

## PRESS RELEASE

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***FUGITIVE SEEDS, A GROUP EXHIBITION***  
**CURATED BY BORBÁLA SOÓS OPENS AT CCA**  
**DERRY~LONDONDERRY**

CCA Derry~Londonderry presents *Fugitive Seeds*, an exhibition of new and existing work by artists Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, Maria Thereza Alves, Alasdair Asmussen Doyle, Minji Choi and Davinia Ann Robinson, and curated by Borbála Soós. Launching on Tuesday 18 October 2022 and runs until Wednesday 21 December 2022.

CCA Derry~Londonderry is delighted to announce our upcoming exhibition *Fugitive Seeds* featuring artists Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, Maria Thereza Alves, Alasdair Asmussen Doyle, Minji Choi and Davinia-Ann Robinson and curated by Borbála Soós.

*Fugitive Seeds* considers how endemic, alien and fugitive seeds connect to colonial histories including in Northern Ireland and more specifically Derry~Londonderry and its port.

The works included help unearth layered histories around plant and human migration and border ecologies. The exhibition and related events reflect on how histories of botanical, zoological and ethno-anthropological explorations have contributed to producing the Other, and the exoticization of certain species and peoples. They consider changing ecologies and (national) identities through stories of belonging, displacement and uprootedness and investigate the feeling of loss when thinking about the connections with far-away lands that might hold clues for one's identity.

Seeds hold political, geographic and cultural histories. They are packages of genetic information, carriers of stories, and cultural archives of the relationships between plants and humans through the continual act of cultivation. Seeds are also fugitive. They have an innate feral talent for resistance, adaptation and survival. They are designed to move, escape and find their own way. Fred Moten writes about fugitivity, especially in relation to blackness as a refusal of standards imposed from elsewhere. In *Stolen Life* (2018), he writes, "Fugitivity, then, is a desire for and a spirit of escape and transgression of the proper and the proposed. It's a desire for the outside, for a playing or being outside, an outlaw edge proper to the now always improper voice or instrument."<sup>1</sup> How do seeds and people carry this potential of fugitivity through generations?

Seeds travel, fly and float. They circulate by being sold, traded, bartered, donated and gifted. They get stuck in the cargo or the ballast of ships, in the fur and hooves of animals and shoes of people:

"They end up in any number of places and re-acclimate to any number of new environmental demands. Maybe they get renamed. Maybe they settle back to some wild, ancestral state. Maybe they evolve, through human and nonhuman forces into some new variety with some new story. They cannot be controlled as artefacts in a museum or entries in a vault. They will

always slip through the cracks. They will always move. ... This material question of ecological fugitivity lies at the break between the infusion of cultural relevance and the life of the seed itself,

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<sup>1</sup> Fred Moten's *Radical Critique of the Present*, By David S. Wallace, The New Yorker, 30 April 2018.

[www.newyorker.com/culture/persons-of-interest/fred-motens-radical-critique-of-the-present](https://www.newyorker.com/culture/persons-of-interest/fred-motens-radical-critique-of-the-present)

the gap between historical archive and historical actor. Seeds compel us to rethink the lives and afterlives of plantation worlds; they give us strategies for evading, escaping, and disrupting any global-cene."<sup>2</sup>

Supported by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

# ENDS

## **Centre for Contemporary Art Derry~Londonderry**

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Opening times: Tuesday–Saturday noon–6pm. Free admission

### **About CCA Derry~Londonderry:**

The Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) is a publicly funded space within the historic city walls of Derry~Londonderry. CCA creates opportunities for audiences to experience ambitious, experimental and engaging art and for emerging artists to develop successful careers. CCA fosters a wide range of artistic, curatorial and critical practices through five programme streams: research and production, exhibition-making, public programmes, publishing and residencies.

CCA was a Finalist in Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021, the largest museum prize in the world. CCA was recognised for its resilience and adaptability throughout the pandemic, and their continued effort to support audiences and artists including creating paid opportunities for artists and freelancers when they needed it most.

CCA is a member of Plus Tate: Plus Tate is a network, which comprises 35 cultural institutions – including the Tate galleries – that have strong artistic vision, a focus on contemporary art, outstanding public programming and a commitment to local community engagement through art. Plus Tate aims to support the development of the visual arts across the UK.

Safety: CCA has a range of safety measures to ensure staff and visitors can enjoy exhibitions with the knowledge that every precaution is taken. This includes hand sanitisers at entrances and exits and heightened cleaning schedules. All who are able to wear a mask are invited to do so and a dedicated isolation room is available in the event of the onset of symptoms.

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<sup>2</sup> *Fugitive Seeds* by Christian Brooks Keeve, Edge Effects, 25 February, 2020.  
[edgeeffects.net/fugitive-seeds/](http://edgeeffects.net/fugitive-seeds/)

## About the Artists & Curator:

**Larry Achiampong and David Blandy:** Through their collaborative practice, Larry Achiampong and David Blandy share an interest in post-coloniality and popular culture. They examine communal and personal heritage, using performance to investigate the self as fiction, devising alter-egos to point at their divided selves.

Larry Achiampong (b.1984) is a British-Ghanaian artist based in London, whose solo and collaborative projects employ imagery, aural and visual archives, live performance and sound to explore ideas surrounding class, cross-cultural and post-digital identity. These investigations examine constructions of 'the self' by splicing the audible and visual materials of personal and interpersonal archives, offering multiple perspectives that reveal entrenched socio-political contradictions in contemporary society. David Blandy (b. 1976) is a British artist based in Brighton, who has established his working practices through a series of investigations into the cultural forces that inform and influence him, ranging from his love of hip hop and soul to computer games and manga. His works slip between performance and video, reality and construct, using references sampled from the wide, disparate sources that provide his (and our own) individualist sense of self.

Larry and David have been working together exploring their friendship, and wider issues of empathy, race and power, through film, performance and socially engaged practice. Exhibitions include Tate Modern, London; The Baltic, Gateshead; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield; FACT, Liverpool; BFI London Film Festival, London; Transmediale Festival, Berlin, Germany and Fort Worth Contemporary Arts, Texas, USA. They have been on residencies at Praksis, Oslo in Norway & Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridgeshire. Awards include an Elephant Trust award and support from Arts Council England.

**Maria Thereza Alves** has worked and exhibited internationally since the 1980s, investigating the histories and circumstances of particular localities to bear witness to silenced histories. Her research-based projects develop in response to local needs and facilitate dialogue between material and environmental realities, and social circumstances. While aware of Western binaries of nature-culture, art-politics, or art-daily life, she chooses instead to create spaces of agency and visibility for oppressed cultures through relational practices of collaboration that require constant movement across all of these boundaries.

Maria Thereza lives and works in Naples and Berlin. She was one of the founding members of São Paulo's Green Party (Partido Verde) in 1987. While a member of the International Indian Treaty Council, she made an official presentation on the human rights abuses of the indigenous population of Brazil at the U.N. Human Rights Conference in Geneva in 1979. She participated in the Sharjah Biennale (2017) in the Bienal de São Paulo (2016) with her work *A Possible Reversal of Missed Opportunities*, which attempted to decolonize the imagination within the Brazilian contemporary context. She participated in dOCUMENTA (13) in 2012 with an installation, *The Return of a Lake*, about the deliberate desiccation of a lake in the now

water-starved region of Chalco just south of Mexico City. She also exhibited in the Sydney Biennale (2020); Manifesta 12 in Palermo (2018) and 7 in Trento (2008); Berlin Biennale 8 (2014); Taipei Biennale (2012); Guangzhou Triennale 3 (2009) and the Second Havana Biennale (1986). She was the recipient of the Vera List Prize for Art and Politics 2016-2018 with her project *Seeds of Change*.

**Alasdair Asmussen Doyle's** (b. 1989, Adelaide, Australia) practice employs moving-image and filmic heritage to navigate multiple relations of physical places and films. Combining contemporary theories of landscape with early shooting instruments, the artist creates works that negotiate hybrid geographical positions. In drawing upon narratives that span time and place, his films and installations conceptualise spaces as fragmented and in continual flux.

Alasdair holds an MFA at the Royal College of Art, London (2018) and a BFA/BA at the University of Tasmania, Hobart (2015). He lives and works between Belfast and Brussels, and is currently undertaking a PhD at the Belfast School of Art, in partnership with aemi (Dublin). His work has been shown at spaces such as Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg; Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda; Void Gallery, Northern Ireland; The Serving Library, Liverpool; Leave of Absence (LOA), London; Galerie Martine Aboucaya, Paris; Meat Markets, Melbourne; and has undertaken residencies at An Lanntair, Outer Hebrides; the British School of Rome, Rome; La Cite des Arts, Paris and Popp's Packing, Detroit. He is the winner of the 2015 Tasmanian Portraiture Prize, runner-up of the 2020 Janet Mullarney Art Prize and has been supported by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Arts Tasmania, Australia Council, Creative Partnerships Australia, Hobart City, Freelands Foundation, Future Screens Northern Ireland, Northern Bridge Consortium, Royal College of Arts, Tasmanian Regional Arts and Ulster University funding. He has led workshops and tutorials, including most recently on 16mm filmmaking at the Royal College of Art in London and 'Filmic Mapping' at the Belfast School of Art, and curated screenings of international artist moving image work.

**Minji Choi** (b. 1988) is a Korean visual practitioner and researcher, currently based in Eindhoven, The Netherlands and Milan, Italy. She investigates the interconnections between plant symbolism in relation to gardens, landscape architecture and novel ecosystems to contemplate socio-politics and ethics through nature. Her work embraces various mixed media such as installation, photography, painting and drawing, which she interweaves to deal with the complexity of the topic, according to the specificity of the context.

Minji graduated with an MA in Contextual Design from the Design Academy Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2018), and holds a BA in Fine Art and BA in Philosophy from Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, South Korea (2013). Her recent and ongoing projects include *Designing the Social – The Eco-Cathedral*, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2022 – 2024); *Looking for Stigmergy, Episode 2 – Sempiterni*, The Netherlands consulate-general in Istanbul, Istanbul Biennial 2021, Turkey (2021); *Bio Art & Design Award, Polarities – Psychology and Politics of Being Ecological*, MU Artspace, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2019 – 2020); *GEO-DESIGN, Junk. All That Is Solid Melts into Trash*, ING Bank and Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2019); *Fraud*, TAC.nu, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2019); *Water*

School, Alcova, Milan, Italy (2019); *Seed to Seed*, Upominki, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2019).

**Davinia-Ann Robinson's** (b. 1987, Wolverhampton, UK), current art practice and research explored through sculpture, sound, writing and performance examines how tactility, presencing and fugitivity work to form an undoing of colonial and imperial frameworks of extraction, with which nature and Black, Brown and Indigenous bodies are articulated. Her work addresses interactions with 'colonial emotions' she has encountered, in local, national and global environments as a Black Female Body, explored through the practice of intimate engagements with physical environments and the histories which form colonial landscapes.

Davinia-Ann holds a BA at Goldsmiths College, London (2010); an MFA at The Slade School of Art, London (2021) and is currently undertaking an MPhil/PhD at Goldsmiths College, London (2021-Ongoing). Her work has been included in solo and group exhibitions and delivered public programmes within arts intuitions. Upcoming projects include: *Raw Nerves* - Hannah Barry Gallery, London (2022); *Residency 11:11* – Gathering, London (2022). Recent include: *distinction between felt flesh* – San Mei Gallery, London (2022); *some intimacy, (a mediation)* - Rotten TV, Jupiter Artland, Edinburgh; *Radical Landscapes* - Tate Liverpool (2022); *Metabolic time / Am meitibileach* - Project Arts Centre, Dublin (2022); *Terrestrial Act II* – HotDesque Thameside Studios, London (2021); *connections unplugged, bodies rewired* – das weisse haus, Vienna (2021); *Our Other Us* – Art Encounters Biennial – Romania (2021); *New Contemporaries*, Colchester and London (2021); *Being Here* – Kupfer, London (2021); *I Am Unsure As To If It Is Still Alive* – Quench, Margate (2021); *Tactile Belonging* – Mimosa House, London (2021); *Bold Tendencies*, London (2020); *Freedom Is Outside the Skin* – Kunsthall 44Møen, Denmark (2020); *Working Progress* – South London Gallery (2020).

Borbála Soós is a curator and an active advocate, participant and organiser of artistic and ecological research. Borbála's practice responds to, disrupts and enriches environmental thinking and related social, political and decolonial urgencies. Since 2021 she is a part-time MPhil/PhD researcher at Goldsmiths College in Art/Visual Cultures Departments. She holds an MA in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London (2012).

**Borbála Sóos** (b. 1984, Budapest, Hungary) is currently based in Birmingham where she works at Eastside Projects as Artist Caretaker, including looking after the Public Programme. 2012–2019 she was Director/Curator at Tenderpixel, a contemporary art gallery in central London. She curated projects in collaboration with Kunsthalle Bratislava in collaboration with the Botanical Gardens Bratislava, Slovakia; tranzit, Bratislava, Slovakia; FUTURA/Karlin Studios, Prague, Czech Republic; Rupert, Vilnius, Lithuania; OFF-Biennale, Budapest, Hungary; Trafó House of Contemporary Arts, Budapest, Hungary; ICA, London; Camden Arts Centre, London; Jupiter Woods, London; Metal, Peterborough, UK and Wysing Arts Centre, UK among others. She has been a visiting lecturer at Goldsmiths College, the Royal College of Art, Central Saint Martins and Edinburgh College of Art, and led a peer forum at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, London in collaboration with Artquest. Between 2020 and 2021 she was a research associate at CCA Derry-Londonderry.

**For media enquiries:**

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Art Fund

