

before they were none

danielle brathwaite- shirley



Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley, 2023

**villa
arson**

February 12 – May 7 2023
Opening: February 11 2023

Galerie carrée

nice

Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley's project stems from Agatha Christie's novel, *And Then There Were None*, which had been, actually, re-titled many times: *Ten Little Niggers*, as published in 1939, *Ten Little Indians*, *The Ten Black Figures*, *Ten Little Soldiers*. In this work of fiction, reality-show like or Cluedo-ish, each character is both a victim and perpetrator, responsible and witness, both object and subject of investigation. But the most surprising thing is how their story, their value as characters, is fleshed out with the risk of death, and then the death, that hovers over each of them.

We never hear from them
We never see them
Yet the presence of them
The presence of us
Is suffocating even in our absence

Those 10 little niggers

Were Neither dead nor surviving but continuously living,
alive, *alived*, inspiring and inspired, forever loved, breathed
in, cared for, supported and held, cherished, singing,
dancing, shimmering

vivid.

"It's gonna be hard for people to sit in" cause ain't about,
or it isn't anymore, sitting-in to occupy a stable space and
responding. Rather it's a *matter* of moving back to motion.
Changing the perspective from which one looks at oneself,
looks at oneself, or doesn't, doesn't look at those from the
standpoint of a death that doesn't belong to them.

"It's gonna be hard for people to sit in" because the show
is over; no more representation but an ensemble. Because
there is nothing to watch and we need to learn to see
differently.

Rewind the film and breathe-in, life.

An other(ed) life an other lives, trans lives, black lives.
Lives multiplying eyes, ears and skins, nostrils and tongues.

Lives' fungal, sporadic, saxifraga and diasporic transmission.
Humble lives and opulent lives.
Lives wandering and incessant metamorphosis.
Innumerable lives.

Lives living, that lived and will live again. Will vibrate again.
One in motion and that will be moved again. Will move again
towards other directions and other desires than the staging
of their death and surviving and a whole bunch of principles
so *exclusively* libidinous.

Towards other directions and other desires, with no more
shame about moods, matters and breaks, rifts, lumps and
marks, pus and of all that isn't beautiful and doesn't "pass".

Because *all that beauty* isn't something you can EVER
appropriate: impetuous, fragile, immemorial, grateful,
unrecognisable and generous.

Before they were none, or not.
Them and us, co-living.

Mawena Yehouessi & Rosanna Puyol

Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley (born in London, 1995) is an artist based in Berlin. She works with animation, sound, performance and video games.

Information:
daniellebrathwaiteshirley.com

Curators

Mawena Yehouessi &
Rosanna Puyol
Assisted by Noémie Pirus-Hassid
and Daisy Lambert

Agenda

February 11

- 6 pm
Opening, with
a performance by the artist
Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley.

Every day of the exhibition

- 3 pm
Meeting around the exhibitions
Students on a mediation
course at Villa Arson will create
guided tours of the exhibitions,
sometimes with performances,
evoking their personal interests
in relation to the artistic issues
of the programme.
Free admission.
No reservation needed.

Group visit

School & Youth activities
servicedespublics@villa-arson.fr

Social media

@villaarsonnice
@ladydangfua

Practical information

Exhibitions open every day
(except on Tuesdays) from 2 to 6
pm.

Villa Arson is a public institution of the Ministry
of Culture and a member of UCA – Université
Côte d'Azur. It is supported by the Ville de Nice,
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ELIA Art Schools.

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