

Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève



Hannah Black, *Bonaventure* (Soraya Lutangu) and Ebba Fransén Waldhör, *Anxietina* (*The Situation*),
Chisenhale Gallery, London, 2017. Photo: Sam Nightingale.

Hannah Black, Bonaventure and Ebba Fransén Waldhör
ANXIETINA

Curated by Andrea Bellini

Opening 29 March 2018, 6pm
30 March – 22 April 2018

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Opening 29 March 2018, 6pm

Performance 29 March 2018, 7pm & 8pm (reservation required)

31 March – 22 April 2018

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The Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève is proud to present *ANXIETINA*, a specially commissioned project by Hannah Black, in collaboration with Bonaventure (Soraya Lutangu) and Ebba Fransén Waldhör.

Hannah Black's installations, performances and videos collage together autobiographical, fictional and pop cultural fragments to explore theories and histories of race, gender and labor and how these ongoing violences structure individual experience as well as broader social tendencies. Her work combines the detritus of everyday social life, top 40 music, and video game visuals with Marxist, feminist and Black radical perspectives, evoking a sense of both alienation and intimacy that, her work suggests, is not only a manifestation of contemporary culture but is also the product of 500 or so years of capitalism and our many shared and individual struggles to live within it. Recent work has included collaborations with other artists including Juliana Huxtable and Precious Okoyomon. *ANXIETINA*, her collaborative proposal at the Centre will unfold through the second and third floors and feature a performance and two simultaneous exhibitions, — *NXIETIN* and *A-----A*.

NXIETIN is the latest iteration of a performance collaboration between Hannah Black, Ebba Fransén Waldhör, and Soraya Lutangu (Bonaventure), loosely centered around the idea of a superhero figure called *Anxietina*. *NXIETIN* is an attempt to build a mythic infrastructure around the pervasive anxiety of the everyday: her superpower is an anxiety that is both her own and an undifferentiated collective energy.

NXIETIN is a performance set in which a new version of *Anxietina* will take place during the opening on the 29 March; thereafter the set will remain on display as aftermath. The set is primarily composed of inflatable walls designed for training use by military and police. The walls are props dividing the space into interior and exterior areas. *Anxietina* occupies the outside of this ambivalent spatial arrangement. She is neither an enemy nor an ally. She channels two conflicting fantasies of others: the external threat and the longed-for object of desire. The performance's previous iterations at MoMA PS1 in New York and the Chisenhale and the ICA in London imagined *Anxietina* moving through an everyday apocalypse, emphasizing how collective social existence is internally fragmented and constantly interrupted, and that this nonstop disturbance is what forms its continuity. In Geneva, fusing this apparent paradox even closer together, *Anxietina* marks the contours of a catastrophic domestic space.

On the third floor, A-----A presents a combination of works by the artists, including textile works by Fransén Waldhör previously used in *Anxietina* sets, posters by Black featuring fragments of previous performance texts as well as a disintegrating iteration of her recent solo show at Chisenhale, consisting of a portion of shredded copies of *The Situation*. This is a collectively authored text produced from transcripts of conversations with friends and later censored to “protect people from their own banality” (Ciaran Finlayson). One of Black’s earliest exhibited video works, *Power Cut 1970* (2012) will be on display, as will her most recent three-screen video work, *Beginning End None* (2017).

Hannah Black is an artist and writer from the UK, living and working in New York. Her work has been recently exhibited at mumok (Vienna) and Chisenhale (London) and in a number of galleries including Real Fine Arts (New York), Arcadia Missa (London), Château Shatto (Los Angeles) and W139 (Amsterdam). Readings and performances have taken place at the New Museum, Interstate Projects and Cage (New York) the Whitechapel, the Showroom, and Cafe Oto (London). Her writing has been published in *Artforum*, *Texte zur Kunst*, *Harpers* and *frieze d/e*, among other magazines. She is the author of two little books: *Dark Pool Party* (Dominica/Arcadia Missa, 2016) and *Life* (a collaboration with Juliana Huxtable (mumok, 2017).

Bonaventure (Soraya Lutangu) uses music as an identity research tool along with practical and speculative initiatives to connect her African and European roots and investigate human relationships. She is a member of the cross-continental blend of record label and social network NON WORLDWIDE, and she has released her debut EP *FREE LUTANGU* in 2017 with New York based record label PTP.

Ebba Fransén Waldhör is a visual artist and designer based in Berlin. Trained in textile and surface design, her work explores different modes of perception and the material forms they take. Collaborating with other artists, writers, and choreographers, she also develops spatial concepts and platforms for performance.

Description of works on the third floor

Room 1

Hannah Black, *Blankets*, 2015

Assemblages arranged to resemble paintings, the blankets suggest two different but related scales, that of the individual physical body and mass categories of bodies such as nationality or corporation, and two different but related forms of regulated circulation, of artworks and of people.

Hannah Black, *Cloth Mothers*, 2013

One of a series of objects originally produced for the video *All My Love All My Love*, all of which correspond to different moments in Harry Harlow’s famous monkey experiments on love. The video as a whole, including this work, is interested in technologies of love and care, from robot mothers to social media, and the crucial role of fantasy and yearning within these technologies.

Room 2

Hannah Black, *The Situation*, 2017

Hannah Black, *Transitional Objects*, 2017

A pile of books, *The Situation*, provides not only reading material but also literal substance for the interior of new subjects (*Transitional Objects*) and the floor of the room. The book is made up of transcribed conversations about “the situation”, interpreted differently by each speaker. Individual contributions are combined without attribution to form a whole. The situation we are in, and its transformation into experience through digestion (the teddies) or destruction (the shredders), in turn produces new situations and experiences. The

teddies are stuffed full of the situation, but unfired clay figurative scraps placed vulnerably on the floor are there to remind them of both the fragility and potentially infinite malleability of living.

Room 3

Hannah Black, *Beginning, End, None*, 2017

The video is a loose and very subjective critique of a popular science analogy: the biological cell as a factory. The analogy compares a historical and social entity – the factory – with a transhistorical, natural one - the cell. In doing so, it makes an ideological claim: naturalises the factory, commodifies the cell. The video moves between factory, prison, highly technologically mediated images of cells, and personal footage and audio recorded by the artist on her phone.

Maybe it's true that the violence of capitalism is echoed even at the structural level of our cells, and certainly it now reaches into the cellular structure of the world through pollution, but I prefer to believe in something else: perhaps that the cells are closer to how they seem in the unannotated lab images, spectral entities, uninterpretable without the right insight. This is the material we are all working with. – Hannah Black, AQNB interview.

Room 4

Hannah Black with Tiffany Malakooti, Untitled poster series, 2018

The posters are based on fragments of text from previous *Anxietina* performances.

Bonaventure (Soraya Lutangu), *A - - - - - A*, 2018

Using heavily transformed samples of the voices of the three artists who collaborated on the show as a whole, *A - - - - - A* invites the listener to engage directly with the sound, rearranging layers and parts in order to create a new narrative and transform the dynamics of the music. The installation is based on a track of the same name from the exhibition's opening performance, *NXIETIN*.

Hannah Black, Bonaventure, Ebba Fransén Waldhör, *Wall Fragment*, 2018

This is an element from the inflatable military training walls used in the set downstairs, cut away from the structure as a whole and laid face down to show its interior.

Ebba Fransén Waldhör, various flags, 2018

These flags, part of an ongoing series, bear the name of the performance's fictional central character. The flags use moiré, an interference pattern, and their message is legible only as an illusion: when the fabric is moving, the text appears, disappears and re-appears. Interrupting the symbolic power and clear visual language of national and corporate flags, these material illusions are instead ambiguous, unreliable carriers of information.

Room 5

Hannah Black, *Power Cut 1970*, 2012

The video's sound is a recording of an improvised drum solo by the drummer Jaki Liebezeit during a power cut at a club. The words semi-synched to the beat are partly an oblique take on the Marxian theory that the deregulation of the global financial system in the early 1970s ushered in a new and more abstract phase of capitalism. Jaki Liebezeit described himself as "like a machine but better", and his work with the band Can and others reflects a kind of European abstraction of various global rhythmic influences, reimagined as robotic, that then refracted back to influence black US music, such as Detroit techno. The fragmentary narrative of the video imagines a fictional adult remembering herself as a child, combining the conflicting tempos of adult nostalgia for childhood and a child's longing to be older and elsewhere.