Draft Press Release

Rita Evans: Portable Portals

17 August – 10 October 2021

Aleph Contemporary Online at www.alephcontemporary.com

Aleph Contemporary are pleased to announce an exhibition of drawings by the British-Canadian performance artist Rita Evans. Evans is known for sculptures that are also playable electro-acoustic instruments and tools. Her performances involve ‘playing’ the sculptures with multiple participants.

This is how Evans describes her recent work: “I have been exploring multiplicity, collectivity and communality through feedback methods of composing and improvising I develop in my sculptural films, performances and public workshops. The resulting Instrument-Sculptures’ soundscapes are characterised by group dynamics as material and create moments of focus, humour, ferocity, generosity and struggle.”

The sixteen drawings on show in Portable Portals were made during the tumultuous summer of 2020 and reflect the uncertainty, seismic change and domestic existence of our collectives lives during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The exhibition is accompanied by a text written by the London writer and curator Amy Lay-Pettifer. “Each of these drawings is the holding of a moment. Out of solitude, stillness and the tactile process of pencil on paper, a space opens up, expansive and exciting; suddenly there is a crowd, a problem, a question, a door! They map our desire for communication and physical touch, tracing its edges and forming blueprints for its expansion beyond limits, both real and of the mind.” She says.

Rita Evans is currently working as a commissioned artist in an art engagement programme with children entitled ‘Rock, Paper, Scissors’ at The Drawing Room, London running until September 2021. Earlier this year **she completed a residency at the Towner Eastbourne where she created ‘Theatre of Sound’ shown at the** Towner International Biennial. In addition to UK exhibitions at the Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery, London and Tate Britain, her work has been shown as far afield as Mexico City, Stockholm and India where she was Artist-in-Residence at Indian Institute of Fine Art, Delhi. **This Autumn she will be at the Bauhaus Dessau as Artist-in-Residence.**At the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation and the GfZK (Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig). During the stay in Dessau, unusual hybrids will be created on the occasion of the Foundation’s annual theme of “Infrastructure”, involving visitors and citizens of Dessau-Roßlau. The results and work processes will be presented at Gropius House. In 2022 she will be carrying out a commission for Tate St. Ives. Entitled *Stringing the Matrix*, this sculptural performance will be made response to the constructivist Naum Gabo.

Rita Evans has an impressive list of academic achievements. In 2018 she studied ‘Anthropology of Spaces, Places and the Built Environment’ at Goldsmiths College, London. In 2015, ‘Sound Art, Composition and Field Recording’ at Morley College, London. This is in addition to her 2009 MA in Fine Art and 2008 Post Graduate Diploma in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London. Her original BA Hons was awarded in 2002, in Fine Art: Painting at The University of Brighton.

Select awards include: The Digital Originals Award, Canada Council for the Arts, 2020; Coil of Days, Canada Council for the Arts Inter Arts Grant, 2019; Marjorie and Neil Armstrong Endowment and Canada Council for the Arts, Sound Arts Grant, 2018; Canada Council for the Arts Media Arts Grant, 2018; Arts Council England, Grants for the Arts, 2017; Sally Mead Hands Foundation Scholarship, USA and Canada Council for the Arts Travel Grant, 2016, in a year where she was also received the Stephen Cripps’ Studio Award on the Acme Residency & Awards Programme.