

# CIVIC ROOM

## **PRESS RELEASE: THURSDAY 11 MAY**

*Of Lovely Tyrants and Invisible Women* investigates themes of spatial politics, gender and racial hierarchies within imperial architecture. This year-long programme, curated by Civic Room, Glasgow features four solo exhibitions from artists - Lauren Printy Currie, Ashanti Harris, Thulani Rachia and Marija Nemčenko and an events programme in collaboration with cultural organisations, community groups and public audiences. Lauren Printy Currie created the first exhibition within this programme, *Masses and Classes and the Apparatus of Capture* in March.

### **Second Site, Ashanti Harris**

**Preview:** 11<sup>th</sup> July 5pm

**Exhibition:** 13<sup>th</sup> July - 18<sup>th</sup> Aug Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 1pm to 6pm daily

**Performances:** Saturdays 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, July and 3<sup>rd</sup> August from 2pm.

**Artist Breakfast:** 28th July 11am-1pm Civic Room

**Reading Group and in Conversation event:** 6<sup>th</sup> August 6:30pm CCA

The performances have been made in collaboration with Sekai Machache, Titana Muthui, Libby Odai, Adebusola Ramsay, Natasha Ruwona, Naomi Shoba and Nabu White.

*Second Site* is a new, site specific installation and collaborative performance work re-imagining the female, African and Caribbean diasporic history which haunts the Mercantile era of architecture in Scotland. Working with a de-colonial methodology and a desire to make invisible histories visible, *Second Site* explores the historical presence and hidden legacies of Guyanese women in Scotland in the 18th and 19th century.

The Republic of Guyana is a Caribbean country on the coast of South America bordered by Venezuela, Brazil and Suriname. Guyana is a former colony of the British Empire and is historically known as the last frontier of British colonial expansion in the West Indies, populated by both enslaved and indentured people who worked the plantations spanning the Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice regions. Scots were prominent among the plantation owners in Guyana and by the mid-1790s, these colonies were predominantly run by Highlanders. Consequently, this colonial relationship between Scotland and Guyana led to the movement of Caribbean women with African heritage to Scotland in the 18th and 19th century.

Responding to this little-known history, the installation and performance, *Second Site*, occupies the Civic Room building, re-imagining the legacies of this forgotten diaspora, seeking to reconfigure historical narratives past, present and future.

The performance and installation has been developed from conversations and workshops with members of Yon Afro Collective – A collective of black women based in Scotland; and draws from the research of Scottish historian, David Alston; the poetry of Martin Carter and the music of Nina Simone. Techniques which have been utilised in the performances include N’Gomku – a diasporic dance technique developed by Ana Beatriz Ameida – as well as sensory and somatic movement techniques drawing from a wide constellation of practices, propositions, exercises, perspectives and people.

*Second Site* is the second exhibition featured in the one-year programme *Of Lovely Tyrants and Invisible Women* investigating themes of spatial politics, gender and racial hierarchies within imperial architecture. *Of Lovely Tyrants and Invisible Women* is co-curated by Director, Sarah Strang and Associate Curator, Alasdair Campbell and is generously funded by [Creative Scotland](#) with additional project funding provided by [Heritage Lottery Fund](#). Civic Room receives support in-kind from Oran Mor, Carson & Partners and Civic Room Advisory. The development of this work was kindly supported by A-N artist bursaries, Glasgow Visual Art and Craft Awards, National Theatre of Scotland, Sekai Machache, Titana Muthui, Libby Odai, Adebusola Ramsay, Natasha Ruwona, Naomi Shoba Nabu White and Sabrina Henry.

# CIVIC ROOM

## Notes to Editors

1. Civic Room is non-profit gallery established August 2015 by Director Sarah Strang and Civic Room advisory of architects and artists who are committed to exploring new perspectives and identities in the city of Glasgow through visual art. "Artists have always found Glasgow a city rich in possibilities. Its urban fabric is strong enough to sustain interventions, its citizens and communities strong enough to question ideas without feeling threatened. What better environment to create a room in the city where all of this can be discussed" Gerry Grams, Civic Room advisor
2. ARTIST Lauren Printy Currie, born Glasgow, 1985 works in sculpture, performance and writing investigating how a sculptural enquiry can find form in language. Her installations are created in response to specific contexts and extended periods of research. Considering how an engaged politic can provide an interrogation of materiality, the artist uses installation, writing and voice to describe varying registers of embodiment as they oscillate between subject and object positions. Recent exhibitions include 'such tender bodies cannot bear so much pressure' 2018, Rhubaba, Edinburgh, 'settings' 2017, the men and women in the text are referred to as, Stirling; 'her body remembered a night-blooming cereus, sweated industry and salt (what came near)' 2017, Glasgow Women's Library & Travelling Gallery, 'a feeling of and, a feeling of if, a feeling of but, a feeling of by, a feeling of blue, a feeling of cold' 2017, Cove Park (Edition 1) and Platform (Edition 2) and; 'If by chance when we are walking, we happen to walk in step' 2017, CCA Glasgow as part of 2HB journal. <https://www.laurenprintycurrie.co.uk>
3. ARTIST Ashanti Harris is an artist, teacher and community activist, working with dance, performance and installation. Harris' work focuses on themes of mobilities - the movement of people, ideas and things as well as the broader social implications of these movements, specifically in relation to the diaspora of West Africa and The Caribbean. Harris' current research is concerned with the body as a repository of incorporated histories which are communicated through dance and movement practices. As part of her creative practice, she also works collaboratively within the collective Glasgow Open Dance School (G.O.D.S) – facilitating movement workshops, research groups and collaborative performances; and as co-lead artist for Project X – a creative education programme, platforming the dances of the African diaspora. [www.ashantiharris.com](http://www.ashantiharris.com)
4. ARTIST Thulani Rachia is a South African artist based in Glasgow. His creative practice sees him working between facilitation, performance, installation, curating and film/video. He completed the BA in Contemporary Performance Practice at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and holds a BA in Architecture at the University of Cape Town. Thulani is currently a curator on the committee for Transmission Gallery and works as a facilitator. Recent performances and talks include (2018): Catalyst 25 Year Symposium, Catalyst Arts, Belfast (Transmission), Artist Run Multiverse, East Side Projects (Transmission); What Gives Me Strength, Ignite Theatre, George Square Glasgow; Chronicles, National Theatre Scotland and Project X, National Museum of Scotland; TEXT-iLE, Toynbee Studios London, Artsadmin
5. ARTIST Marija Nemčenko (b. 1989, Kaunas, Lithuania) lives and works in Glasgow, UK. Marija Nemčenko is an artist and creative learning activities facilitator working in Glasgow, Scotland. She received her MFA from Glasgow School of Art in 2016 and BA(Hons) in Sculpture from Camberwell College of Arts in 2013. Despite Glasgow being her base, her working environment shifts between Glasgow, Kaunas and Berlin where she exhibits and devises workshops, discussions or activities. Recent participation includes: Berlin Project Space Festival 2018 and Glasgow International 2018. Marija has recently been nominated to participate in A.M Qattan and E-flux Residency program "Ways of Travelling" in Ramallah, Palestine. Marija Nemcenko website [marijanemcenko.com](http://marijanemcenko.com)
6. OPENING TIMES Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday, 1pm-6pm 215 High Street, Glasgow G1 ODU
7. FUNDING: Creative Scotland, Heritage Lottery Fund, supported by Oran Mor, Carson & Partners
8. Exhibition photography Martin Gray
9. Design by Neil McGuire, After the News

Second Site, Ashanti Harris

Exhibition Opening Times: 13<sup>th</sup> July- 18<sup>th</sup> August (Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 1pm to 6pm daily)

Civic Room is a registered company with Companies House, England and Wales as a Community Interest Company, an established form of social enterprise. Registered Company Number 965105.

Address: 215 High St. G1 1QB [www.civicroom.com](http://www.civicroom.com) @civicroom