

Michèle Pearson Clarke

All That is Left Unsaid

Opening Reception
Friday | 16 February | 6-9p

16 February – 24 March 2018



ltd los angeles is pleased to present Michèle Pearson Clarke's *All That is Left Unsaid* in the film gallery. Michèle Pearson Clarke (b. 1973) is a Trinidad-born artist who works in photography, film, video and installation. Using archival, performative and process-oriented strategies, her work explores the personal and political possibilities afforded by considering experiences of emotions related to longing and loss.

With Audre Lorde acting as both subject and surrogate for the artist's mother, *All That is Left Unsaid*, is a daughter's elegy for her mother. Both women lived with cancer for 14 years, and the absence of their wisdom, guidance and love is experienced as an ongoing loss. This short, experimental documentary reflects on all other Black women gone too soon, in contemplating this aspect of grief.

Given that the Black/Queer body is always already understood to be in mourning due to racial trauma, social exclusion and violence, Pearson Clarke's work in film, video and photography is concerned with representing other forms of Black/Queer pain as a practice of resistance. While there is a long wretched history in Western visual culture of parading Black suffering as a spectacle for public consumption, her practice deals largely with the everyday moments of ambiguity, melancholy and discomfort present in narratives related to longing and loss. By using archival, performative and process-oriented strategies, the work investigates the personal and political possibilities afforded by sharing these experiences and the negative emotions that they produce like disappointment, loneliness, shame and grief. Her interest in the tremendous vulnerability present in these affects and what this vulnerability offers us when we are transparent about these difficult and often stigmatized psychological and emotional states, informed by her background in psychology and social work. As Nicole Fleetwood concedes, since "seeing Black is always a problem in a visual field that structures the troubling presence of Blackness," Pearson Clarke's practice is also preoccupied with creating visual documents of Black experience rather than of Black indexicality; certainly, she argues that this remains impossible to see, if indeed it exists at all. As such, she is interested in the embodied intimacies and emotional realities of Black/queer people as routes to making us visually knowable.

Pearson's work has been exhibited and screened across Canada, United States, and Europe, including Ryerson Image Centre (Toronto), Studio XX (Montreal), Robert McLaughlin Gallery (Oshawa), Ann Arbor Film Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, 198 Contemporary Arts & Learning (London, UK), International Film Festival Rotterdam and International Short Film Festival Oberhausen. She holds an MSW from the University of Toronto, and MFA in Documentary Media Studies from Ryerson University, 2015, she was awarded both the Ryerson University Board of Governors Leadership Award and Medal and the Ryerson Gold Medal for the Faculty of Communication + Design. This past year, she was artist-in-residence at Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography, and she was recently awarded the EDA Residency in the Department of Arts, Culture and Media at the University of Toronto Scarborough for the Winter term 2018. She is currently teaching in the Documentary Studies MFA program at Ryerson University.