

FACT

LIVERPOOL

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EXHIBITION GUIDE

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DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY & JOSÈFA NTJAM

2 Dec 2022 - 9 Apr 23

Archives and records are not always reliable narrators. The choice of how our stories are told often sits within a binary, Westernised and colonial context. In resistance to this, artists Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley and Josèfa Ntjam play with lost histories to imagine alternative futures and who might live within them.

Both artists conjure experiences that reposition those whose stories are often mishandled or underserved. Their immersive installations combine sculpture, film, sound, video and gaming to present richly layered works that explore erasure, and the collaborative processes built by communities in defiance of this.

Danielle and Josèfa's worlds play with time to shift our view on how the past impacts our present. If conflicting versions of history can exist, so can alternative possibilities for our future. Through their careful observations of archives and understanding of needs, they show us how acts of resistance, rebuilding and reimagining can lead to transformative new worlds.



*'I feel the urge to show the world that History is not
the one they want to tell me, is not the one that I see.'*

- Josèfa Ntjam, *Dislocation* (2022)



JOSÈFA NTJAM

When the moon dreamed of the ocean (2022)
Installation environment and video (18 mins)



Josèfa Ntjam is an artist, performer and writer whose practice combines sculpture, photomontage, film and sound. Her use of language, combining poetry with history and science, deconstructs common discourses on origin, identity and race.

Josèfa's work reexamines history in the aftermath of colonialism and the Transatlantic slave trade. It references counter-cultural movements and non-Western histories that symbolise ideas of resistance, transformation and freedom. In her new film *Dislocation* (2022) and the photomontage works framing it, she brings together a range of cultural references: the African water spirit Mami Wata, a figure of resistance and connection to their origins for those enslaved by the Transatlantic trade; the galactic mythic future of jazz composer Sun Ra; and the speculative underwater civilisations popularised by Detroit techno duo Drexycia. Josèfa presents these works within a watery, underground cave filled with alien jellyfish, plankton and mushrooms. These natural life forms survive by communicating through systems and signals that they create amongst themselves: fungi form networks in the dense darkness of undergrowth, and plankton collectively adapt over generations in response to environmental factors such as changing ocean currents. These lifeforms become metaphoric carriers of memories that are too heavy for any single being to bear, but whose weight can be shared amongst the collective. These stories disperse with their hosts, and fragment with time and distance, growing into new forms and possibilities.

By drawing parallels between natural processes and human experience, Josèfa offers new ways of navigating through the flows of the past: ultimately demonstrating how spaces of solidarity, care and revolution can thrive in even the most inhospitable conditions.

DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY

When Our Worlds Meet (2022)

Installation environment and video game



Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley creates artwork that archives the experiences of Black Trans people, and communities who can be otherwise underserved. In an immersive installation, Danielle opens access to new worlds designed with The Bandidos, a group of young people from Liverpool. They began the project by considering three simple questions: how would you redesign Liverpool for your community? What does your world need? And, what rules does your world have?

Entering past a bus shelter displaying a set of terms and conditions, the gallery houses a suburban city street: lamp posts, buildings and public spaces have been hacked and transformed, transporting us into the architecture of a new world. Avatars of the young people watch over from above. Housed within four zones are chapters of an online video game created by Danielle and The Bandidos.

For The Bandidos, the game world ‘represents all of us individually, and all of us as a group’. Their Liverpool is transformed into four worlds: one made from meat, where dragons headline stadium gigs; a utopian colony where queer feminists and communists can exist freely; a theme park where those who work the land are kept in poverty; and a series of portals found in dance clubs that allow us to travel between the past and the present to experience the journeys of enslaved people.

The game and gallery encourage exploration and learning: a space that offers a reshaping of the rules and systems that frame our lives. The work prompts us to consider how we live together, how we represent ourselves, and how others receive us.

You are entering a space that is not yours. A space that may not centre you. Be yourself, and we will find out your place here.

Play the game online fact.co.uk/game

Commissioned by FACT Liverpool with support from The Ragdoll Foundation, PH Holt Foundation, DWF Foundation and the Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust. Courtesy of the artist.

RELATED EVENTS



OPENING EVENT

Thu 1 Dec, 18:00 - 20:00
Free, booking required

Be the first to see new works by Danielle and Josèfa at our celebratory opening event. Enjoy a free welcome drink from The Canteen before heading into the galleries to experience alternative futures. Venture upstairs to discover works by residency artists April Lin 林森 and Erin Dickson, on display until 6 Feb 2023.

ARTIST TOUR WITH JOSÈFA

Sat 3 Dec, 14:00 - 15:00
Free, booking required

Learn more about Josèfa's artistic process and cultural references whilst gaining insight into her wider practice in this guided tour with the artist.

CURATOR TOUR

Sat 10 Dec / 13:00 - 14:00
Free, booking required

Join our Learning team for an interactive tour of Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley's new immersive work. Discover how the project was developed with young people Liverpool and the importance of art as archive.

DO SOMETHING SATURDAYS

Selected Saturdays / 12:00 - 15:00
Free, drop in

Drop in to a free family-friendly workshop packed with activities inspired by video game worlds and the different ways we can present ourselves. Open to all ages, our fun, educational and inspirational hands-on sessions take place on selected Saturdays throughout the year. Go to our website to find out more and see a full list of dates.

CURATOR TOUR

Sat 21 Jan / 14:00 - 15:00
Free, booking required

Join us for a unique tour of Danielle and Josèfa's immersive works. Led by our Senior Producer, learn how each artist uses technology in their practice and how their ideas get transformed into artworks for everyone to explore.

AFROFUTURIST FILM SEASON

Tuesdays 7, 14, 21 & 28 Feb / 19:00

Tickets £8-10, booking required

Afrofuturism presents infinite future possibilities in which Black people exist, not just as background or bystanders, but at the center of the narrative. It combines elements of science fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, and magic realism with non-Western beliefs. Join us every Tuesday in February for a cinematic vision of Black creativity, resistance, and freedom including a mesmerising screening of Neptune Frost.

BOOK TICKETS



To book tickets for an event, please visit our website fact.co.uk/whats-on or speak to a member of our team.

Discover more events online and in our season guide.

FACT LIVERPOOL

88 Wood St

Liverpool

L1 4DQ

FREE ENTRY

Exhibition open Tuesday -
Sunday, 11:00 - 18:00

Visit our website fact.co.uk

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Top image: Josèfa Ntjam, *Dislocation* (2022)
film still. Courtesy of the artist and Nicoletti,
London.

Bottom image: Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley,
When Our Worlds Meet (2022). Courtesy of
the artist.