

John Walter (born 1978 in Dartford, lives and works in London)

A Virus Walks Into A Bar

2018

HD Video, duration: 19 minutes, 54 seconds

A Virus Walks Into A Bar is the artist's most ambitious film to date, and is described by the artist as if it were set somewhere between Coronation Street, Twin Peaks and the Teletubbies. Combining the artist's love of soap operas with scientific research on molecular virology, the film charts the journey of a capsid - a protein shell contained within a virus particle that helps protect and deliver virus to the host cell during infection.

Imagined through Walter's unique aesthetic of clashing cultural references and highly eclectic visuals, the quintessential British pub becomes the context for illustrating the virus' journey. From entering the bloodstream (the street), the capsid then tricks entry into the host cell (the pub) and navigates the hostile environment of the cytoplasm (the bar regulars), eventually getting a drink from the landlady (the cell nucleus). Mirroring the process of the HIV virus from entry through to replication, Walter's film is a unique vocabulary on viral infection through the lens of an artist whose practice embeds scientific knowledge as both content and aesthetic form.

A Virus Walks Into A Bar features a cast of non-professional actors including students, gallery staff and scientists, dressed in hand-made onesies where the designs reflect the artist's wider practice of maximalist and highly-patterned image making. In this exhibition, the film appears alongside artworks from Walter's wider practice including a bespoke wallpaper, two Co-Factor paintings and a video titled *The Zany Capsid*. Three highly-decorative onesies from the film are on display.

Part of 'CAPSID'. Co-commissioned by Southwark Park Galleries London and HOME Manchester – Supported by a Large Arts Award from Wellcome and Arts Council England Grants for the Arts.

John Walter (born 1978 in Dartford, lives and works in London)

Co-Factor (Big Breakfast)

2018

Silkscreen, acrylic and paint pen on canvas

John Walter's practice is embedded with scientific knowledge of the spread of viruses. With specific reference to the HIV virus, Walter's work in this exhibition stems from a collaboration with Molecular Virologist Professor Greg Towers and his team at University College London.

Co-Factors are scientifically referred to as CPSF6 and CypA. They are particles which help navigate and guide the capsid (the protein shell of a virus) through the dangerous environment of a cell wall to the nuclear pore which leads to viral DNA being inserted into the cell nucleus. In Walters's film, *A Virus Walks Into A Bar*, shown nearby, Co-Factors are portrayed as two pairs of particles that defend the capsid against the violence of the other cytoplasm.

Walter refers to his Co-Factor paintings as magnified versions of cultural cells where invading cultural ideas are vying for attention. Drawing a parallel between physical and cultural viruses, Walter's Co-Factor paintings illustrate pairs of images which are helping to smuggle other single images into the picture plane, much like how particles in a cell help an infecting virus to replicate. In *Co-Factor (Big Breakfast)*, anachronistic BBC Breakfast time logos from the 1980's become deeply buried motifs in amongst complex and improvisatory patterns. This painting and the nearby *Co-Factor (Owl Vase and Les)* are part of a series of ten identically sized paintings. Each of the paintings include images and logos of fast-replicating global brands as a metaphor for the spread of viruses and illustrate the artist's aesthetic of Maximalism as opposed to Minimalism.

Courtesy of the artist

John Walter, (born 1978 in Dartford, lives and works in London)

The Zany Capsid

2017

HD Video, duration: 9 minutes, 33 seconds

This film tells the story of an imaginary virus that infects people with zaniness. According to Walter, artists are classic 'zanies', the word coming from a nomadic character called Zanni from *commedia dell'arte* who moves from one specialism to the next in order to find work. *Commedia dell'arte* was a form of popular theatre begun in the 1500s in Italy that emphasised ensemble acting. Pantomimes and the puppet show Punch and Judy are derived from ensemble and comic acting.

Tying into Walter's research into the replication of viruses and specifically HIV, *The Zany Capsid* fuses the artist's unique satire with scientific research into how viruses spread. For some of the imagery in his film, Walter used a scientific software called PyMOL which is used to envisage protein structures. The video underpins Walter's current interest in viruses of the mind, commonly referred to as memes.

Courtesy of the artist

John Walter, (born 1978 in Dartford, lives and works in London)

Co-Factor (Owl Vase and Les)

2018

Silkscreen, acrylic and paint pen on canvas

Owl Vase and Les is part of a series of ten identically-sized paintings by Walter, and one of two featured in this exhibition. Walter refers to his Co-Factor paintings as magnified versions of cultural cells where invading cultural ideas are vying for attention. In the Co-Factor paintings, pairs of images help to smuggle other single images into the picture plane, much like how particles in a cell help an infecting virus to replicate.

The British comedian Les Dawson is a longstanding fixture in Walter's repertoire of images, and whose outline can be seen in this painting. Dawson was a Manchester-born comedian famed for the drag portrayal of northern working-class women Cissie and Ada with comic actor Roy Barraclough. A key part of Dawson's act as a comedian was his intentional off-key piano playing, which is akin to Walter's own aesthetic called "shonky" – a slang term meaning shoddy or unreliable, corrupt or bent, clumsy or lo-fi.

The owl vase and other images in this Co-Factor painting are drawn from images found on earthenware plates painted by Staffordshire potters Ralph and Thomas Toft in the 1600s.

Courtesy of the artist

John Walter, (born 1978 in Dartford, lives and works in London)

Costumes for *A Virus Walks Into A Bar*

2016 - 2017

Customised onesies: embroidery patches, buttons, felt, patches, crinoline, trimmings, stuffing and fabric dye

Courtesy of the artist

John Walter, (born 1978 in Dartford, lives and works in London)

The RNA book

2018

Mixed media on paper

This book of paintings visually reflects the style of patterns and colours in Walter's Co-Factor paintings.

The title of this book refers to how HIV is a retro-virus. Unlike simpler viruses such as the common cold, HIV does things backwards. Rather than travel with DNA it makes DNA out of two strands of simpler RNA. Once an HIV virus has entered the host cell, it weaves these strands together into a double spiral thus changing the genome of that cell. This process is known as reverse transcription, and this allows the virus to spread throughout the body unbeknownst to the immune system. In this book of paintings Walter takes an RNA strand for a walk.

You are welcome to use the gloves provided to look through this book. Please be careful and turn the pages slowly.

Courtesy of the artist

Evan Ifekoya, (born 1988 in Nigeria, lives and works in London)

Ritual ~~Without~~ Belief

2018

Audio, vinyl, balloons, acoustic foam

Evan Ifekoya's immersive installation is conceived as a space without hierarchy that starts from a place of abundance rather than scarcity. The title, and intentional strike through of the word ~~Without~~, refers to how a ritual is reliant on a belief. As a title for the work, Ifekoya asks what it might mean to cultivate rituals and beliefs that could be more positive for individuals and for society.

In *Ritual ~~Without~~ Belief*, Ifekoya embodies and channels different voices and interprets the word polyvocality as a space that is open and in flux. They ask, what does it mean to occupy a position that is made from so many different positions?

Ifekoya's installation consists of an ocean floor that rises to a crest of a wave at one end, a ceiling of balloons and a six-hour audio track. For the artist, the ocean is a site of transformation, tranquillity and calm. The balloons are a playful gesture to queer nightlife and to David Mancuso's dance parties at The Loft in 1970s New York where an alternative space was created and attended by Queer communities. The six-hour audio is a multi-layered compilation of techno, underwater samples, and vocalised streams of consciousness that includes reflections on sexuality, desire, mothering, and blackness.

Visitors are invited to experience the installation by relaxing on the acoustic mats. The duration of the audio and the eventual deflating and falling of the balloons is an encouragement by the artist to keep returning to the artwork, and they hope that the installation can evoke a feeling of transformation for those who visit.

Courtesy of the artist

Evan Ifekoya, (born 1988 in Nigeria, lives and works in London)

The Gender Song

2014

HD Video, duration: 2 minutes, 32 seconds

Evan Ifekoya has worked with audio for a number of years. They are part of the QTIPOC (Queer Trans Intersex People of Colour) collective Black Obsidian Sound System. Through this collective they hope to bring together a community of queer, Trans and non-binary people of colour in art, sound and radical activism.

The Gender Song is made by and features Ifekoya whose spoken-word lyrics are a defiant call against gender categorisation. Seeking to queer the music video format, the punchy chorus line resonates "female, hemale, shemale, it don't matter." Challenging the gender stereotypes placed on products and colours, "Pink is for Rosie, and Blue is for Ben", Ifekoya takes aim at societal norms and defies them. *The Gender Song*, with its upbeat rhythm and deftly chosen mantra is a call to action everyone should hear.

Ifekoya's major installation *Ritual ~~Without~~ Belief* is shown nearby.

Courtesy of the artist

Martine Gutierrez (born 1989 in Berkeley, lives and works in Brooklyn New York)

Indigenous Woman
2018
Magazine

Indigenous Woman is an extensive and powerful parody of a glossy fashion magazine. The front and back covers are modelled on Andy Warhol's infamous *Interview* magazine and the inside pages are filled with Vogue-style fashion spreads and advertising campaigns, each produced and modelled by Gutierrez. Taking around four years to complete, Gutierrez took on every role required to produce the magazine: creative director, editor, photographer, model and stylist. She said "I gotta do it all, because no one else was offering to put me on the cover of their magazine."

By establishing a practice of full autonomy, Gutierrez takes control of her narrative as an indigenous trans woman. In the magazine's 'Letter from the Editor', Gutierrez states that the magazine celebrates "Mayan Indian heritage, the navigation of contemporary indigeneity and the ever-evolving self-image." Her performance of identities in the magazine reflects the artist's wider practice where she often uses portraiture as a means to disrupt the traditional cisgender white male gaze.

As shown in one of the magazine features called *Masking*, Gutierrez creates elaborate homemade facials where she uses beauty treatments along with fruit, vegetables, and flowers to make a new face. By creating her own version of a fashion magazine's beauty feature, Gutierrez draws a distinction between the role of self-care and the figurative masks a person chooses to hide behind. For Gutierrez, personifying identity as something alien or unfamiliar feels the most truthful.

Please find a copy of the magazine to look through in Kete Aronui.

Courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York

Martine Gutierrez (born 1989 in Berkeley, lives and works in Brooklyn New York)

Clubbing

2012

Video, duration: 3 minutes, 8 seconds

Clubbing deconstructs dance movements through the lens of gender. The video's low-fi silvery backdrop, retro dance moves, and upbeat music provide the context to the artist's performance of multiple couples who simultaneously interact with each other.

Beginning with one couple, the dancefloor fills up to three couples, each becoming aware of each other's presence, performance, and individual mannerisms. Through humour, costume, and exaggerated make-up, Gutierrez reminds us of how gender is a performance just like dance, and how identities can be performed in a relatable and fun way that might encourage us all to take to the dancefloor!

Gutierrez' landmark publication *Indigenous Woman* is on display upstairs.

Courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York

Shannon Novak (born 1979 in Ngāmotu, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Jack Goodwin

Ngahuia Te Awekotuku

Louisa Wall

2019-20

Acrylic and ink on board

Shannon Novak's new series of paintings are conceived as portraits of key figures in the New Zealand LGBTQI+ community. Each element of the painting is symbolic and representative of the person portrayed; the board is the body of the subject, the paint the skin, and the solid geometric forms the personality, emotion and character.

Novak's method of decay and destruction, where he works into the layers of paint, scraping, removing, and visually altering the painted surface, is a metaphor for the societal layers and pressures that seek to erase a person's character. By titling these paintings after leaders in the LGBTQI+ community who have fought injustices, Novak's paintings refer to a form of collective erasure which is still being challenged.

Titled from left to right, Jack Goodwin founded the first formally organised gay group in New Zealand in 1972 called the Dorian Society. Goodwin also played a part in the homosexual law reform movement. Ngahuia Te Awekotuku was refused entry into America in 1972 due to her sexuality, leading to the proliferation of gay liberation groups in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Labour MP Louisa Wall led the bill to parliament to legalise same-sex marriage in New Zealand. The bill was passed into law on April 17th 2013.

Courtesy of the artist

Shannon Novak (born 1979 in Ngāmotu, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Fran Wilde

2019

Acrylic and ink on board

This painting joins the artist's wider series of symbolic portraits of key figures in the New Zealand LGBTQI+ community, seen nearby.

Fran Wilde was a politician who campaigned for the Homosexual Law Reform Act in the 1980s which legalised homosexual acts between consenting men aged sixteen and older in New Zealand. As a Cabinet Minister for the Labour Party, she introduced the Homosexual Law Reform Bill in 1985 which sparked sixteen months of heated debate as violent demonstrations and angry rallies swept the country. Revealing the country's hatred and prejudice, Wilde, as a heterosexual married mother of three children, stood by LGBTQI+ communities at this time with her dedication to the law reform making her a target of hate mail and death threats. The bill narrowly passed with 49 votes to 44 on July 9th 1986.

Courtesy of the artist

micha cárdenas (born 1977 in Florida, lives and works in Santa Cruz)

Pregnancy

2017

HD Video, duration: 13 minutes, 15 seconds

Pregnancy is a personal narrative that incorporates images of cárdenas' own biological material with poems that relay intimate stories of her and her partner's desire for a child. Described by the artist as a hybrid poetry and bioart project, *Pregnancy* presents a vision of Trans Latina reproductive features based on the artist's experiences of cryogenic tissue (sperm) banking.

The featured images are from videos the artist took of her own biological material at a time when she was using a microscope to look for the presence of sperm as her reproductive capacities changed after she stopped taking prescribed hormones. For cárdenas, the choice to represent her body through images under a microscope has multiple meanings, and is ultimately a way of refusing the voyeuristic, and sometimes fetishizing, gaze that cisgender audiences use to see work by transgender artists.

cárdenas argues that current literature focusses more on trans men's family planning than trans women's resulting in a transmisogynist dynamic where trans women's concerns are often overlooked.

As a trans woman of colour, cárdenas suggests that the biotechnological and bio-political domination of bodies still falls along colonial lines. Working with algorithms and virtual technology, cárdenas believes that this domination can be resisted by imagining and inhabiting bodies that can exist outside of algorithms' abilities to capture and categorise.

Courtesy of the artist

Shu Lea Cheang (born 1954 in Taiwan, lives and works in Paris)

Brandon

1998 - 1999

Interactive networked code (html, Java, Javascript and server database)

Brandon is a multi-artist / multi-author / multi-institutional collaboration that explores issues of gender fluidity and the techno-body in public space and cyberspace. The work examines the structural conditions that have faced trans people in contemporary society, and was made in response to the tragic death of Brandon Teena in 1993.

Members of San Francisco's trans community including academic Dr Susan Stryker and artist Jordy Tackett-Jones worked closely with Shu Lea Cheang from the outset of the project. Cheang's intention for the project was to deploy Brandon "into cyberspace through multi-layered narratives and images whose trajectory lead to issues of crime and punishment in the cross-section between real space and virtual space."

Created in the early days of the internet, Cheang's work taps into the anxiety around knowing who someone really was online, and misrepresentation as a form of violence or deception. At the time this project was made, erroneous concerns of misrepresentation were often levelled at trans people. *Brandon* is intentionally expansive, which reflects the nature of the content and Cheang's desire to create an experience of randomness for users when interacting with it. Any desire to control a user's exploration of the website is curtailed and playfully frustrated so that the user becomes aware of their limited role as an active agent in the work.

Brandon was originally conceived as a one-year instalment with regular updates and live events, which are now archived and accessible on the website. The website has five different interactive interfaces: *bigdoll*, *roadtrip*, *mooplay*, *panopticon* and *theatrum anatomicum*, and approximately 4,500 files.

The panopticon interface is a virtual simulation of Jeremy Bentham's 18th century concept for an ideal prison which placed prison cells around a central guard tower. In the mid-1970s Michel Foucault used the panopticon as a metaphor for modern disciplinary society. In the context of Cheang's work, the panopticon serves as a metaphor for how sexuality and gender have been regulated by medical and governmental institutions.

The theatrum anatomicum interface houses an archive of live events and performances that took place in the late 1990s. These included a series of virtual trials which were exploratory in nature but conceived with the aim of developing a virtual court system that would open dialogue on real and virtual crimes. Cases of sexual assault became a focus of the trials which influenced discussion on how institutional and social violence has impacted people with non-confirming gender identities and trans communities. On the concept of the virtual live events Cheang commented, "If virtual worlds are used as laboratories, its easier to recognise the possibilities for change – both within a virtual environment, and, just maybe, in the real world as well."

As the first artist's project commissioned for the World Wide Web, *Brandon* is considered the inaugural piece in the canon of online art. Representing a particular moment in the 1990s in relation to knowledge of the internet and of identities, *Brandon* represents a crucial intervention in gender studies by raising important questions about identity and rights that continue to be crucial today.

A description of the five interfaces is included in a guide nearby. Please feel free to sit and interact with the website with the computer mouse and headphones provided.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Commissioned by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and produced in association with the Waag Society for Old and New Media, The Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at Harvard University, and The Banff Centre, with additional funding from The Bohen Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the Mondriaan Foundation

Ursula Mayer (born 1970 in Austria, lives and works in London)

Atom Spirit

2017

16mm HD film, duration: 20 minutes

Atom Spirit is a speculative narrative that explores a near future of increasing biomedical innovation. The film is set in and made with the LGBTQI+ community in Trinidad and Tobago, with its central character played by trans model Valentin de Hingh.

Atom Spirit features a group of evolutionary geneticists who study and collect DNA from all forms of life to create a cryogenetically frozen Ark. Studying the algorithms of life and evolution, the film blends science and mythology, moving across biological labs, dense forests and illegal underground hangouts for queer communities. Presenting a cyborgian future of techno-science, *Atom Spirit* ponders the effects of computational and biological technologies on future iterations of humanity and the environment.

As laboratory sites are questioned as sites of truth, *Atom Spirit* explores the dissolving of distinctions and the dismantling of binaries, reimagining these across different histories and temporalities. *Atom Spirit* addresses the need for a more fluid re-imagining of life. As stated in the video, "At the dawn of creation, a new life awaits you."

Courtesy of the artist

Aliyah Winter (lives and works in Te Whanganui-a-Tara)

Speaking Without Words

2019

Video, duration: 1 minute, 22 seconds

Speaking Without Words stems from Aliyah Winter's involvement with transgender activism, specifically in response to the rise of TERFs (trans exclusionary radical feminists) or 'anti-trans activists', the latter being Winter's preferred term. Since the Births, Deaths, Marriages and Relationships Registration Bill was introduced (and since deferred) in parliament, anti-trans activists have launched public campaigns against a self-identification clause that would allow individuals to change the sex on their birth certificate under the guise of 'protecting women and girls.'

Winter's video uses some of the language of trans rights activism as well as anti-trans right-wing politics in an attempt to disrupt some of the reasons underpinning anti-trans rhetoric. The words and phrases that feature in the video combine those used against trans women and those used to empower them.

Speaking Without Words is inspired by Jos Charles' book of poetry called *feeld* which uses a hybrid of medieval and "internet-speak" forms of language. For the artist, her voice and style of reading in the video evinces a distance between voice, language and meaning and as Jos Charles' says "it's easier to write with reference to Middle English than it is to write as a trans woman."

For Winter, the resulting video aims to address the role of language in perpetuating and reacting against structural transmisogyny and transphobia, and what it is possible to say under these structures.

Courtesy of the artist

Aliyah Winter (lives and works in Te Whanganui-a-Tara)

Artist-made stickers

2019

Vinyl

Aliyah Winter has created a series of stickers that feature here and extend out around the gallery's entrance. Printed in the shape of distorted phalluses, the stickers feature the artist's face pressed up against the surface, contorted, blurred and stretched.

The stickers recall those that the artist has seen periodically affixed to lampposts, buildings and bus stops around Te Whanganui-a-Tara. Examples range from appeals like "Protect lesbian youth" to explicit hate speech like "Saying trans women are women is like saying seahorses are horses." Also seen here in Tāmaki Makaurau, recent stickers have included those inciting hate by White Supremacist and Transphobic groups in a bid to spread their messages.

These stickers are artworks that form part of Gus Fisher Gallery's exhibition, *Queer Algorithms*.

Courtesy of the artist

Yuki Kihara (born 1975 in Apia, lives and works in Samoa)

Ua taofia le ai tagata o Malieto - How Malieto renounced cannibalism, from the series Vavau - Tales from the Ancient Samoa

Tonumaipe'a - How she was saved from serving her sentence, from the series Vavau - Tales from Ancient Samoa

Maui Ti'iti'i Talaga - How Maui obtained Samoa's first fire, from the series Vavau - Tales from Ancient Samoa

2004

Digital type c-print

In this series of portraits, Yuki Kihara explores Samoan legends, taking on the roles of three different figures through her identity as fa'afafine - broadly translated as 'third gender' in the Western context. Fa'afafine are one of the original continuous indigenous queer cultures in the Pacific. In her portrayal of Maui, Kihara replaces her own features onto a male torso. Kihara's staging of the photographs are a conscious evocation of 1970's black velvet paintings that sexualized the bodies of Pacific people. Speaking about the work, Kihara says "Where the velvet painters are notorious for portraying Pacific people from the colonial gaze, what I do is re-occupy that gaze. I come from a point of view from the insider." Kihara's portraits offers a window into pre-contact Sāmoa before fa'afafine were outlawed by explorers, missionaries and colonial authorities.

Kihara's *Vavau – Tales from Ancient Sāmoa* were partly inspired by stories shared with her Samoan family members as well as *Tala o le Vavau Myths and Legends of Samoa*, a collection of stories interpreted by the German folklorist Oskar Steubel and translated into English by the Catholic monk, Brother Herman, for publication in Wellington in 1967. It is a book of explanations of the Earth's creation, the origin of tattooing and the feats of Samoan mythological figures.

Malietoa Faigā was a well-known Samoan chief. Legend has it that he demanded a young boy as a sacrifice for his daily consumption. He abandoned this practice after his own son, Poluleuligana, wrapped himself as an offering. Upon discovering it was his son, the king realised how families of his victims must have felt and stopped the practice entirely. This was the commonly held belief that eating another human being would enable their life force to pass into their body, giving them supernatural power and influence.

Tonumaip'e'a, which can be translated as 'salvation comes from the flying fox' was better known as Princess Leutogi (the Samoan word for bat). Sent to Tonga to be the King's second wife, Leutogi was held in low esteem by the Tongan people and she was ridiculed for her acts of kindness - one of which involved nursing a wounded baby bat back to health. Later sentenced to die by fire, Leutogi's life was saved when thousands of bats urinated on the flames and crowd that surrounded her. She was exiled to a deserted island and was kept alive by the bats who kept her company, who brought her food and later colonised the island making it fertile again. Princess Leutogi became a goddess and protector of bats and fertility, and the term 'manulagi' meaning bird of heaven was given to bats for their preservation of the Samoan line.

Maui Ti'iti'i Talaga

Ti'iti'i was the son of Talaga who was a great friend of the earthquake god Mafuie. Asking to join his father at work in the taro fields, Talaga replied that Ti'iti'i should not come with him as he may provoke the demon that lives there. Ignoring his father, Ti'iti'i followed his father's route and Mafuie gave him fire to carry to his father to cook the taro. With the fire prepared for cooking the food, Mafuie emerged and blew the fire out. After an altercation, Mafuie lost an arm and in order to save his other he offered to teach Ti'iti'i the secret of how to make a fire by rubbing two sticks together.

Courtesy of the artist and Milford Galleries, Dunedin

Shannon Novak (born 1979 in Ngāmotu, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

“Untitled” (Stray)

2020

Transparent vinyl

Shannon Novak intervened into the heritage architecture of this building after noticing a deviation to the order of the design of this window. Conceived as a symmetrical layout where opposites mirror each other in formation, one of the window panes disrupts this order. Likely fitted by mistake, this window dates to the origins of this 1934 Grade I listed building.

Novak’s intervention addresses this breaking of order by highlighting it with coloured transparent vinyl. For the artist, “To be part of the LGBTQI+ community often feels like you are deviating from the norm in almost everything you do. This is exemplified by a pane of glass breaking the order of a window both in colour and layout.”

Courtesy of the artist

Shannon Novak (born 1979 in Ngāmotu, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Gender Study I

2019

Acrylic and ink

This is the first of a series of works by the artist that explore gender as a spectrum. The work references the rainbow flag, first designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker and since developed into other versions. In *Gender Study I*, the colour order of the popular six-colour flag has been inverted and the colours black and white added. For Novak, an aim of this work is to represent an abstracted gender spectrum. Here, Novak's spectrum appears worn through his process of etching into and eroding parts of the painted surface which can be seen in his other paintings in the exhibition. Applying a method of erosion and decay to his interpretation of a gender spectrum, Novak hints at the fruitlessness of trying to enforce gender categories.

Gender Study II-V by the artist have been installed across the road in the window above the Imperial Mini Supermarket. These are four circular orbs which continue to explore the complexities of the gender spectrum.

Courtesy of the artist

Shannon Novak (born 1979 in Ngāmotu, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

Bathroom Liberation Study II

2020

Acrylic and ink

Bathroom Liberation Study II is an intervention by the artist into the building's signage. The additions to the building's existing bathroom signage include rainbow connected icons and a replacement of the toilet sign with the word 'Toilets' instead of the standard male and female icons.

Bathroom signage is changing as we learn more about and acknowledge the gender spectrum. As stated by the artist, bathroom signage "is a complex activity that has yet to produce a "golden standard". This work is one starting point."

Courtesy of the artist

essa may ranapiri (Ngāti Raukawa, lives and works in Kirikiriroa)

redinblack / ransack

2019

Acrylic and marker pen on paper

"These paintings came out of a poem. Came out of the question mark at the end of the poem 'takatāpui'. These paintings came out of the limits of words. They speak to the moment of the big bang the separation of Papatūānuku and Ranginui. The red and the black and the white speak to the land and earth and sky all these in thir pregnant causes mixt. The space as a queered space where gender and sexuality are formless splatters of experience and non-experience. There are containers that hold and there are containers that break open. These are attempts at words that never quite reach that point and shapes that fumble to meaning." – essa may ranapiri

Bronte Perry (Pākehā, Ngāpuhi, lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau)

filthy angry faggots

2019-20

Cotton canvas

"I want a filthy angry faggots liberation that lies in the obscenity of their luv, their rage, their vulgarity. A praxis of sweaty cherub beauties denying the glory of the state for sweet leather kisses and hormone shots. Abject subjects fucking in the gutter cus its hotter that way. I'd still rather be a poor trans faggot with a bag of dicks than the rich gay piggy living in Ponsonby. Titties out, cock on, imma nasty little queer here to stay." – Bronte Perry

Courtesy of the artist