

STILL I RISE: Feminisms, Gender, Resistance

Act 1: 27 Oct 2018 - 27 Jan 2019

Still I Rise is a timely exhibition exploring the history and possibilities of resistance and alternative forms of living from the perspective of gender. Spanning the late 19th century to the present, Still I Rise looks at resistance across the world, from intimate acts to large-scale uprisings. Still I Rise presents the way in which resistance has been approached by visual artists, writers, architects, designers and activists, working as individuals or in groups.

In an attempt to rethink the relationship between feminism and history, the exhibition discards linear models of progress, connecting ideas across time and space. It references both key historic moments, as well as recent womxn-led uprisings and demonstrations.

Still IRise is accompanied by a programme of live events, including talks, screenings, workshops and performances. The live programme explores ideas in Still IRise and invites further discussion. For more information, please see our website or brochure.

This exhibition is a collaboration between Nottingham Contemporary and the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea. It has been curated by Irene Aristizábal (Nottingham Contemporary), Rosie Cooper (De La Warr Pavilion) and Cédric Fauq (Nottingham Contemporary), in collaboration with Alba Colomo, Phoebe Cripps, Carolina Rito and Mercè Santos.

Exhibition design by f-architecture collaborative. Publication design by OOMK (One Of My Kind). Still I Rise – Act II will be at De La Warr Pavilion, 9 Feb – 27 May 2019

With the generous support of the Exhibition Circle: Belmacz, Catherine Petitgas, Young Collectors Collective, Camel Assembly.

1. A Rumour: Communal Wisdom

Gallery one is rooted in grassroots resistance, looking at self-organisation, self-publishing, and representation. It explores resistance as an attempt to re-write and re-read history, laws and policies. This space also includes a zine library and a reading area where the publication accompanying the exhibition can be browsed.

2. A Spell: Feminism Beyond Humanism

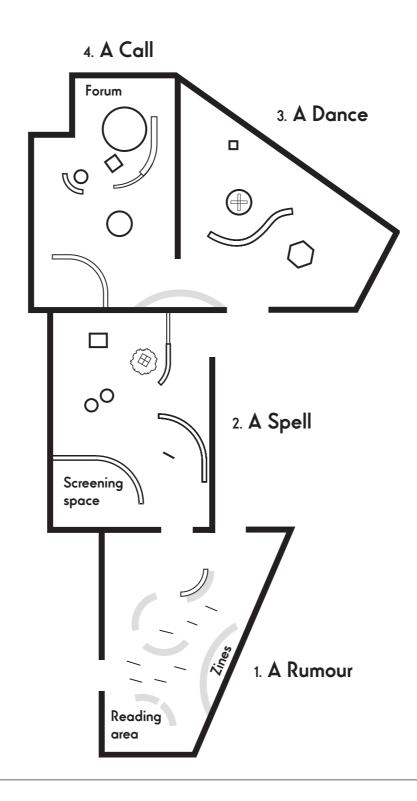
Gallery two concerns rituals, subject-making and reinvention. It examines and attempts to redefine social constructs of gender, sexuality and race. Works in this gallery consider identity from a non-representational point of view, exploring our relationships beyond human-to-human relations. The gallery also hosts a screening space with an evolving film programme.

3. A Dance: No Woman is an Island

Gallery three focuses on different kinds of space, including land, shared ground, the built environment and the commons. The artworks in this gallery explore the ways in which bodies and gestures can reconfigure hierarchies, ownership and economies in relation to our environments.

4. A Call: Making Our Voices Heard

Gallery four is a space of broadcast, public protest and declaration. The artworks in this gallery interrogate how raising your voice can reshape the public sphere. Facing towards the street is a forum-like space, which hosts discussions, workshops and performances, creating a site for participation and a platform for multiple voices.



GLOSSARY

Here are some concise working definitions of some of the terms used in this exhibition. It is important, however, to say that these are neither definitive nor fixed. Historically they have been debated, refuted and reclaimed, and we hope and expect that this debate will continue. We invite you to form your own definitions of these terms.

The Commons: That which belongs to everyone: air, water, land. As these spaces and resources have become increasingly privatised, activist groups have been fighting to reclaim them.

Consciousness-raising: A form of activism popularised by US feminists in the late 1960s and 70s, originally used during the civil rights movement. It often takes the form of a group of people focusing attention on understanding the structures and personal challenges of a cause or condition. However, some in the feminist movement criticised consciousness-raising groups as trivial and apolitical.

Decolonisation: Decolonisation originally designated the independence movements against colonial rule, notably in South America, Africa and Asia, and concerns the ongoing aftermath of colonisation. It now also signifies the process of de-westernising knowledge, perceptions, experiences and systems, and of rejecting these dominant 'norms' that permeate societies, cultures and their representation.

Intersectional: Theorised by African-American lawyer Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in 1989, intersectional feminism is an attempt at considering how someone can experience various forms of oppressions. For example, a black woman experiences both racism and misogyny in her daily life. It ultimately supports the idea that someone is rarely one being but a multiplicity of beings.

Non-binary gender: Gender identities that are neither exclusively masculine nor feminine. Non-binary can be defined as identifying as having a gender which is in between or beyond the two categories 'man' and 'woman'; as fluctuating between 'man' and 'woman'; or as having no gender, either permanently or some of the time.

Nonlinear time: Nonlinear time is a possible theory of time where there are no referential points, as if everything in time is either connected or alternatively occurring at the same time. The past, present and future is viewed simultaneously and without hierarchy. For us, this allows us to acknowledge that there have always been several histories taking place at the same time.

Queer: Originally meaning strange or peculiar, from the late 19th century this became used as a pejorative term for homosexuals. Beginning in the late 1980s, queer scholars and activists began to reclaim the word. It has been reclaimed by people who consider their sexuality and/or gender beyond the given 'norm' (heterosexual and cisgender). It is now also used as a verb as a way to think and act against and beyond the patriarchal system, its values and perpetrators.

Womxn: A spelling of 'women' that not only sheds light on the prejudice, discrimination, and institutional barriers womxn have faced. It also expresses that womxn are not the extension of men (as hinted at in the Old Testament account of Adam and Eve) but their own free and separate entities. Womxn also includes trans-womxn, who were excluded by some feminists in the 1970s who were using the variation 'womyn'.

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