

# CIVIC ROOM

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
CIVIC ROOM ANNOUNCES 2019 – 2020 PROGRAMME  
*Of Lovely Tyrants and Invisible Women*

### *In the eyes of LISA, Marija Nemčenko*

**Preview:** 14th November 5pm

**Exhibition:** 16<sup>th</sup> November– 22<sup>nd</sup> December Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 1pm-6pm daily

**Artist Breakfast:** Saturday 30th November 11am-1pm Civic Room

**Reading Group:** Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 6:30pm CCA

*In the eyes of LISA* draws from the history of the Lithuanian migrant community in Lanarkshire in the 19th and 20th centuries and their loss of cultural identity through the Anglo Russian military convention and subsequent assimilation into Scottish society. The work is a response to little-known stories of Lithuanian migrants and their role in the heavy industries that contributed to Scottish industrial growth.

The first wave of Lithuanian migration to Scotland was partly prompted by the industrial success of the country that required ‘cheap labour’ to support the mining industries. Lithuanian miners were sought by Scottish industrialists to work for less pay and their vulnerable position was strategically exploited with Lithuanian workers used as strike-breakers. Mine owners benefitted from media hostility towards migrants and adopted a strategy of divide and rule in order to maintain low pay and minimum social security for workers. Yet it didn’t take long before Lithuanians became strongly involved in unionising with their fellow Scots to fight against this exploitation. However, despite the united force of the working classes and the unions, the British government had different plans for the fate of Lithuanians in Scotland...

In the eyes of LISA (14min)

Camera: Matthew Arthur Williams and Marija Nemčenko; Sound: Jokūbas Čižikas; Assistance on set: Gintare Venzlauskaite and Indrė Šimkutė. “Goodbye Eliza” song credits: Rondo, music -Aleksandras Ivanovas, lyrics – G.Patackas (1996). Mine image credits: Bedlay Colliery and coke ovens. (c.1927), North Lanarkshire Archives.

*In the eyes of LISA* is the final exhibition featured in the *Of Lovely Tyrants and Invisible Women* programme investigating 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. *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 and Glasgow City Heritage Trust. Civic Room receives support in-kind from Oran Mor, Carson & Partners and Civic Room Advisory. Included as part of the shadow programme of Lithuanian Days in Scotland.

With thanks to Cait McGlinchey and her family, Alan Poutney, James D. White, Gintare Venzlauskaite, Daina Bytautiene, The Lithuanian Social Club Bellshill, Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life - Culture NL, National Mining Museum Scotland, Motherwell Heritage Centre, Professor David Smith and the CEES department at the University of Glasgow, “Saduta” Lithuanian folk group and Bereyozka Ltd shop for their input and support of the project. Special thanks to the install team Amelia Bywater, Hussein Mitha and Ambroise Leclerc.

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## 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