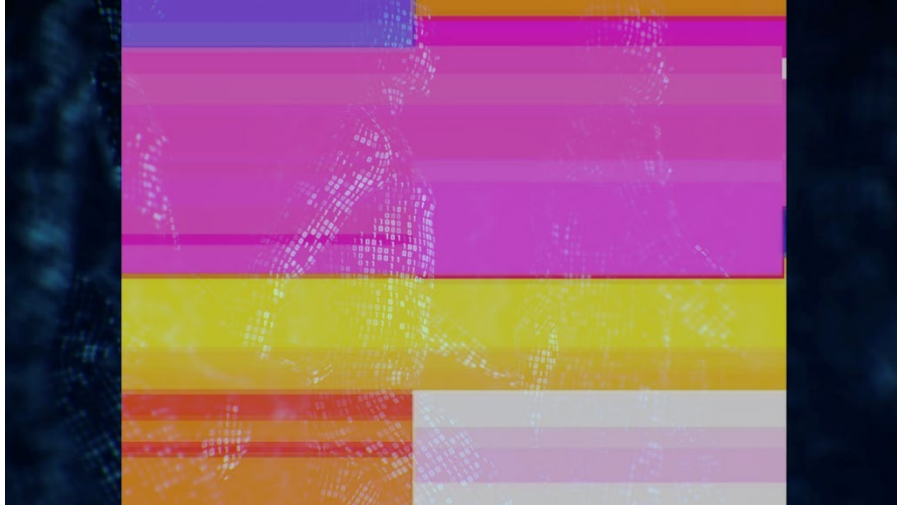


Spike Island

PRESS RELEASE

ARTISTS' FILM COMMISSIONS: ZINZI MINOTT AND LAURA PHILLIPS

Spike Island presents two newly commissioned video works by artists Zinzi Minott and Laura Phillips, to be screened online this autumn



ZINZI MINOTT

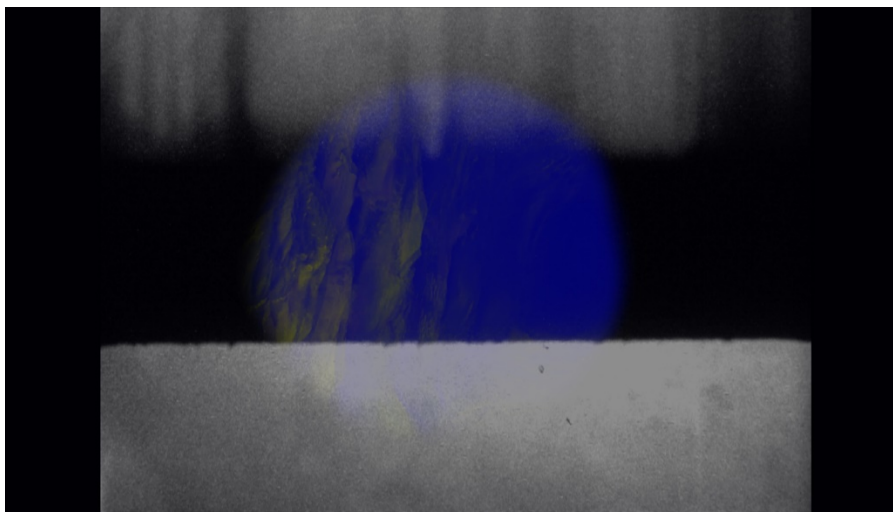
FI DEM III: ANCESTRAL INTERFERENCE

Screening 30 October to 26 November 2020

Fi Dem III: Ancestral Interference (2020) is a newly commissioned film by artist and dancer Zinzi Minott, produced and commissioned by Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, Spike Island, Bristol and Transmission, Glasgow.

Fi Dem is a durational moving image project and continued investigation into Blackness and Diaspora. On the anniversary of the Empire Windrush docking in the UK on 22nd June 1948, Minott returns to the work. Each iteration is a filmic manifestation of a year lived, a body moved and moving through a reflection on the legacies of The Windrush Generation.

Fi Dem III: Ancestral Interference, like preceding instalments of Minott's project, invokes the HMT Empire Windrush's mid-century voyage from Jamaica to London—except now we see it placed explicitly alongside emblems of the transatlantic slave trade. Minott is aware of the slave ship's hold, stretching across centuries of Black Caribbean history into the present; an image of Covid-19 statistics overlaid atop a slave ship diagram tells us as much. But the artist also turns our attention to the legacies of Black Caribbean life, sound, resistance and communion within its diaspora. *Fi Dem III: Ancestral Interference* draws from personal and familial archives to chart several Black Caribbean journeys and narratives, some of which have been imaged and returned to throughout the series. For Minott, a trained dancer who was raised within sound system culture, *Fi Dem*'s clashing images and sounds are a way of 'editing with the body' to create the feeling of movement central to her training and to the migratory lives of Black Caribbeans.



LAURA PHILLIPS

BENEATH THE MEAD: CIGAR.LEND.SHAVE

Screening 3 December to 31 December 2020

Laura Phillips' new film *Beneath The Mead: cigar.lend.shave* (2020) is a speculative portrait of a place in North Bristol called Pen Park Hole. The site was discovered accidentally in the 17th century and first explored in 1669 by Captain Sturmy, a renowned mariner and navigator. By the early 1990s surveyors had mapped the cave's many chambers and discovered impressive examples of dogtooth spar, a mineral deposit that is found in limestone caves, consisting of very large calcite crystals resembling dogs' teeth. The entrance to the cave is adjacent to the Southmead housing estate and the site was subject to planning permission for residential homes but this was thwarted in August 2016 when its geological origins and cave invertebrate community (including the cave shrimp *Niphargus kochianus*) led to its designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

As in the pastime of caving, *Beneath The Mead: cigar.lend.shave* channels the intense curiosity to seek out what lies beneath the land we occupy. Combining the real and the imaginary—conversations with local residents are layered with speculative ideas about an imagined landscape—Phillips' film questions what is known about this specific site and ideas of locality and home.

– Ends –

Images: Zinzi Minott, *Fi Dem III: Ancestral Interference* (2020), film still;
Laura Phillips, *Beneath The Mead: cigar.lend.shave* (2020), production still

For further information and high-resolution images please contact Jane Faram, Communications Manager at Spike Island on jane.faram@spikeisland.org.uk or +44 (0)117 9292266.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

- Zinzi Minott is an artist and dancer whose work focuses on the relationship between dance, bodies and politics. She explores how dance is perceived through the prisms of race, queer culture, gender and class and is specifically interested in the place of Black women's bodies within the form. As a dancer and filmmaker, she seeks to complicate the boundaries of dance, seeing her live performances, filmic explorations and objects as different but connected manifestations of dance and body-based outcomes and enquiry. Broken narratives, disturbed lineages and glitches are used by Minott to explore notions of racism one experiences through the span of a Black life. Sharing Caribbean stories in her work, she



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highlights the histories of those enslaved and the resulting migration of the Windrush Generation. Current commissions and residences are with BFMAF (Berwick Film and Media Art Festival); Spike Island, Bristol; Transmission, Glasgow; 198 Gallery and Cubitt Gallery, London. In 2016–17, she was artist-in-residence at both Tate Modern and Tate Britain. Minott has also been an artist-in-residence at Serpentine Gallery, Rich Mix and Dance Research Space (all London), and is currently a resident artist at Somerset House, London and Once Dance UK Trailblazer. Zinzi is one of two artists commissioned under 'CONTINUOUS', a four-year partnership between BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, and Siobhan Davies Dance to explore the relationship between contemporary dance and the visual arts.

- Laura Phillips is an artist who lives and works in Bristol. Her work investigates the complexity of obsolescence and precarity as narrative devices. Phillips uses a mixture of photochemical processes, sounds and digital imagery and often makes work through conversation and collaboration. She makes films and plays waterphone in the audio-visual project Viridian Ensemble, who perform live improvised music and images (both digital and analogue) to produce an ethereal blend of film and noise which reimages folklore and femininity. Their recent releases include *The Prelude* commissioned by The Quietus and Aerial Festival 2020. Her work has been acquired by The Arts Council England Collection. Previous presentations include: International Film Festival Rotterdam (2020); Supernormal Festival (2019) Oxfordshire; NAWR at BBC Studios Swansea (2019); and Arnolfini (2019/20), Bristol.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- *Fi Dem III: Ancestral Interference* is produced and commissioned by Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, Spike Island, Bristol and Transmission, Glasgow. *Fi Dem III* premieres at Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival in September 2020 followed by screenings with Spike Island and Transmission from 30 October to 26 November 2020.
- *Beneath The Mead: cigar.lend.shave* is commissioned by Spike Island with support from Arts Council England.
- Spike Island is an international centre for the development of contemporary art and design, located close to Bristol's harbourside. It is a place where artists and the public can meet, enabling audiences to engage with artists' research and production. Within the 80,000 square foot building, Spike Island offers visitors a year-round programme of internationally relevant exhibitions, events and activities, as well as providing working space for artists, designers and creative businesses. The link between the production and presentation of art on this scale and under one roof is unique within the UK. Spike Island's programme emphasises the commissioning of new ambitious work and often provides artists their first significant gallery exhibition in the UK. Spike Island Exhibition Services support the development of commissions, including in-house post production facilities for artists' film and video, audio visual technical services and equipment provision for ambitious moving image installations, on site fabrication workshops, resin rooms, skilled art technicians and fabricators.

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TRANSMISSION



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