



COVERS

Harold Offeh

**LEEDS
ARTS RESEARCH
CENTRE**

OUTPUT TYPE

Exhibitions (M), Performances (I)

CLUSTER

PERFORMANCE, IDENTITY, EMBODIMENT

KEY WORDS

Performance, Re-enactment, Identity, Archive, Photography

FUNDING CREDITS

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KEY DATES

Opening Friday 13th January 2017. Untitled: art on the conditions of our time at New Art Exchange in Nottingham, UK.

Opening Friday 21st April 2017. Tous, des sangs-mêlés (All mixed-bloods) at MAC VAL, France.

UNTITLED: art on the conditions of our time, New Art Exchange Nottingham, UK. 14 January 2017 - 19 March 2017

Tous, des sangs-mêlés (All mixed-bloods), MAC –Museum of Contemporary Art Val-de-Marne, France. 22 April to 3 September 2017



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The most moving and touching is undoubtedly the video of Harold Offeh: in his bathroom, in balance and naked, the artist tries to mimic the pose of Grace Jones on the cover of the album *Island Life*. Deconstructing the cliché of the black sculptural woman with the oiled body, it also explodes the partitioning of the genres. Another way to mix.

CLÉMENTINE MERCIER,
LIBÉRATION,
18 JUNE 2017
[TRANSLATION FROM
FRENCH ORIGINAL]

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Harold Offeh beams himself down for the camera as a long-limbed and lithe disconaut Grace Jones.

HOLLAND COTTER, THE SHADOWS
TOOK SHAPE EXHIBITION REVIEW, NEW YORK TIMES 14 NOV 2013

Covers is an internationally recognised performance project by artist Harold Offeh. Initiated in 2008, the project has evolved through major commissions from The Studio Museum, Harlem USA in 2014 and the Live Art Development Agency, London in 2015. *Covers* uses the artist's body, durational actions and physical re-enactment to build on established performance methodologies of the 1970s by artists such as Adrian Piper and Marina Abramovic. Through photography, video and live performance Offeh re-enacts archival album sleeve photographs by black singers from the 1970s and 80s, creating static, durational, tableaux poses. *Covers*, innovates through its use of performance strategies to re-activate historical popular cultural images. In collapsing live and documented elements Offeh makes visible the mediation and power of the photographic image to fix and shape identity.

In 2017 a new video installation series was developed for the touring group exhibition, *Untitled: art on the conditions of our time* at New Art Exchange in Nottingham, UK. One of the videos was also included in the exhibition, *Tous, des sangs-mêlés* (All mixed-bloods) at MAC VAL, Museum of Contemporary Art in Val de Marne, France. Featuring over 60 international artists, the exhibition and accompanying publication *investigates the inherent issues of what cultural identity means*.

The *Covers* series has been critically reviewed widely in the international press with Pulitzer Prize winning New York Times critic Holland Cotter describing how *Harold Offeh beams himself down for the camera as a long-limbed and lithe disconaut Grace Jones*. For the French newspaper *Libération*, critic Clémentine Mercier describes the work as *moving and touching* in its deconstruction of the cliché of the black sculptural woman.



Images: Covers Playlist, New Art Exchange, Nottingham
Photo: Bartosz Kall



Images: Covers — Birmingham





Images: Covers — Live, PI, New York
Photo: Suzanne Mooney





Image: Covers — Live, Pt, New York
Photo: Suzanne Mooney



Image: Covers, Arabesque After Grace Jones Island Life
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist



Image: Covers, Betty Davis
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist



Image: Covers, The Rollingstones — Exile On Main Street
Photo: Courtesy of the Artist

AUDIO & VIDEO

Clips (in French) from *Tous, des sangs-mêlés (All mixed-bloods)* Exhibition at MAC VAL, France, 2017

<https://vimeo.com/214649780>

<https://tval.valdemarne.fr/tous-des-sangs-meles-video-23730.html>

Clips about *Untitled: art on the conditions of our time* at New Art Exchange in Nottingham, UK, 2017

<https://audioboom.com/posts/5510577-free-thinking-the-influence-of-the-british-black-art-movement> (From BBC Radio 3, Free Thinking Interview)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0LC-LFTuxM4>

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS BOOK 13 JANUARY – 19 MARCH 2017

UNTITLED: *art of the conditions of our time*, New Art Exchange, Nottingham.

13.01.2017

- » A most interesting and varied art work, very uplifting and good for the heart.

14.01.2017

- » Powerful and challenging. Thank you, artists, for your work.
- » Powerful, visually stunning work, thank you.
- » Very good, powerful work.
- » Interesting!
- » Very Interesting, we will be returning again.
- » Will be re-visiting with friends.

15.01.2017

- » Great to be here!
- » Dramatic and Interesting, worth a second visit.

16.01.2017

- » Some honourable work. I was really impressed by Phoebe Boswell.

18.01.2017

- » Very nice.
- » Exciting, thought provoking exhibition.

19.01.2017

- » Very beautiful work.

20.01.2017

- » A conflict of dislocated memories.
- » Excellent work of art.
- » Breath taking, beauty everywhere.
- » Loved these, thank you, it was excellent.
- » Great, emotive exhibition – loved it. Will be coming again.
- » Came from Southampton for the show, completely worth it.

23.01.2017

- » Loved the diversity of the exhibition
- » Wonderful exhibition – worth coming down from Cambridge
- » I liked the film on the two screens.

26.01.2017

- » Amazing exhibition.
- » Powerful and wonderful exhibition. Thank you.

30.01.2017

- » Amazing will be coming back

01.02.2017

- » Brilliant and moving.
- » 02.02.2017
- » Fantastic Show – Thank you

07.02.2017

- » Fantastic exhibition – so worth the trip from NYC
- » Great, thank you.

08.02.2017

- » Interesting!

09.02.2017

- » Really enjoyed the exhibition, there was some great music too.

10.02.2017

- » Glad we visited – thoughtful work.
- » Great show!
- » Interesting and enjoyable.

12.02.2017

- » Enjoyed the variety of this exhibition, I especially liked Barbara Walker's work.

13.02.2017

- » Good compliment to Nottingham Gallery shows.

16.02.2017

- » A great show – struck by Blandy and Barbara Walker's work.
- » Excellent work.
- » Enjoyed the exhibition a lot, have been inspired to do some of my own work.

28.02.2017

- » Interesting exhibition, also nice to have books to look through.

03.02.2017

- » Great Show, especially Barbara and Harold.

18.02.2017

- » Wonderful, thank you.
- » Brilliant exhibition.

20.02.2017

- » Fantastic, well drawn exhibition.
- » I think it is very good and unique.
- » Wonderful, very enjoyable. Thank you.

23.02.2017

- » Thought provoking and creative.

24.02.2017

- » When will we begin to express.
- » Thought provoking and creative.

26.02.2017

- » Loved Barbara Walker's portrait 'attitude'
- » Time for less nasal gazing. We can be aspirational, we can think bigger.

03.03.2017

- » Wonderfully skilful work, especially Phoebe Boswell & Barbara Walker.

08.03.2017

- » Thought provoking especially Phoebe Boswell
- » Incredible! Bring these shows to York, would be highly appreciated

09.03.2017

- » Interesting and I like the combination of video and fine arts.
- » Very cool.

10.03.2017

- » Different!

13.03.2017

- » Brilliant.

15.03.2017

APPENDIX

Download Online
leedsbeckett.ac.uk/larc/HaroldOffeh

PRESS RELEASES

PRINTED

Press Release

MAC

« Tous, des sang-mêlés »

“All, mixed-bloods”

Group show
From 22 April to 3 September 2017
Opening on Friday 21 April 2017, 6:30pm

Curators
 Julie Crenn and Frank Lamy

Assisted by
 Julien Blanpied and Ninon Duhamel

Musée d'art contemporain
 du Val-de-Marne



Donec urna nisl, dapibus at fringilla.

PRINTED



Pellentesque scelerisque sem tellus, non bibendum felis dictum at. Sed eget porttitor tellus, eget rhoncus velit. Integer vel viverra eros.

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HAROLD OFFEH

Covers Playlist: 2006
 Video, Duration: 32 minutes

Covers: Originals, Mimesis, Grease, Acid, Politics, America, Music, Cover and Album, Album Review: 2006
 32 high-resolution album covers

The album has been observed in drawing references from popular culture, its strategy for using music as capital, its aesthetic (or a disrupted translation).

Harold Offeh: 2006

Harold Offeh is an artist and educator working in a range of media including performance, video and photography. His work is often a response to the social and cultural conditions of his time. He has been featured in numerous exhibitions and publications.

In two new works *Covers Playlist: 2006* and *Covers: Originals, Mimesis, Grease, Acid, Politics, America, Music, Cover and Album, Album Review: 2006*, Harold Offeh explores the function of the album cover as a visual design, with a clear purpose to inform and market the music and music of the performer. In *Covers Playlist: 2006*, Offeh presents a series of 32 high-resolution album covers, which are arranged in a grid. The covers are arranged in a grid, with the original album cover on the left and the artist's interpretation on the right. The covers are arranged in a grid, with the original album cover on the left and the artist's interpretation on the right.

Offeh's broader enquiry through this series is to question the aesthetic of the album cover, and in particular the relationship of images with popular culture. The artist explores this in relation to the album cover, the album cover as a visual design, with a clear purpose to inform and market the music and music of the performer. In *Covers Playlist: 2006*, Offeh presents a series of 32 high-resolution album covers, which are arranged in a grid. The covers are arranged in a grid, with the original album cover on the left and the artist's interpretation on the right.

Offeh also examines the function of the album cover as a visual design, with a clear purpose to inform and market the music and music of the performer. In *Covers Playlist: 2006*, Offeh presents a series of 32 high-resolution album covers, which are arranged in a grid. The covers are arranged in a grid, with the original album cover on the left and the artist's interpretation on the right.

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ONLINE

- » Gargett, Sophie, 'Exhibition Exposition: UNTITLED at New Art Exchange', Experience Nottinghamshire, 15 February 2017. <http://news.experiencenottinghamshire.com/exhibition-review-untitled-at-new-art-exchange/>
- » Masterson, Piers, 'UNTITLED: art on the conditions of our time', This is Tomorrow, 16 March 2017. www.thisistomorrow.info/articles/untitled-art-on-the-conditions-of-our-time
- » Burrows, Wayne, 'A Q&A with... Larry Achiampong, artist exploring the Black diaspora', a-n, 26 January 2017. www.a-n.co.uk/news/a-qa-with-larry-achiampong-artist-exploring-the-black-diaspora
- » Anon., 'Four artworks that explore what it meant to be Black and British in the 1980s', Free Thinking Show, BBC Radio Three Website, 20 January 2017. www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/5mMhfBSwXtsyDYS4K6Rz3v9/four-artworks-that-explore-what-it-meant-to-be-black-and-british-in-the-1980s
- » Anon., 'UNTITLED: art on the conditions of our time', Contemporary And, 14 January 2017 www.contemporaryand.com/exhibition/untitled-art-on-the-conditions-of-our-time/
- » Brady, Poppy, 'African diaspora artists' work outside the frame', The Voice Online, 29 January 2017. <http://www.voice-online.co.uk/article/african-diaspora-artists%E2%80%99-work-outside-frame>
- » Emm, Ali, 'Artists Tell Personal Stories with Grand Theft Auto V', Leftlion, 2 February 2017. Also in print. www.leftlion.co.uk/read/2017/february/untitled-at-new-art-exchange
- » Gallarate, Sofia, 'Five art shows to see this week: Whitechapel Gallery, New Art Exchange and more', Royal Academy, 13 January 2017. <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/five-art-shows-to-see-this-week-13-19-jan>

RADIO

- » Free Thinking show, BBC Radio Three, 'The influence of the British Black Art movement', Wed 18 Jan 2017, 10pm www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b088jl62
- » 'Ben Affleck, Untitled in Nottingham, V&A news, Lord Snowdon remembered', Front Row, BBC Radio 4, 13 January 2017. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b087ptb4>

CAN THESE MIX WITH THE OTHERS?

- » This is Tomorrow: Contemporary Art Magazine, Piers Masterson, 16 March 2017
- » Review of Untitled: art on the conditions of our time at New Art Exchange in Nottingham, UK <http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/untitled-art-on-the-conditions-of-our-time>
- » Libération, Clémentine Mercier, 18 June 2017, Review of (In French) *Tous, des sangs-mêlés* (All mixed-bloods) at MAC VAL http://next.liberation.fr/arts/2017/06/18/brassages-en-revue-au-macval_1577674
- » Art in America, Miriam Atkin, Review of The Shadows Took Shape exhibition review. 3 March 2014 <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/reviews/the-shadows-took-shape/>
- » New York Times, Holland Cotter, The Shadows Took Shape exhibition review. 14 Nov 2013 <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/15/arts/design/the-shadows-took-shape-at-the-studio-museum.html>

REVIEWS

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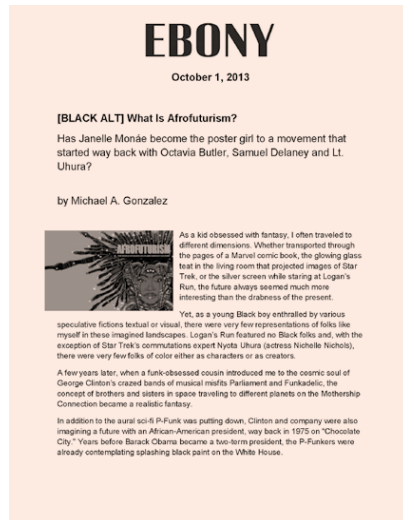
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TRANSCRIPT?



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Image: Harold Offeh, MAC VAL – Tous, des sangs-mêlés
Photo: © Aurélien Mole

LINKS

haroldoffeh.com

Email???

