

ELLIOT REED -- *Union*

Dates	Nov 2 - Dec 30, 2023
Opening	Nov 2, 6-8 pm
Location	136 Baxter Street New York, NY 10013

Performance is not just something you “do.” For any body that exists in a public, performance can happen TO you as well. The gaze, desires, and interpolations of the other become tangible material. The eyes are the window to the soul. I’m boarding up the house.*

*Mining my conceptual difficulties with live performance as tools for making more work, I’m interested in how the body of the performer becomes a consumable object on stage. A type of aesthetic cannibalism if you will. Unfortunately, violence against Blacks, queers, and other minorities has progressed beyond the world of simple physical or socially motivated violence into something much more sinister. News articles, blog posts, and videos can forever attach the victims of violent crimes to the motives of the attacker. The body of the victim has been acted upon, absorbing a hypertext composed by public opinion. Is there anyway to avoid this? How do we cultivate and maintain our anonymity?

In my studio, I’m triangulating a visual link between post-minimalist art and writing, process composition, and a lived queer and Black performance tradition. What if the work of artists such as George Lewis, Susan Howe, Anthony Braxton, Félix González-Torres, and Yvonne Rainer could be viewed as pre-emptive resistance to digital censorship? Predictive digital technologies profit by assuming the behavior of users and anticipating their next choices. By working within self-imposed confines of form and process, I feel we can envision a resistance to over-simplified corporate storytelling. Specifically, Yvonne’s work surrounding gesture and “liveness” is a north star to me as I feel she managed to negate the performance of virtuosity and literal personhood, focusing on pedestrian movements eschewing identifiable narrative. Is this a successful protest of the dancer performed from within the stage? In what other ways can the artist talk about their craft while also remaining critical of it? I will never not be a part of my body but its my job to question how it exists within the world, and not just receive the labels attached to it. This is not randomness, this is an embodied refusal.

I’m inspired by Georges Bataille’s writing on Gilles de Rais, *The Delectable Negro* by Vincent Woodard, intellectual property law, and produced an entire exhibition about the arrest, crimes, and trial of Ed Buck. All of these things feel intimately connected to my understanding of performance as a methodology - performance as a tool used by the individual to interface with a public.

I moved to New York City in 2019 and stayed between Brooklyn and Manhattan during the early days of COVID-19 and the movement for Black lives. One of my favorite image memories was riding my bike through the empty city, seeing the luxury stores with boarded-up windows. It was as if the brands

themselves were ashamed at the state of society. The performance of wealth and commerce had been disrupted and the shops erected modesty skirts.

This is disappearing in plain sight. A concert of suggestions reaching towards freedom. Walls divide but they can also contain or protect. "Home"

- Elliot Reed, October 2023

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Elliot Reed is an artist, based in New York working across video, dance, performance, and sculpture.

He received his MA in Choreography from Master EXERCE ICI-CCN in Montpellier, France, and is a member of The Whitney Museum ISP 23-24 cohort.

Elliot is a 2019 danceWEB scholar, 2019–20 Artist in Residence at the prestigious Studio Museum in Harlem and part of the museum's permanent collection. Reed was also the recipient of the 2019 Rema Hort Mann Emerging Artist Grant. Recent gallery and museum exhibitions include Kunsthaus Glarus (2021) JACK Quartet (2021), Metro Pictures (2021), MoMA PS1 (2020/21), OCD Chinatown (2021), The Getty Center (2018), Hammer Museum (2016), Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (2018), The Broad (2017), and performances in Tokyo, Osaka, London, Mexico City, Vienna, and Hamburg.

Union marks Reed's third presentation with anonymous gallery, however our first solo exhibition at the gallery together. *Union*, opens November 2nd from 6-8 pm and will run through December 30th. For further information, contact hello@anonymousgallery.com