

Black Atlantis: Retrograde Futurism

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Black Atlantis: Retrograde Futurism is Ayesha Hameed most-recent lecture-performance part of the ongoing Black Atlantis project. Black Atlantis is a multi-part experimental lecture performance that combines sound and moving image. It looks at possible afterlives of the Black Atlantic: in contemporary Mediterranean migration, through Afrofuturistic dancefloors and soundsystems, and in outer space.

Ayesha Hameed presented the lecture-performance *Black Atlantis: Retrograde Futurism* at Nottingham Contemporary on 13th June 2019, part of CAMPUS Episteme What do we mean by meaning?. This event is the third in a series exploring ways of sensing that challenge the norms of knowledge production and knowing.

The lecture-performance explores the stories of a twenty-foot boat spotted off the south-eastern coast of Barbados on April 29, 2006. On board, eleven bodies were found by the coastguards, preserved and desiccated by the sun and saltwater. The ghost ship was adrift for four months on the Atlantic Ocean. It set sail on Christmas day in Praia in the Cape Verde Islands, full of migrants from Senegal, Guinea

Bissau, and Gambia, en route to the Canary Islands. Each of these men paid £890 for their place on the boat. Four months later the boat was found on the coast of Barbados.

This is an inadequate telling of this story that draws on the materials and tools at hand to make sense of the complicity of weather, ocean currents and state violence in the journey of this ship. Hovering between the film and the essay form is a questioning of the adequacy of the measuring of histories and affects connected to crossing, languages to make evident the materiality of the sea, and the both measurable and immeasurable horror contained in the figure of the ghost ship.

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