

Julie Brook
Pigment
Tower Room

Artist Julie Brook is drawn to wild and remote landscapes, often making outdoor sculptural interventions and film works. Taking inspiration from its location, her film *Pigment* (2013) was shot in a cave in Namibia, "Over the years I have consistently used raw pigment in my drawing and sculptural work. In Namibia I was introduced to the way in which the Himba women used red pigment rubbed onto their skin. This has both an aesthetic and protective value for them. Through an unexpected meeting with three Himba women in Otjize I was able to collect the red pigment with them. We use the same techniques of crushing and grinding the pigment. I use it dry, whilst they mix it with animal fat and aromatic plants."

Associated Event

Artist's Talk – Julie Brook
Tuesday 22 September, 6.30–8pm – FREE

Join artist Julie Brook as she discusses her life and work, including the inspiration behind her film, *Pigment*. Places are free but should be booked. Please visit www.ikon-gallery.org to book online or call Ikon on 0121 248 0708.

Visit the Resource Room where you can find a selection of books, audio and film.

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Want to know more about Ikon's At Home with Vanley Burke exhibition?

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IKON

Exhibition Guide

22 July – 27 September 2015

At Home with Vanley Burke
First Floor Galleries

Referred to as the "Godfather of Black British photography", Burke (born Jamaica, 1951) is also a dedicated archivist and collector of objects relating to black culture in Britain. Ikon presents *At Home with Vanley Burke*, an exhibition of the entire contents of Burke's flat in Nechells, north-east Birmingham.

The following interview was made in July 2015.

The objects seen at Ikon are part of a much larger collection. What motivates you to collect?

I am informed by my desire to capture people's experience, history is a by-product of lived experience. I take a long-term view. History always has a starting point, but we (the African-Caribbean community) didn't trust the history that was written ... we needed to start documenting and writing our own history so I collected material that reflected us ... newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets ... a lot of street posters advertising dances and events, conferences, meetings.

It was all about the process of migration and settlement – I was conscious that while you're busy doing that you don't have time to record your own history or see what's happening around you. My role as an artist was to observe these things and document them.

Is this a private collection or a public archive?

The question of ownership is interesting. There is a sense in which the collection has 'gone beyond me', it's now a public record of personal histories. Initially I hated the idea of institutions holding or hiding archives, but now my own archive has gone from a shed, damaged by fire in Bournville, to the Library of Birmingham. Those materials have been transformed by the change of environment ... the value of them has changed. I want the people who shared the experience of these materials to re-live those experiences and to analyse and contextualise the material, to re-present it for a new generation.

Your exhibition has transformed the gallery. What kind of experience might visitors have?

The gallery is one of those public spaces that we use to engage socially. I am using a language that the public can understand, hoping this exhibition will speak their language. It's also about time passing. I'm interested in how images look different and people's relationship with objects has changed. Stories and memories are attached to objects and I'm collecting them.

I'm also interested in mass-produced objects relating to black people in Britain – the paraphernalia that was used visually to describe black people; figurines, masks, golliwogs. Although they may not have been owned by us at the time, they are still a part of our narrative.

It's about the process of collecting objects which are full, pregnant with history, history of the people who have used them. A black experience, but largely a working class experience as well.

A catalogue accompanies the exhibition, Priced £18, special exhibition price £15, illustrated with Vanley Burke's

photographs and including texts by Pete James, Curator of Photographs at the Library of Birmingham, and artist/curator Marlene Smith.

At Home with Vanley Burke is supported by funds raised through *Art Happens*, the Art Fund's crowd-funding platform and the Mill Dam Trust.

Associated Event

Artist's Talk
Vanley Burke in conversation with Soweto Kinch
Thursday 10 September, 6.30–8pm – FREE
Join artist Vanley Burke as he discusses his life and work with musician Soweto Kinch, and in particular the inspiration behind the current exhibition, *At Home with Vanley Burke*. Places are free but should be booked. Visit www.ikon-gallery.org to book online or call Ikon on 0121 248 0708.

Takehisa Kosugi *SPACINGS* Second Floor Galleries

Ikon presents the first major solo exhibition in the UK by Japanese composer and artist Takehisa Kosugi (born 1938). A pioneer of experimental music in Japan in the early 1960s, he is one of the most influential artists of his generation.

Closely associated with the Fluxus movement, Kosugi joined the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in the 1970s, becoming Musical Director in 1995, and working with it until the final performance in 2011. His sound installations, exhibited here involve everyday materials and radio electronics, and interactions with wind, electricity and light, making sonic relationships between objects.

Mano-dharma, electronic (1967), uses electric waves, radio frequency waves and wind movement, and draws sound from them by installing an electronic system within the space. Electronic wave transmission devices and receivers are suspended from the ceiling, and the interference that occurs between them is made more complicated through the use of an oscillating fan. Simultaneously, Kosugi projects an image of ocean waves on the gallery wall to make an analogy.

Interspersion for Light and Sound (2000), is a work which embodies imperceptible movement. Perspex boxes are filled with white sand and sugar emitting faint electronic crackles of sound and light from the electronics and LEDs concealed below the surface. Kosugi explains the inspiration behind his work, "One day I looked at the bottles of salt and sugar put on the table when I ate breakfast in the dining room of my friend's house, and I noticed suddenly that the salt and the sugar might convert into the modulation of the sound

by covering the sounding materials. I am often inspired by the encounter with daily materials and ordinary scenes."

A new work for Ikon, *Light Music II* (2015), features audio generators operated with solar cells and batteries emitting continuous long tones, and clicking sounds simultaneously. Using various types of speakers the sounds are evocative of natural environments, constantly changing.

"My exhibition at Ikon is comprised of six pieces and simple technology is used for all of them. For some works, wind from an electric fan, light and even sugar bring the change to the sound. In converting what is not sound to what is sound, we not only hear it with our ears but also see sound with our eyes. We are indeed hearing light as well. I hope that visitors will take their time slowly and enjoy the landscape of sounds changing subtly with every moment," Kosugi

This exhibition is supported by the Japan Foundation, the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation and The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation.

Associated Event

Rie Nakajima and David Toop
Sculpture 7
Sunday 6 September, 2–4pm – FREE
CBSO Centre, Berkley Street
Birmingham B1 2LF

Ikon, in collaboration with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, presents *Sculpture*, an ongoing project devised and curated by Rie Nakajima and David Toop. A consideration of events as sculpture, it questions notions of performance as entertainment, conventions of duration and negotiations of space. Places are free

but should be booked. Book online at www.ikon-gallery.org or call Ikon on 0121 248 0708.