

Press release April 2019
For immediate release

John
Hansard
Gallery

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

Resist: be modern (again)

John Hansard Gallery
25 May–17 August 2019

#JHGResist

John Hansard Gallery, part of the University of Southampton, is pleased to present *Resist: be modern (again)* from 25 May to 17 August 2019.

Curated by Alice Maude-Roxby and Stefanie Seibold, *Resist: be modern (again)* explores the practices of women artists, designers and writers of the 1920s and 30s through the work of contemporary artists. These early pioneering women were important groundbreakers for their time, many of their ideas are reverberating until today. Their battles against social conventions and aesthetic dogmas paved the way for today's understanding of an expanded field of art, as well as for contemporary personal freedoms.

Resist: be modern (again) looks back at these revolutionary art, design, performative and written practices. Using the lens of contemporary art, theory and design, the exhibition highlights the importance and influence of these long-lost early avant-garde practices into the present. *Resist: be modern (again)* showcases collaborations between women who, due to either gender, sexuality or ethnicity, have been censored out, devalued or marginalised over time. This exhibition brings their practice and contribution out of the archives and into the foreground. Contemporary artists reactivate and represent these early practices through mapping, transcribing, sampling, referencing, reciting, re-telling or re-making, reclaiming their lasting value and importance for today's art world and beyond.

The artists, designers, writers, editors, film-makers and performers referenced within *Resist: be modern (again)* include: writer Virginia Woolf, textile designers Barron and Larcher, Enid Marx, photographer Berenice Abbott and writer and art critic Elizabeth McCausland, legendary club proprietor and jazz singer Ada 'Bricktop' Smith, film-maker Esther Eng, artist, performer and poet Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Lohringhoven, and editors of the 1920s American literary journal *The Little Review*, Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap. All of whom were responsible for highly innovative art, design and publishing, much of which has been largely erased from the art historical canon.

The exhibition spans continents, exploring the link between a 'lost generation' of collaborative women in Paris with the Harlem Renaissance in the USA to concepts of queerness in the Bloomsbury Set in the UK. The exhibition reveals the multiple links between different practitioners of the time, highlighting the importance of those interconnections and how they created such an immensely rich web of relationships and influences.

Resist: be modern (again) centres around a series of new commissions and existing works by a selection of international contemporary artists. These works draw upon both specific historic individuals and the wider cultural and historical context surrounding the development of Modernism during the early 20th Century, focussing on its overlooked and marginalised women protagonists. Using a range of media, including photography, film, installation, drawing, textile and sculpture, the contemporary works in *Resist: be modern (again)* reintroduce specific individual practitioners as well as highlighting the ongoing importance and significance of their pioneering works. *Resist: be modern (again)* reexamines these important legacies and shows us how we can learn from an overlooked past outside of a mainstream standard in order to navigate our own complex present.

Exhibiting artists

Becky Beasley / Madeleine Bernstorff / Tessa Boffin / Ricarda Denzer / Andrea Geyer / Moira Hille / Alice Maude-Roxby / Nick Mauss / Ursula Mayer / Falke Pisano / Ingrid Pollard / Tanoa Sasraku-Ansah / Katie Schwab / Stefanie Seibold / Megan Francis Sullivan / S. Louisa Wei / Riet Wijnen / Gillian Wylde / and a contribution by curator Beatriz Herráez.

Archival material and exhibited works relating to

Alice Austen / Berenice Abbott and Elizabeth McCausland / Natalie Clifford Barney / Phyllis Barron and Dorothy Larcher / Sonia Delaunay / H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) / Rose Dugan and Vera von Blumenthal / Esther Eng / Elizabeth Eyre de Lanux / Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Lohringhoven / Therese Giehse / Eileen Gray / Lotte Goslar / Barbara Ker-Seymer / *The Little Review*, Jane Heap and Margaret Anderson / Erika Mann / Maria Martinez / Enid Marx / Marlow Moss / Charlotte Perriand / Lilly Reich / Annemarie Schwarzenbach / Ada 'Bricktop' Smith / Florine Stettheimer / Renee Vivien / A'Lelia Walker / Marguerite Wildenhain / Virginia Woolf / Evelyn Wyld.

Resist: be modern (again) is a John Hansard Gallery exhibition curated by Alice Maude-Roxby and Stefanie Seibold. Financial support has been received from Arts Council England, Middlesex University, the Mondriaan Fund, Arts & Culture Division of the Federal Chancellery of Austria.

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Image credits (L-R): Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Lohringhoven, date unknown, courtesy of the Library of Congress; Ursula Mayer, still from *Interiors*, 2006, courtesy of Ursula Mayer and LUX, London; Portrait of Alix Strachey by Barbara Ker-Seymer, and John Banting, collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London, © Estate of Barbara Ker-Seymer

Notes to Editors

Alice Maude-Roxby's writing, curating, and photography develop out of ‘live’ and ‘site-specific’ investigations of questions inherent in photographic and art historical research that involves interviewing and excavating archives. She has developed bodies of work that take the form of books, installations, videos, and exhibitions in response to questions about the ways in which live art or ephemeral works are recorded and understood through documentation, how artists’ practices inform teaching and workshops, and how artists collaborate. She has published with Artwords Press, Tate Liverpool, and Intellect Press, and has curated exhibitions for the University of Southampton’s John Hansard Gallery, including *Live Art on Camera* (2007) and *Anti-Academy* (2013). She is Programme Leader for Fine Art at Middlesex University in London.

Stefanie Seibold is an artist working with performance, installation, objects, archives, video, sound, and text including curatorial approaches/projects. In her work, she examines forms of social performativity and possibilities of its transformation and resignification. She appropriates images and texts from the heterogeneous areas of the mainstream, subcultures, and the avant-garde, weaving them together in the form of a subjective archive. Her interest aims at building spaces that question strategies of visibility as well as defer fixed areas of meaning in order to develop and provide new narrative structures. Her work has been shown at venues such as the De Appel arts centre, Amsterdam; 21er Haus, Vienna; Akademie der Künste, Berlin; and the Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, among others. She currently teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in the Department of Sculpture and Space Strategies.

John Hansard Gallery

John Hansard Gallery is a locally engaged and internationally recognised contemporary art gallery in Southampton. Being part of the University of Southampton, the Gallery aims to change the world for the better through great art. To realise this the Gallery creates innovative and critically acclaimed contemporary art exhibitions, events, engagement and research projects that excite, challenge, represent and reach the widest possible public audience. Since being established in 1979 the Gallery has been located on the University's Highfield Campus. In 2018 the Gallery relocated to the new purpose-built arts complex Studio 144 in Southampton's city centre, significantly increasing the space available for exhibitions, events and integrated programming. Learning and engagement are at the heart of the Gallery and underpin all its activities. The innovative education and public programme is accompanied by special community-focused projects, including activities for all ages and levels of experience. John Hansard Gallery is supported using public funding as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

www.jhg.art

University of Southampton

The University of Southampton is one of the UK's leading teaching and research institutions, with a global reputation for research and scholarship across a wide range of subjects. The University combines academic excellence with an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to research, supporting a culture that engages and challenges students and staff in their pursuit of learning.

www.southampton.ac.uk

Arts at University of Southampton:

Inspiring arts and culture for everyone

Arts at University of Southampton offers a wealth of inspiring cultural experiences and opportunities, showcasing emerging talent and renowned international artists. From visual arts, music and literature, to theatre and film, there's something for everyone.

The University of Southampton has rich heritage and long-standing commitment to arts and culture as an essential part of university life. The University is proud of its unique relationship with three Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. The Nuffield Theatre opened at its Highfield Campus in 1964 and was joined by the University's concert hall Turner Sims and John Hansard Gallery in the 1970s.

Sculpture by leading UK and international artists is displayed at Highfield and Boldrewood Campuses and exhibitions takes place at the Hartley Library's Special Collections Gallery. The University's Arts and Humanities departments present regular free public activity at its campuses and across Southampton and Winchester. The University is committed to fostering new talent and the University's Students' Union SUSU supports over 40 performing arts societies which host regular public events.

The relocation of the John Hansard Gallery to its new purpose-built home in the heart of the city's Cultural Quarter increases the University of Southampton's presence in that area, close to its Mayflower Halls and administrative offices in Guildhall Square. The opening of Studio 144 symbolises an extraordinary moment for Southampton and the University will be working closely with John Hansard Gallery, City Eye and NST to deepen public engagement, to share its research and present inspiring and accessible cultural opportunities for all.

www.southampton.ac.uk/arts



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