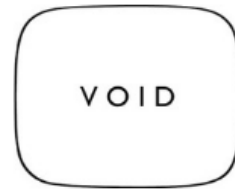


Patrick Street  
Derry BT48 7EL  
Tel +44 (0)28 7130 8080  
hello@derryvoid.com  
Reg Charity No XR69



**28 May 2019**

**\*\*\*\*\* Press Release for Immediate Attention \*\*\*\*\***

***Command Lines* – Candida Powell-Williams at Void Gallery, Derry**

**Exhibition Launch Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June, 6:30-8:30pm**

**Artist's Introduction, 6pm**

**Performance, 7-7:30pm**

**Exhibition runs 25<sup>th</sup> June – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2019**

*Command Lines* is a theatrical installation of sculpture, performance and animation by artist Candida Powell-Williams. The works re-imagine the iconic tarot as a three-dimensional experiment in symbolism, action, story-telling and magical thinking. Powell-Williams' installation uses the term Command Lines to frame the exhibition, insinuating systems, networks and feedback loops, control over and order of information. Her work builds on the play between performance, technology and sculptures that act as props to her fantastical stage setting calling into questions structures of reality.

Throughout the gallery there is a multitude of scales and forms of sculptures that determine how we interact with the works. The centre point of the exhibition is colourful stationary sculptural forms that are a chaotic shambles apparently poised ready for action, the space punctuated with enlarged heavy, stationary symbols. This main body of work acts as an anchor that feeds back and circumnavigates the works in the adjoining gallery spaces.

There are miniature scale versions of the same forms, ordered in 10 dioramas arranged as a Celtic cross tarot spread. The viewer is invited to peer into each proscenium discovering abstract forms, empty castles and temple-like structures, animal heads and frozen magician's gloves. The tarot is stripped of its archetypal human imagery leaving a space to fill and pushing the symbolic to the fore.

An interactive 'game', answering the viewer's question with a series of animations derived from the performance and accompanied by a poetic voice. These vignettes mix ballet and computing terminology, which, rather than giving divinatory guidance are in fact instructions for the performance. This leads the viewer back to the main gallery where the props and costumes are waiting, as though inviting the audience to pick them up and start configuring their own imaginative reading.

The elements of performance and the sculptural props repeat and mutate across the galleries. Block sculptural forms and symbols are echoed in different media (ceramics, Jesmonite, resin, embroidery, textiles, drawing, animation) and different scales (human size and miniature), flipping back and forth creating a repetitive, self-referential loop,

experimenting with positive and negative space; past and present; stationary and moving; animate and inanimate; soft and hard. The range of materials and textures reference digital pixilated landscapes rendered in the physical with apparently dissolving edges, wobbly geometry and bare the intimacy of the handmade to explore the mutability of meaning as they come together in a cacophony of voices.

The project is a culmination of research and development during a residency at London's Warburg Institute exploring the endurance of esoteric ideas and the cultural heritage of tarot, archetypes and mutation of symbols. A longstanding interest in our attempts to navigate the Absurd led Powell-William to consider mysticism within storytelling and its meeting point with the mundane materiality of objects.

Powell-William's work is a response to researching the slippage that occurs between primary and secondary source material in relation to historical Artefacts. By discarding the original source and reimagining objects as a product of their interpretation she explores the consequences of retelling history and how we construct identity through objects and memory. She manipulates historical narratives, plucking references from disparate eras, folding them into the present and condensing them into a singular experience.

This exhibition is kindly supported by The Warburg Institute and the Arts Council of England.

### **Artist's Bio**

Candida Powell-Williams graduated from the Royal College of Art, London in 2011 and the Slade School of Fine Art London in 2009. Her sculptural and performance works are a response to researching the slippage that occurs between primary and secondary source material, exploring the consequences of retelling history and how we construct identity through objects and memory. She was recently Artist in Residence at The Warburg Institute London. Selected exhibitions include: *Lessness, still quorum*, performance, Serpentine Galleries, London (2018); *Boredom and its Acid Touch*, Frieze Live, London (2017); *Tongue Town*, Museum of Modern Art, São Paulo (2017); *Cache*, Art Night Associate Programme, London (2017); *Vernacular History of the Golden Rhubarb*, Bosse & Baum Gallery, London (2017); PIC performance festival, Melbourne, Australia (2016); *Coade's Elixir-an occupation*, Hayward Gallery, London (2014). Powell-William's is the recipient of the 2018 *Mother Art Prize* with a group show at Mimosa House London (2019). Other awards include the Sainsbury Scholarship at the British School at Rome (2012-13), the Paris Residency at Cite Internationale des Arts, (2010), Eric and Jean Cass Sculpture Award (2010-2011). In 2019 common-editions published Powell-William's 78 card tarot deck and artist book.

- **Performance**

As part of the preview of the exhibition there will be a performance choreographed by the artist. Animating the sculptural forms the dancers will configure and reconfigure architectural structures found in the artist's invented tarot cards. Set to meditation music and metamorphosing between each tableaux, dancers pierce and divide the space in a choreography inspired by spiritualist diagrams.

- For further information on Void Derry or to arrange a tour or interview, please contact:  
Tansy Cowley, Press & Marketing Coordinator, Void Gallery, Derry  
marketing@derryvoid.com / 028 7130 8080

For more information about the artist please visit <https://www.candidapowell-williams.com/>

### **Void Gallery:**

- Void Gallery is a contemporary art space located in Derry, Northern Ireland. With up to 5 exhibitions per year showing the work of established international and Irish artists, Void has created an international reputation for its wide-ranging and challenging exhibition programme. A key element to the gallery is the Void Engage programme, which places participation, engagement and learning at the heart of Void, making contemporary visual art accessible to visitors of all ages.
- Mission statement: Void exists to present the contemporary visual arts and to support artists, through a programme of exhibitions, related educational and outreach activities from a national and international perspective.
- Void Gallery is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 5pm. Admission is free. Void Gallery is supported using public funding from Arts Council Northern Ireland and Derry City and Strabane District Council.
- Each exhibition launch is kindly supported by Northbound Brewery.
- For the latest news and events follow @derryvoid of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram - #derryvoid - or visit our website at [www.derryvoid.com](http://www.derryvoid.com).
- Void Gallery, City Factory, Patrick Street, Londonderry, Derry, BT48 7EL.  
028 71308080 / [www.derryvoid.com](http://www.derryvoid.com).

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