

THE HILLSIDE

Stephanie Black-Daniels

Position & Attachment

17 September – 20 November 2022

Position & Attachment is a new exhibition by Glasgow based artist Stephanie Black-Daniels.

The exhibition builds upon two years of performative and collaborative research and conversations with other breastfeeding mothers, architects and artists.

This new installation presents a series of durational performance works, documenting the artist pushing and challenging her body in a two-channel film. The work draws on Stephanie's experience of establishing a breastfeeding practice in public spaces during lockdown and discovering how rigid and inhospitable the built or 'man-made' urban environment is to breast/chestfeed.

The title *Position & Attachment* is drawn directly from medical reports on pregnancy, birth and recovery. Such language is used by medical professionals to talk about the 'position and attachment' (P&A) of how you hold the baby at the nipple when feeding, and observing the parent performing this action.

Similar to the urban public spaces in which Stephanie fed her baby during lockdown, medicalised terminology and language are deeply rooted in patriarchal structures and practices. The instructional and didactic term 'position and attachment', along with other medical jargon, has informed a performative score for a set of choreographed routines. These routines build up repetitive gestures with laborious exertion, in order to embody a feeling of uneasiness and underlying turbulence that the feeding body endures in public urban space, as it adapts and moulds to its rigidity.

Stephanie's research was informed by a group of breastfeeding mothers, who shared experiences of feeding babies in public spaces during lockdown. The research group talked about 'performing' in the city, navigating and assessing the spaces they fed within whilst contending with the weather, temperature, comfort and safety. The performances that Stephanie created simulate the shared experience of the group by mimicking the daily feed and bringing closer the memory of nursing publicly.

The sound track, performed by cello, has been composed to accompany the repetitive and rhythmic performance. Cellos are also cradled by the musician's body, while demanding the engagement and labour of the entire body to play.

To design the exhibition, Stephanie worked with collaborator and architect Nick O'Neill to think about the binaries of architectural spaces: left and right, masculine and feminine, safe and dangerous, open and closed, domestic and public. These binaries informed the performance installation and draped structure. During their collaboration, the pair walked through the city together with their children, thinking about town planning, boundaries, access and materials. The scaffolding netting drapery divides the gallery space, and serves as a visual signifier of Stephanie's lockdown feeding experience amidst an industrial materiality.

The artist has deliberately designed the space for viewers to explore and adapt to. Stephanie has chosen to expose the structural qualities, by leaving the piles of strapping loose, and by revealing the

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wires and amps that support the work. The draped structure dictates and directs how we approach the performance; with no seating or place to rest, visitors are encouraged to find their own way of sharing space with the work, much like the way Stephanie encountered her urban surroundings whilst feeding her baby.

The two print works *PL* and *AR*, situated at the entrance of the gallery, represent the right and left feed. These were generated by collecting data in feeding (action, duration, terminology, weight of milk etc) from which she created a set of instructions for printing. Stephanie adopted the physical labour involved in printmaking – the repetitive ‘pulls’ to apply the ink to the paper – as another form of documentation of the durational performance in the two-channel film.

About the artist

Stephanie Black-Daniels (b.1987) is a visual artist, based in Glasgow, working predominantly with performance within contemporary art. Her work is situated between a choreographic and sculptural practice. Stephanie is a Masters graduate from the performance pathway at Glasgow School of Art and a graduate from The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Stephanie uses her body and the bodies

of others to explore concepts around performance, gender, sexuality, spectacle, heightened physicality and theatricality. She often collaborates in order to realise a creative and conceptual vision; this has led her to work with choreographers, directors, performers, musicians, composers, cinematographers, scenic artists and costume designers.

Works

A two channel film and performance installation, 7:51 and 15:41 mins (looped, HD), which includes various industrial* and bodyfeeding materials, 2022

* SC-6630CBL-blue, Superclad® debris netting, 2m x 50m, scaffold protection for site safety and supporting light insulation material with various materials: nylon, steel, plastic, ratchets and hooks.

Prints

Stephanie Black-Daniels, ‘PL’ & ‘AR’, screenprint on Somerset Black Velvet Printmaking paper (280gsm) in an edition of 8, image size 42 x 59.4 cm, 2022

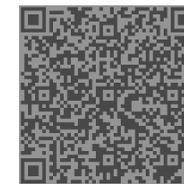
Stephanie Black-Daniels, ‘attachment/R’, screenprint on Somerset Soft White Velvet Printmaking paper (300gsm) in an edition of 8, image size 42 x 59.4 cm, 2022

Credits

Cinematographer – Nelisa Alcalde
Cellist – Sarah McWhinney
Film editor – Caitlin Delves
Sound recording/mixing – Sam Smith, Green Door Studio
Architectural collaboration – Nick O’Neill, aaltspace architects
AV consultant – Duncan Marquis
Research group – Becky, Katie, Ruby and babies
Commissioned writing – Rowan Lear

Thank you

Andy Magee, Anne Marie Rennie, Arianna Mele, Annie Crabtree, Camara Taylor, Dr Lyndsay Mann, Ed Bruce, Elliot Black-Daniels, Mark Black-Daniels, Helen Black, James N Hutchinson, Joey Simons, Kate V Robertson, Katherine Ka Yi Liu 廖加怡, Kirsty Earley, Thomas McCulloch, Louie Pegna, Louise Neilson, Luke Collins, Michelle Emery-Barker, Mina Heydari-Waite, Natsumi Sakamoto 坂本夏海, Oktavia Schreiner, Rachael Simpson, Reece Cargan, Siobhan Carroll and Suzie Cichy.



QR Code for Performance Observation Data of *Position & Attachment*, 2022. Explore the text using your hand-held device: pinch fingers to adjust zoom and observe performance data.

This exhibition is part of Collective’s Satellites Programme for emerging creative practitioners.