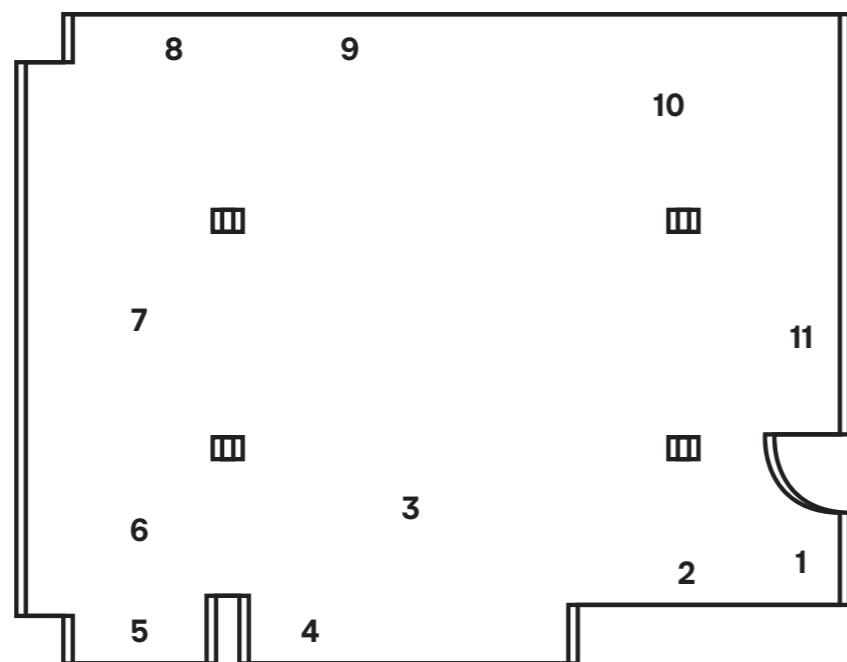


RITUAL TOUCH
 MONICA-SHANTA
 GLADYS PAULUS
 INGRID POLLARD



27/01/23 — 11/03/23

RITUAL TOUCH

MONICA-SHANTA / GLADYS PAULUS / INGRID POLLARD

Ritual Touch brings together three artists for the first time, creating new conversations to which you are invited. Central to the exhibition is the materiality of touch and the significance of time and rhythm in the ritual of creating.

1. Ingrid Pollard
(Untitled)
2022
Duratrans
51 x 51cm
2. Ingrid Pollard
(Untitled)
2022
Duratrans
51 x 51cm
3. Monica-Shanta
Death is a Place
2017
Synthetic hair
350 x 350cm
4. Monica-Shanta
Death is a Place
2017
Video
7.41 minutes
5. Gladys Paulus
Ancestral Healing Costume for oma (Veil)
2017
Wool and Silk
180 x 100 x 70cm
6. Gladys Paulus
Ancestral Healing Costume for oma (Dress)
2017
Wool
160 x 40cm
7. Ingrid Pollard
(Untitled)
2022
Nine bark boxes (xylothecks), various wood, organic material, woodcraft by Malcolm Robertson
12.5 x 21 x 4.5cm
8. Ingrid Pollard
(Untitled)
2022
Nine digital prints on watercolour paper and other materials
21 x 29.7cm
9. Ingrid Pollard
(Untitled)
2022
Duratrans
51 x 51cm
10. Gladys Paulus
Ancestral Healing Costume for opa
2017
Wool, burnt silk, charcoal, ship's compass holder, burnt rice, eggshells and silk
165 x 70 x 40cm
11. Gladys Paulus
Rituals
2015-2017
Wool, hair, silk, cotton scrim, copper, brass, gold leaf and felt
Sizes variable

“The idea of the work, the accumulation of the materials, the putting them together, the sharing of a work are all part of a ritual. This process of objectification is...purification. Once in the world, the artwork can become part of someone else’s ritual.”

Betye Saar

The artists’ repetitive and slow creative practices become ritual; an act of making that shifts from a doing to a being with, where touch transcends the material and exists also as energy.

Monica-Shanta, Gladys Paulus and Ingrid Pollard share a quiet depth to their practice, calling on rhythmic traditions, rooting human presence and interaction in the natural world. A combination of mixed media installation and assemblage, the artists collapse historical and personal pasts, bringing to the fore a resonance of being imbued in the objects through touch. The embodied pasts of these objects release a power and a presence, where the ritual can become our own.

ARTISTS

MONICA-SHANTA

'Death turned to sand in my hands, escaping through my fingers. There is no death'. Monica-Shanta's Death is a Place is a large installation and performance contemplating, the artist says, 'the universal transcendent nature of death, culturally specific traditions and responses to death, as well as historical instances of genocide.' There will be a very special one-off live performance of 'Death is a Place' in the gallery, both a ritual and an endurance.

Monica-Shanta is a multi-disciplinary visual artist who weaves together digital image and film, interactive performance, drawing and installation, through a practice that is informed by both Western and Asian cultural traditions. Monica's work is the impulse of an artist embodying a space of cultural instability, engaging with universal human experiences as portals to ontological and philosophical questions.

Monica has been based in the South-West for 10 years, sharing her practice as an artist and educator with an extensive range of people, arts organisations, schools, galleries and a multitude of community environments.

DR INGRID POLLARD MBE

Ingrid Pollard's artworks featured in 'Ritual Touch' are the most recent works in the exhibition, having been made in 2022 as part of her acclaimed 'Three Drops of Blood' show at Thelma Hulbert Gallery (August to October 2022). These works address the richness of relationships between tradition, the locale, and the global, linking the lengthy, painful, act of lace making, with plant lore and practices of classification and exploration. Included here are perfect reproductions of xylotheke; wooden boxes used for storing tree specimens, examining ways other than colonial adventure of being in the world.

GLADYS PAULUS

Gladys Paulus' pieces are part of a much larger series entitled Hinterland created in 2017; a deeply moving collection of felted textile artworks containing and healing familial and ancestral legacies. Starting with the shamanic concept that in order to heal yourself you have to heal your ancestors, Paulus incorporates personal objects in each of the pieces, imbuing the work with a sense of each individual. Echoed by the alchemy and sheer physicality of the felt making process itself, the work explores loss, remembrance, identity, protection, healing and transformation and tackles the effects of colonialism, war and displacement within her family.

Dutch-Indonesian artist Gladys Paulus creates deeply emotive works that quietly reclaim a perceived loss of sacredness. Often stemming from personal explorations into her ancestry and identity, her oeuvre straddles the worlds of fine arts, traditional crafts and ritual, managing to find a space entirely of its own, pushing the boundaries of the medium of felt in doing so.

A fourth generation artist and maker, Paulus currently lives and works in Somerset. She is a specialist visiting tutor across the UK, Europe, USA and Canada. Her work is represented in the collection of the Tropenmuseum (Amsterdam), and private collections in the USA.

Ingrid Pollard is recognised as one of the most influential British artists, breaking new ground and forging pathways for younger generations, shaping Britain's understanding and histories of art, society and culture. Her mixed media work with photography pushes the boundaries of the genre, with a rigorous attention to materiality as well as history.

Described by The Guardian as an artist 'at the peak of her creative powers', this exhibition is a rare chance to see Pollard's work in the South West. Pollard is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, and received her doctorate-by-publication from the University of Westminster in 2016. She was a recipient of the BALTIC Artist Award in 2018, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Awards for Artists in 2020. Pollard's work is represented in the collections of Tate Britain, the V&A, Cartwright Hall, and Arts Council England. Pollard is one of four artists nominated for Turner Prize 2022.

CURATORS

LORNA ROSE

Lorna Rose is a creative producer, artist and one half of talking on corners. Based in South West England, her work incorporates arts research and designing/developing projects that consider how to work holistically with gaps and space. Lorna uses her creative practice as a catalyst for conversations about the nuances of the Black experience, visibility and Black joy. Underpinned by listening and the intricacies of conversation, Lorna's practice is concerned with the play of power, equity and space within communication. Recent projects include co-curating 'Spaces to Speak', a project focused on interviewing and Black and Brown creativity in Plymouth and working as Audience Development Producer with Beyond Face theatre company.

talking on corners is a diy, experimental visual art curating and producing practice underpinned by critical thinking and research. We commission visual artists and work with organisations to host exhibitions, residencies, talks and study days. We also offer writing, research, consulting and grant writing. We are committed to the arts and working towards long term institutional change. talking on corners is funded on a project by project basis.

t|o talking
|c on corners

ELLA S. MILLS

Ella S. Mills is an art historian based at the University of Plymouth in contemporary and modern art history, and one half of talking on corners. Ella is interested in unfolding art's histories, working towards creating safe spaces for artists and audiences, and developing new methodologies of listening by introducing the qualitative research method of grounded theory to artist interviewing. Recent projects and publications include devising the 'Ingrid Pollard in Devon' project involving commissioning new work and curating the exhibition Three Drops of Blood at Thelma Hulbert Gallery (2022); and Artist Conversation: Lubaina Himid and Ella S. Mills, in, Robles, E. K.; Price, D. C. (Eds.) After the Black Arts Movement: Framing the Critical Decade (Bloomsbury, 2023).