



small gatherings

Hagere Selam “shimby” Zegeye-Gebrehiwot’s response to the work of Jaime Black and Brandy Bjarnason Bloxom

small gatherings - Platform Centre for Photographic and Digital Arts

Jaime Black (MB) and Brandy Bjarnason Bloxom (MB)

05 February – 06 March 2021

Hagere Selam “shimby” Zegeye-Gebrehiwot

June 2021

Untitled

There is a frame

Holding movement with land

Captured practices and ceremony

My screen mediates the borders

Of your still images

I only read your work in motion picture

A forthcoming

A shyness

Maybe less bashful than medium specific

If we speak in image making

If the borders of still image

Translate a FaceTime tour

A pandemic share

A phone call

The gallery experience double mediates your work

Even the moving image

In it's virtual context

Points to the limits of spectatorship

But the clay knows

I once held clay

I think

Blue doors

Or art city

Or daughter of a fine arts graduate, clay

Not porcelain or plastic covered bricks

But from the red river bank

Or my uncle's place by the sea

I don't know clay, I didn't learn it

But a proximity, para-clay

Communication

--

Brandy emailed, " I feel whole, complete, and at home when I'm on the land."

The context was this:

Being one with nature, I feel whole, complete, and at home when I'm on the land. I grew up in the north and [I'm] still here, it was our way of healing to be with our true self, we didn't have resources. So I've been taught this as a child. When I go out on the land, I go out alone to be with my spirit and I listen and I'm guided. All my images are mostly taken outside my home on the lake and I would say are spur of the moment

one's for the most part. My camera and my dress come with me at all times when I am on the land.

The photographs in *small gatherings* made by Bloxom unfurl a rich narrative of being a collaborator in relationship with the land. I was struck by her foregrounding of place and the sincerity of how she shares her relationship to it.

To do:

Make an appointment with Collin.

Videocall the show.

I've only known *small gatherings* virtually. I think I was set up on a friend date with the show and we only had one pandemic visit. The show, like all artist run centre shows, was ephemeral.

Apropos Clay

The show no longer exists and the walls that were once imprinted with Jaime's clay mixture body prints are washed away or maybe painted over. An imprint was laid but the interactions with clay are not part of the space any longer.

I heard that the small gallery had the presence of ancestors bursting through the white walls.

We're tired of talking about and writing about the yt cube, aren't we?

I couldn't find you but I found you, sort of. I don't think this whole art world vibe is my kind of worldbuilding.

It was cool to be asked to write something.

Jaime:

- thinks about clay from a spiritual perspective
- wonders, what do we learn by touching the land? so much memory lives there
- understands that we're capable of remembering old stories/knowledge through materiality
- is more interested in performative work than photography
- approaches image making as documentation
- starts thinking in a different way by being immersed in an alternate performance reality
- engages universal themes that are deeply personal but also spiritual
- creates a space of healing that others can benefit from
- thinks, maybe not even a performance practice but things called to access historical knowledge
- just wants to do ceremony on the land

Lists from a place of love. As reverential. How legible can an experimental and belated text about witnessing and digitally mediated exhibitions be?

Platform says, "The exhibition features new bodies of works that considers the artist's relationship with the land, reciprocity/relationality, contagions, colonial-induced climate change and collectives."

Thinking through this show,

being present with the sense of unshared ancestors,

being young while embodiment takes a different shape as a writer or artist.

--

shimby is an administrator based in Regina, Saskatchewan, Treaty 4.

Jaime Black is a multidisciplinary artist of mixed Anishinaabe and European descent. Black's art practice engages in themes of memory, identity, place and resistance and is grounded in an understanding of the body and the land as sources of cultural and spiritual knowledge.

Brandy Bjarnason Bloxom was born in Pinawa, Manitoba and soon after relocated to Leaf Rapids in northern Manitoba where she spent the remainder of her youth. Growing up in the north with First Nations roots has inspired Brandy throughout her creative processes in art and photography. A self-taught photographer, Brandy has also helped aspiring photographers by hosting small workshops and one-to-one sessions within her home community of Denare Beach, SK and neighbouring communities of Creighton, SK and Flin Flon, Manitoba. Brandy has always been curious about her Indigenous history. She has explored and shared many teachings and her love of the outdoors in the work that she creates. home, body/home, land.

Hagere Selam "shimby" Zegeye-Gebrehiwot is an artist, writer and administrator who currently works and resides between Treaty 1 and Treaty 4 territories. Their practice engages with themes of place and it's abstraction from a diasporic, queer and feminist perspective. Currently, they are the Executive Director at the Saskatchewan Filmpool Cooperative, Interim Director of WNDX Festival of Moving Image and guest editor of the forthcoming Art&Wonder publication.

IMAGE | Jamie Black and Brandy Bjarnason Bloxom, from *small gatherings*



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