



PRESS RELEASE

**you feel me\_**



Video still from Anna Bunting-Branch, *The Linguists* (2017). HD video with sound, 8 minutes 4 seconds

## **New exhibition at FACT invites you to feel the future and imagine a world without division**

**Opening at FACT on 1 November, *you feel me\_* invites visitors to an alternative world: a mystical space free from division and bias and a sanctuary for healing. From 360° virtual reality experiences to a neon-lit restaurant orbiting in space, the exhibition brings together multisensory artworks which disrupt systems of power.**

We experience power every day. It rules our actions, opinions and responses to the world through systems like education, politics and technology. But who holds this power and who really benefits from it? ***you feel me\_*** seeks to challenge the systems we live with, and asks how we can work together to repair, rebuild and restore justice to groups affected by bias. The exhibition aims to allow for other voices to break down the old, and create new, ultimately different worlds.

Presented by FACT Curator-in-Residence **Helen Starr**, ***you feel me\_*** will transform FACT's galleries into alternative worlds. Interactive artworks will suspend in air, float in a hazy mist and explode onto walls. The immersive exhibition includes artworks across disciplines including ceramics, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, video and game design. Exhibiting artists are **Rebecca Allen, Megan Broadmeadow, Anna Bunting-Branch, Phoebe Collings-James, Brandon Covington Sam-Sumana, Aliyah Hussain and Salma Noor.**



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***you feel me\_*** has been developed by **Helen Starr, Curator-in-Residence at FACT** - an opportunity made possible with support from Art Fund. Helen said: *“It has been a privilege to be a resident here, in multicultural Liverpool - I am much changed from the experience. The team at FACT have taken a group of interwoven ideas and developed them into a beautifully ordered exhibition. The exhibition is dedicated to my Mother; a Carib woman, for teaching me to trust my feelings, tropical rainforests and turquoise seas.”*

**Nicola Triscott, Director/CEO at FACT**, said: *“Curator Helen Starr has brought together an extraordinary group of artists to explore how prejudice is perpetuated in the systems that underpin society. The exhibition features an array of dazzling artworks, which suggest connections between societally engrained systems of power and the built-in biases of video games, artificial life and VR, and consider how we might move towards a place of healing.”*

***you feel me\_*** will comprise of a number of new commissions and existing artworks. These include ***Warm Worlds and Otherwise*** (2018) by **Anna Bunting-Branch**, which engages painting, digital animation and virtual reality to explore ideas of worldbuilding. Central to the project is ***META***. This experimental animation uses digital technology to transport viewers between environments including unknown planets and a restaurant orbiting in space, transforming hand-painted characters, props and backdrops into an immersive virtual storyworld.

Amongst other works, **Phoebe Collings-James** will exhibit ***okokok*** (2013-2019); a collection of plaster sculptures which evoke the image of hoods, at the same time spectre and mask. The title suggests the exhaustion of a community and the battle against a colonial project that exists - although in a relatively fragile ruin - with a power that is ever raging.

***Why can't we do this IRL?*** (2019) by **Megan Broadmeadow** is a virtual reality experience created in collaboration with an intergenerational group of participants, who will be working on the project up until December. Based on video game *Red Dead Redemption 2*, the artwork will challenge a viral video from the game in which a player uses his in-game avatar to kill a suffragette. Blending the boundaries between the game world and the 'real' world, the work exists as an act of justice. The video game character is placed on trial to be judged 'in real life', with the 'verdict' set for December when the artwork will be installed in FACT's galleries in its final form.

Throughout the exhibition's run, visitors are invited to dive deeper into the alternative worlds of ***you feel me\_*** in FACT's series of exhibition related events. Highlights include a cult film season featuring classics ***Barbarella*** and ***Belladonna of Sadness***, an artist-led tour with **ROOT-ed Zine** and a series of video game-based adventures through our galleries with performer and gamer **Conway McDermott**.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **you feel me\_**

1 November 2019 - 23 February 2020

**Press Preview:** 31 October 2019, 13:00 - 16:00

**General Opening:** 11:00 - 18:00, Tuesday to Sunday. Galleries closed on Mondays.

### **For further information, images and interview requests, please contact:**

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### **About FACT**

We stand for and celebrate the talents of film, art and creative technology. Imagined and made in Liverpool, we make internationally exceptional art, science and technology projects that radically explore society and its most pressing issues. Our success is reliant on the dedication and support of our visitors; each year we welcome over 250,000 people into our building and our learning programme has over 10,000 interactions with young people and adults from across Merseyside. In 2018 we worked with 88 artists from the UK and internationally and hosted 21 residencies to embed new thinking into our organisation. We worked with people in schools, prisons and in the community, and toured our artworks to China, Panama and York. **fact.co.uk**

### **About Helen Starr**

Helen Starr is an Afro-Carib Trinidadian Blixn\* who lives between Trinidad and the UK. She has worked in the Arts sector for over 25 years. She founded The Mechatronic Library in 2010, to enable artists to engage with new media tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual reality (VR), Game engines, and 3D printing technologies. Starr's focus is on the wellbeing of local communities. Working with museum curators and education teams, Starr's hope is that cutting edge artworks can provide a glimpse of a future filled with hope.

\*Blixn = (Black womxn)

**For further information on all artworks and exhibiting artists, visit: [fact.co.uk](http://fact.co.uk)**



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