

The Interior and the Exterior - Noah Purifoy

Hannah Collins

18 photographs and a soundtrack - edition of 3 and 2 aps – Artist book

The Interior and the Exterior - Noah Purifoy (2014) is an installation of sound and photographs that pays homage to the West-Coast American artist Noah Purifoy (1917-2004). Purifoy was born to a sharecropper family in Alabama and moved to Los Angeles as a young adult. He first worked as a furniture designer and later studied as a teacher and social worker. Purifoy was a co-founder of the Watts Tower Art Center and a witness of the Watts Riots in 1965. In the aftermath, he and fellow artist Judson Powell collected the broken neon signs that littered the streets and repurposed them as material for small constructions, which became *66 Signs of Neon* (1966), an innovative and acclaimed group exhibition.

In the last 15 years of his life, Purifoy moved to Joshua Tree in the Mojave Desert where he expanded his practice through large-scale assemblages created from found materials that eventually covered a large tract of desert landscape. The site is now preserved as a monument to his life's vision. Inspired by the site, Collins developed the work to include both images of the sculptures in the day and night and the voices of Purifoy's contemporaries. These voices include those of artist Ed Ruscha, founding members of the Black Panther Party, L.A. Rebellion Filmmakers, writers and other cultural thinkers who have lived through the same period.

Voices: Ed Boreal, Dale Brockman Davis, Jacques and James Bronson, Ben Caldwell, Emory Douglas, Rosie Lee Hooks, Emory Holmes, Hank Jones (Black Panther Party), Tendai Jordan, Joe Lewis, Samella .Lewis, Yael Lipshultz, John Outterbridge, Judson Powell, Ed Ruscha, Sue Welsh

Walker Evans' publication *Message from the Interior* (1966) is presented with Hannah Collins version of the book. The editions bound in grey cloth contain twelve carefully selected photographs taken by Evans over 30 years. They are a widely focused document of the American vernacular. Collins has re-imagined Evans' project, appropriating the format to bring her study of Purifoy's sculptures into a relationship with a previous social agenda.



Vista de la instalación (Camden Art Center, Londres) –julio 2015

GALERIA JOAN PRATS

The Fertile Forest

Hannah Collins

The Fertile Forest (2013-15) is a visual work that looks at our engagement with nature. During visits to several tribes from the Amazon rainforest, Hannah Collins has been researching a vital matter for the human being: the use we are currently making of plants and our relationship with them.

This latest work by Collins demonstrates a powerful unique experience and opens a dialogue with biodiversity from a personal viewpoint.

The Fertile Forest 2013-15 is a horizontal stream of images in a series of vitrines around the perimeter of a space. Each image records a plant used by the Inga and Cofan tribes, with whom Collins lived in the Amazon rainforest. These plants are the means by which the tribe remain physically and spiritually healthy, serving each one for a specific purpose – from headache cures to illnesses of the soul and in some cases the plants enable hallucinogenic journeys to spiritual planes and 'telepathic' communication with others. Along with a hundred and fifty images, screen-printed texts on the gallery walls relate the mental journey of the artist whilst under the influence of the hallucinogenics and in the company of the shaman. In vitrines, plant samples gathered with the tribe, are placed above gold plated mirror which reflects the viewer and the plant simultaneously. The installation itself becomes sculptural and poetic.

An ongoing development of *The Fertile Forest* during the year 2016, is the film project with the indigenous artist and botanist Abel Rodríguez (La Chorrera, Colombia, 1941), a guide for many years for botanists from whom he learnt to draw. His knowledge on indigenous culture is a source of diffusion of the amazon ecosystem, culture and values. His drawings relate and describe plants at different seasons and their relationship with aboriginal population.



Installation view (Baltic Mill, Newcastle, UK) – September 2015-January 2016

GALERIA JOAN PRATS