

# STUDIO VOLTAIRE

Press Release

22 September 2021

Studio Voltaire announces 2022 Exhibition and Commission Programme



Every Ocean Hughes, *One Big Bag*, 2021. Single-channel video projection. Colour, sound. 38 minutes. Courtesy of the artist.

Studio Voltaire has today announced its exhibition programme for 2022 including large-scale exhibitions by Every Ocean Hughes, Maeve Gilmore, Huw Lemmey & Onyeka Igwe, and a major offsite commission by Sunil Gupta.

## Every Ocean Hughes

*One Big Bag*

27 January–17 April 2022

Studio Voltaire will present the first UK solo commission by Every Ocean Hughes (FKA Emily Roysdon). *One Big Bag* is a 40-minute film which asks vital poetic, practical and political questions that contribute to a necessary and growing debate around end of life practices. Hughes' considers the subject from an explicitly queer perspective, exploring new references, vocabularies and aesthetics with which to reorient our approach to surviving and dying.

Drawing on the artist's extensive research, the film's narrative centers on a 'millennial death doula' and her 'mobile corpse kit'. She performs her knowledge within a field of props, that are the tools of her trade – everyday items that she manipulates to profound use: caring for the newly dead. With a matter of fact demeanour and intense physicality she guides the audience into the largely uncharted waters of corpse care – practical, political and spiritual. Threaded with humour, grief, unknowing and a desire for justice, her work encourages us to turn towards that which we strive so hard to avoid. The form of the video creates a tension between the subject matter of dying and the forceful liveness of the performance itself.

*One Big Bag* is co-commissioned by Studio Voltaire, London and Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. With additional support provided by Whitney Museum of American Art.

## Sunil Gupta

February–May 2022

Offsite: Main Foyer, Charing Cross Hospital, London and Cambridge Wing Gallery, St. Mary's Hospital, London

Studio Voltaire and Imperial Health Charity are pleased to present a new commission by leading international photographer Sunil Gupta. The commission will be presented across two London hospitals.

As a culmination of Gupta's year-long residency set within Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust's adult HIV Clinic and Genital Reconstruction Surgery, the commission has been made in dialogue with outpatients and hospital staff from Jefferiss Wing at St. Mary's Hospital and Riverside Wing at Charing Cross Hospital, London.

Working in collaboration with a number of patients, the new commission will ask questions around the role health institutions play in defining gender and sexuality, as well as exploring patients' healthcare experiences as part of their care.

This project is a collaboration between Studio Voltaire and Imperial Health Charity and has received additional funding from Arts Council England.

## Maeve Gilmore

11 May–17 July 2022

Maeve Gilmore's practice as a painter and illustrator was autobiographical and often portrayed the domesticity of family life. Throughout her early works, interior spaces viewed through doorways and windows are repeated, many of which picture her own children at play. While Gilmore frequently depicted familiar subjects, her works are surreal and at times even dreamlike in composition and attitude. Recurring motifs, such as skeins of yarn woven into elaborate cat's cradles, suggest a sophisticated symbolic language.

Gilmore was born on Acre Lane in Brixton, less than a mile from Studio Voltaire. While she found early success exhibiting in the 1930s at London's Wertheim and Redfern galleries, Gilmore later committed herself to the work and career of her husband, Mervyn Peake (*Gormenghast*, *Boy in Darkness*). Subsequently, very little of the artist's work has ever been presented to contemporary audiences.

The exhibition at Studio Voltaire will be the first ever survey of the artist's practice and offers a significant opportunity to reassess Gilmore as an important British artist of her period. It brings together a significant body of work from private and family collections, most of which have never been seen publicly.

## Huw Lemmey & Onyeka Igwe

September–December 2022

Huw Lemmey and Onyeka Igwe are collaborating on a new film exploring the relationship between espionage and male homosexuality via Britain's fertile culture of spy literature. The film examines class and power in Britain; blackmail and criminality; the state's changing relationship to sexual dissidence; and how homosexual men have been used as both traitors and heroes in the service of imperialism.

Imagined as a drift through South London, from St James's Park to Clapham, the film explores the skill set of subterfuge, community and secrecy shared between homosexuals and spies. The first-person narrative overlaying the film's visuals is threaded with historical scandals: the Profumo affair, one of the largest political scandals in twentieth-century British politics; the Cambridge Five, a ring of spies in the United Kingdom who passed information to the Soviet Union during World War II; and the Vassall affair, when gay civil servant John Vassall was caught in a 'honey trap' sprung by the Soviet Secret Service.

Amalgamating fact with fiction, the narrative concurrently makes reference to Britain's fertile culture of both spy literature and gay literature, where modes of interiority and observation helped create the public face of both spies and gay men.

Studio Voltaire's opening programmes have received support from Cockayne Grants for the Arts (The London Community Foundation).

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### Notes to editors

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### Every Ocean Hughes

Every Ocean Hughes (FKA Emily Roysdon) (b. 1977), is an interdisciplinary artist based in Stockholm, Sweden. The artist's recent projects take the form of performance, photographic installations, printmaking, text, video, and curating. Her many collaborations include music with The Knife, Colin Self, and JD Samson & MEN; costume design for choreographers Levi Gonzalez, Vanessa Anspaugh, Faye Driscoll, and the band Le Tigre.

Hughes has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon (2017); Secession, Vienna (2015); PARTICIPANT INC, New York (2015); Art in General, New York (2011); and the Berkeley Art Museum (2010). The artist has received commissions for new work from Tate Modern, London (2012, 2017), the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (2013–14); Portland Institute of Contemporary Art (2013–14); and the Kitchen, New York (2010). A major exhibition of Hughes' work is forthcoming at Moderna Museet, Stockholm in 2022 and a new commission with the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2023.

## Sunil Gupta

Over a career spanning more than four decades, Sunil Gupta (b.1953) has maintained a visionary approach to photography, producing bodies of work that are pioneering in their social and political commentary. His work is in many public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art (NY, USA) Tate (UK), Philadelphia Museum of Art (USA), Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (Japan), Arts Council of Great Britain (UK) and Harvard University (Massachusetts, USA). Gupta's major retrospective *From Here to Eternity* opened at The Photographers' Gallery, London in 2020 and tours to the Ryerson Centre in Toronto in 2022. He is represented by Hales Gallery, London/New York; Stephen Bulger Gallery, Toronto and Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi.

## Maeve Gilmore

Maeve Gilmore (b.1917–d.1983) was a British artist and writer born in Brixton, South London. The artist studied at Westminster School and had a number of solo exhibitions during her life time including Redfern Gallery, London (1945) and Woodstock Gallery, London (1954).

Gilmore was the wife and biographer Mervyn Peake, author of the *Gormenghast* novels. After his death Gilmore wrote *A World Away: A Memoir of Mervyn Peake* (1970) and a sequel to her husband's *Titus* trilogy, *Titus Awakes: The Lost Book of Gormenghast* (2011).

## Huw Lemmey

Huw Lemmey is a British writer, artist and critic living in Barcelona. He writes on culture, sexuality and politics. As an artist his work has been shown at the ICA, London; LUX Biennial of Moving Image, London; Mumok, Vienna; Warsaw Museum of Contemporary Art, Warsaw and the Design Museum, London. Lemmey writes the weekly essay series *utopian drivel* and is the author of three novels: *Unknown Language* (2020); *Red Tory: My Corbyn Chemsex Hell* (2019) and *Chubz: The Demonization of My Working Arse* (2016). He is also the co-host of the popular history podcast *Bad Gays* with Ben Miller. *Bad Gays: A Homosexual History* will be published by Verso Books in Summer 2022.

## Onyeka Igwe

Onyeka Igwe is an artist and researcher born and based in London, working between cinema and installation.

Igwe's video works have been screened at Artists' Film Club: Black Radical Imagination, ICA, London (2017); Dhaka Art Summit, Bangladesh (2020), and at film festivals internationally including the London Film Festival, 2015 and 2020; Rotterdam International, Netherlands (2018, 2019 and 2020); Edinburgh Artist Moving Image (2016); Images Festival, Canada (2019) and the Smithsonian African American film festival, USA (2018). Solo and two-person exhibitions include *KW Productions Series*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2020); *There Were Two Brothers*, Jerwood Arts (2019) and *Corrections*, with Aliya Pabani, Trinity Square Video, Toronto, Canada

## About Studio Voltaire

Studio Voltaire is one of the UK's leading not-for-profit arts organisations. Its pioneering public programmes of exhibitions, participation projects, live events and offsite commissions have gained an international reputation. The organisation has an outstanding track record of supporting artists at a pivotal stage in their careers, championing emerging and underrepresented practices and placing emphasis on risk-taking and experimentation. Many commissions are an artist's first solo exhibition in London or the UK.

Exhibiting artists have included Aaron Angell, Nairy Baghramian, Phyllida Barlow, Monster Chetwynd, Anne Collier, Thea Djordjadze, Nicole Eisenman, Sharon Hayes, Nnena Kalu, Sanya Kantarovsky, Ella Kruglyanskaya, Shahryar Nashat, The Neo Naturists, Henrik Olesen, Paulina Olowska, Elizabeth Price, Charlotte Prodger, Jo Spence, Cathy Wilkes and Rehana Zaman.

Studio Voltaire commissions a wide range of participatory and offsite projects working in collaboration with artists, local organisations, schools and community groups and provides a much-needed resource of affordable and accessible onsite artists' studios, supporting the development of diverse individual and collective practices, from recent graduates to internationally recognised practitioners.

Studio Voltaire is a registered charity and part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio.

[studiovoltaire.org](http://studiovoltaire.org)