



## Press Release

# Rudy Loewe A Significant Threat

23 June - 12 August 2023

Preview: Thursday 22 June, 6-9pm

VITRINE, Fitzrovia. Wed - Sat, 12-6pm.

VITRINE is delighted to present 'A Significant Threat', a solo exhibition by emerging artist Rudy Loewe. Loewe uses painting and drawing as a method to interrogate and expose Britain's role in suppressing Black Power movements in the English-speaking Caribbean during the 1960s and 70s.

'A Significant Threat' brings together paintings on canvas and board produced over 2022 and 2023, which are part of an ongoing visual examination of archival research carried out during Loewe's PhD in The National Archives from the Information Research Department, a secret unit within the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. The documents uncovered serve as source and reference material to the heavily researched and informed paintings, which reflects on the artist's Caribbean heritage and interprets the history and stories they have found during their research.

Giving voice to those suppressed by the British state during this period, Loewe wants to unearth forgotten and hidden figures to bring justice and pay tribute to the work undertaken for Caribbean independence. In doing so, they question the dominant retelling of independence that has been prescribed and controlled by the British Empire.

On the main wall of the gallery a group of paintings are installed in a comic book format - outlined and ordered in the direction of reading or viewing - from top left to bottom right. Like the content of the paintings which bring together text and imagery, the format ensures the works remain accessible, allowing the viewer to learn about this important part of history by providing context and imagery entwined.

The 'Trinidad' series presented in this exhibition highlights moments from the Black Power Revolution in Trinidad & Tobago in February 1970. This included a growing atmosphere of rebellion at Carnival, depicted in 'February 1970, Trinidad #1', black Trinidadians in solidarity with Asian Trinidadian sugar workers, as depicted in 'March to Caroni, Trinidad #2', and soldiers from the Teteron Bay barracks, as depicted in 'An Unsuccessful Rebellion, Trinidad #3'.

Further instances of uprising that were suppressed by British colonial rule are depicted in other paintings in the exhibition, such as The Second Regional Black Power Conference, scheduled to take place in 1970 in Barbados. Loewe made a Freedom of Information request to access the archival record documenting a proposed visit by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office to the conference for an individual linked to the Swiss Press Review, but the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office denied the request as a matter of national security. However, Loewe did uncover that in 1969 the Information Research Department infiltrated the First Regional Black Power Conference in Bermuda. This story is seen in 'The First Regional Black Power Conference, Bermuda #1'.

Included as part of the exhibition is a reading space created by the artist. The space offers visitors time for reflection and an opportunity to read and engage with material Loewe has used as reference or been influenced by. Fundamental aspects to Loewe's practice is understanding and context which allows for informed interpretation of the history they are depicting.

On Saturday 22 July at 2pm, VITRINE will host an artist talk at the gallery in which Loewe will discuss their research and work.

**Rudy Loewe (b. 1987, London, UK)** lives and works in London, UK. They hold a BA in Illustration from the University of Brighton, UK (2010), an MFA in Visual Communication from Konstfack, Stockholm, SE (2018) and is currently working towards a PhD in Fine Art Practice at the University of London. Residencies include: Early Years Artists in Residence, The Serpentine Gallery, London, UK (2020); Distributed Identities residency, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Canada (2019); We Dey, X Space, AU (2019); The Bothy Project, Scotland (2019).

Loewe has exhibited internationally in institutions and galleries including: Humber Street Gallery, Hull, UK; South London Gallery, London, UK; New Art Exchange, Nottingham, UK; Botkyrka Konsthall, Stockholm, SE; Vallentuna Kulturhus, Stockholm, SE; Marabourparken, Stockholm, SE; Royal Academy, London, UK; Regart Centre D'Artistes En Art Actuel, Lévis, CA; DobraVaga, Ljubljana, SI; 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, London, UK; Staffordshire St, London, UK; Ugly Duck, London, UK.

They have had public commissions including: LDN WMN billboard commissioned by Tate and the Mayor of London, London, UK; Becintree Forever schools project, commissioned by Barking & Dagenham council, London, UK; The Depths of Our History, Contemporary Art Space Project commissioned by Iniva and RSA Academies, UK; Black Women in History, Pen Store shopfront window, Stockholm, SE; PROCESSIONS banner commissioned by Artichoke, London, UK; Draw Or Die! Grafikens Hus shopfront window, Södertälje, SE.

Forthcoming exhibitions include the artist's first public sculpture commission as part of the Liverpool Biennial 2023, UK (opening 10 June 2023).

**For press enquiries, image requests and private view accreditation please contact: [press@vitrinegallery.com](mailto:press@vitrinegallery.com)**

#### Notes to Editor

1. Installation views of the show will be released on Wednesday 28 June 2023.

2. VITRINE is focused on artistic experimentation and emerging interdisciplinary practices. The gallery was founded in Bermondsey, London in 2010, with a second space in Basel opened in 2016, a digital space launched in 2020 and a third space in London's Fitzrovia opened in spring 2022. Over this last decade, we have established a reputation as a selector and nurturer of new talent, supporting artists' careers and the development of their ideas.

**Our programme** is focused on interdisciplinary approaches in a variety of media, concentrating on artists working in installation, sculpture and performance. We are committed to support experimental practices that flourish site-responsively, in alternative environments to the traditional white cube, and are often underrepresented in the art market.

**Our spaces** are transparent: In London, glass windows cover the entire 16-metre-long, panoramic space; In Basel, our space – custom designed by Swiss architects PanteraPantera - offers a 360 degree 'in-the-round' viewing experience. This transparent architecture allows all exhibitions to be viewable 24/7 from the surrounding public squares. Both VITRINE London and Basel are wheelchair accessible. Our office and viewing spaces are hidden inside, allowing for an incredibly flexible contemporary exhibiting and working space.

**Our business model** is a hybrid. We operate an expanding commercial gallery; representing a core group of artists and advising international clients. Our work in the public realm and commitment to supporting artists with ambitious experimental exhibitions has allowed us access to public funding, which we have carefully used over our 10-year history for specific large- scale non-profit projects.