



The Salon of Disobedience: *Algorithmic Intimacies*
Hervisions with Nouf Alhimiary
The Mosaic Rooms
226 Cromwell Rd, Kensington, London SW5 0SW

12 September 2019
7-9.30pm

The Salon of Disobedience: *Algorithmic Intimacies* is an interactive and immersive evening which alongside Nouf Alhimiary composes a temporary site, a third space of sorts¹, where the spectres of our multiple disembodied selves are invited to collectivise within a physical territory.

The evenings settings appropriate its sensorial qualities from the mystical and intimate collectivity of a Jalsa ceremony, a specific cultural history which Nouf Alhimiary's current body of artistic and academic research builds a variety of constellations around. Alhimiary looks into the fictionalization of the social history of the 'Jalsa', which — despite its prominence in the GCC, finds its buried roots within East African and Sub Saharan traditions which were bought over to the GCC through the existence of slaves. The Jalsa, or 'Jalsat Tarab', is a ceremony whereby participants experience states of trance through celebration, song and dance achieving moments of intoxication with the possibility of being visited by a 'zar' or djinn. Whilst Jalsa has been adopted into Khaleeji culture and is often now fully credited to the Gulf, Alhimiary's research points to an inability to completely erase its roots. The reference to Jalsa not only exists to raise consciousness of the violent erasures of such history but is also intended by Alhimiary to allow for a consideration of how cyberspace and the affects we gain through disclosure within it might be read as extensions of the mystical and the algorithmic.

Algorithmic Intimacies invites you to consider these constellations of research through playfully disorienting your sense of absence and presence. Digital prompts in the form of an immersive display of sound, text and visual work will animate the physical environment allowing us to collaboratively produce an intimate and shared dialogue around the notions of disclosure, intimacy and affect as they relate to our ever-mediated lives. Virtual reality headsets for imagined intimacy will be provided to those who wish to take up discussion providing us with the cloak of anonymity we wear in our online lives within the physical environment. This evening of leaking our online experiences through our disembodied selves aims to create a space for us to consider how we can reclaim the master's tools and find agency over the algorithm, perhaps producing an alternative to common critiques of the dangers of these blurred states.

*Participants are encouraged to bring along digital ephemera, such as voice notes, screenshots and memes from their own personal digital archives. [These materials](#) will be shared in the performative and participatory workshop, acting as prompts for collective discussion.

¹ Edward Soja (1996) proposes first and second spaces as two different, and possibly conflicting, spatial groupings where people interact physically and socially: such as home (everyday knowledge) and school (academic knowledge). Third spaces are the in-between, or hybrid, spaces, where the first and second spaces work together to generate a new third space.

The Salon of Disobedience is an on-going nomadic salon that nods to and plays with the legacy of Arab art salons began by women in the early 1900s who had returned home to the Arab world from European education. Whilst open to all, The Salon of Disobedience centres ideas, materials, emotions, people, politics, history and art from the Arab and North African worlds. As evolving spaces in a state of continuous becoming, the salons will facilitate dialogue around peripheral and often invisible histories and experiences from the region and its diasporas. Collaborating with contemporary artists, thinkers and practitioners, the salons will challenge the power dynamics of the traditional salon format whilst fostering a spirit of dismantling in order to create new bodies of knowledge that reclaim the region from its interpellation by western scholarship and media. Much like the 19th century Salon des Refusés, *The Salon of Disobedience* locates a force of collectivity within rejection and opens up its fleshy hypothetical doors to all people and ideas defying categorisation.

Nouf Alhimiary is an artist and academic working with multimedia approaches ranging from photography, video, installation, pedagogy, performance and text. She uses collective critical engagement and fiction to interrogate themes like intimacy, technology, culture, gendered subject formation and alterity. Alhimiary has presented her work in the British Museum, The Venice Biennial and UtahMOCA amongst others. She is currently a PhD candidate at UCL Institute of Education researching digital culture and how affect and gender are articulated online, with particular focus on digital communities in the GCC. @noufling

Lorén Elhili is an independent curator based in London. Her practice co-exists beside a commitment to building support structures, public outreach beyond contemporary art networks, and alternative forms of knowledge sharing and production. Elhili's current research is occupied by the notion of repair as understood through a non-western lens and which forms the foundations for a project opening in Spring 2019 that collaboratively addresses London's dispersed North African communities to reckon with questions of resistance, civics and cultural production within postcolonial citizenship. Elhili has curated *Feminism(s) x The Arab & Muslim Diaspora* (2017), *Pressure Makes Diamonds* (2018). She co-curated *Choreophobia* at Somerset House Studios (2018) and *Nom* with Laundry Arts at AMP Gallery (2018). She is a part of curatorial collectives To Whom This May Concern and Present Futures and is working alongside The Laundry Arts on their new programme. @lorenelhili

Hervisions is a multidisciplinary curating and commissioning agency supporting and promoting new media art made by non-binary, POC, LGBTQI+ and female identifying artists. Facilitating online and offline experiences and collaborations with partners to research and produce innovative commissions, exhibitions and events with a strong focus on the intersection of art, technology and culture. Since launching in October 2016, with a visual podcast in collaboration with Specta at The Standard in LA. Original commissions include new work for i-D's Fifth Sense x Chanel platform (2017), Standard Vision (2018) and MIRA (2018) and has since held exhibitions and events in London at LUX at *Honey I'm Data* (2018), Tate Modern *Face up* (2019) and Tate Britain (2019), BFI, LN-CC (2019), *Suspended Power* at Arcade East (2019), and *Fast Line* at Art Night (2019). @hervisions_

Zaiba Jabbar is a moving image artist, award-winning director, independent curator and founder of Hervisions. With nearly a decade of experience of working in the creative, music and media her curatorial practice is an investigation into how people on the margins are using technology to create art outside of traditional formats, mixing high and low culture and making space for themselves through the experience of expanded moving image. Jabbar was curator in residence at LUX (2018) and is a board member of Abandon Normal Devices. @zaibajabbar

For press enquiries please contact hervisions.info@gmail.com