



**HOUSE**

**photoworks**

***Timely Tale***

**Natasha Caruana**

**University of Brighton Gallery, Edward Street**

**30 September - 5 November 2017**

HOUSE and Photoworks present a new co-commission by Natasha Caruana for this year's HOUSE Biennial.

*Timely Tale* is a lens-based work set against a backdrop of love, desire and health in the age of *Excess* - the theme for this year's HOUSE Biennial. These topics are discussed in the artwork through the vehicle of the artist's mother - Penny - and the audience will see the work in the setting of a 'medical waiting room'.

To experience Penny's story, viewers will be transported via the intimate waiting room into her bedroom through a short film capturing: recuperation, finding the right outfit, storing medication and looking for the perfect online partner. The piece addresses the idea of choice and how, in the long run, too much choice can often lead to decision-making paralysis.

**Natasha Caruana** explains, "*We assume that more choice means better options and greater satisfaction. Excess choice can make you question the decisions you make before you even make them and present unrealistically high expectations. We might endlessly feel guilty that we are not making the right choices, and that's why we didn't succeed. We are anxious that we are not good enough - working or spending hours on remaking ourselves.*"

*Timely Tale* is a comment on the current social and political landscape we live in but also an observation of how the photographic frame, with the advent of new technology, is dramatically changing for the first time. The work is viewed through headsets and *Timely Tale* uses the 360° technologies to empower the audience to look around the artwork with choice of what to see. Viewers can turn their heads to the right to observe the taking of prescription pills or to the left to see what's displayed on the television screen.

The narrative running throughout the artwork is the story of excess but also of consequence. It addresses NHS cuts, pharmaceutical price inflation, the pressure to find 'Mr. Right', and the impact the barrage of young and beautiful images can have on mental health and

consumer choices. Particularly, perhaps, for the older woman (Penny), handling the ageing of her own body.

**HOUSE Biennial Curator and Director of Photoworks, Celia Davies**, commented, "*This year's theme of Excess for HOUSE Biennial feels timely - we witness the consequences of excess and its impact every day with increasing magnitude. All the artists in HOUSE Biennial have made diverse responses to this year's theme that often focus in on personal, smaller stories, but with situations that scale up to relate to our bigger shared experience of the world.*

*Natasha Caruana's proposal is original, inquisitive and inventive. Her work underlines how photography, and our consumption of it, is ever shifting. Timely Tale tells a story of excessive choice and the consequences for an individual."*

Natasha's new co-commission is part of HOUSE Biennial which moves from an annual May slot to October for the first time in 2017 and to a biennial format.

**HOUSE Biennial Director, Judy Stevens**, said "*This commission will be an integral part of HOUSE Biennial's strong visual arts offer for Brighton & Hove, bringing a new dimension to the city's Autumn cultural calendar through providing a range of thematically linked commissioning opportunities for artists, both established and emerging.*"

Photoworks work with HOUSE Biennial as a co-commissioning partner, to produce a lens-based co-commission, as part of HOUSE Biennial, which will alternate with Brighton Photo Biennial.

This HOUSE Biennial and Photoworks co-commission is also supported by University of Creative Arts at Farnham.

## **ENDS**

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**A press preview of all HOUSE Biennial commissions will take place on September 29. 10am-3pm.**

## **LISTINGS INFORMATION**

*Timely Tale*

Natasha Caruana

30 September- 5 November 2017

Brighton University Gallery, 154-155 Edward Street, Brighton, BN2 0JG

Monday - Sunday 10am - 5pm

Free admission

**Natasha Caruana**

Natasha Caruana is a photographic artist living and working in London. She has an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art, London and is a Senior Lecturer of Photography at the University for the Creative Arts, Farnham, UK.

Caruana's art practice is grounded in research concerned with narratives of love, betrayal and fantasy. Significant to all Caruana's work is the questioning of how today's technology is impacting relationships.

The newly commissioned, *Divorce Index*, is currently showing at FACT Gallery, Liverpool, until October 1st. The piece is a culmination of the work made during her residency at the Open Data Institute, as part of the Data as Culture Programme 2015/16. In 2014 Caruana was named as the winner of the prestigious BMW Artist in Residence Award at Musée Nicéphore Niépce, France. The award led to solo shows at Les Rencontres d'Arles and Paris Photo and the monograph *Coup de Foudre*.

Her work has been shown across Australia, China, France, India, Lithuania, Portugal, Saudi Arabia and the United States. Her series *Married Man* and *Fairytale for Sale* has been included in numerous contemporary photographic catalogues, printed as monographs, and has toured widely, most recently alongside *Public, Private, Secret* at the International Center for Photography Museum, New York, 2016, *The Real Thing*, Flowers Gallery, New York, 2016, *Photo50*, Feminine Masculine, London, 2016

## **HOUSE Biennial**

Conceived in 2008 by Directors Judy Stevens and Chris Lord, HOUSE is a contemporary visual arts festival that began in part as a response to the limited space in the city for presenting contemporary art. HOUSE is curated by Celia Davies and commissions an internationally regarded Invited Artist and selects for commission a range of artists at varying career stages. Inherent to HOUSE is a potential to experience new ideas and different ways of thinking within the artistic process. Previous years' Invited Artists have been Gillian Wearing (2016), Nathan Coley (2015), Yinka Shonibare MBE (2014), Mariele Neudecker (2013) and David Batchelor (2012). In 2017 HOUSE will move to October as HOUSE Biennial and the lead artist for 2017 is Laura Ford. [www.housebiennial.art](http://www.housebiennial.art)

## **Celia Davies**

**Celia Davies** is Director of Photoworks, a national development agency for photography and visual culture based in Brighton UK, producing major cultural projects including the Jerwood/Photoworks, Brighton Photo Biennial and the Photoworks Annual. Experienced in developing artist's commissions for nearly two decades, Celia has been Curator for HOUSE since 2008 and was previously Head of Exhibitions at De La Warr Pavilion, 2002-9.

## **Photoworks**

Photoworks is a national development agency for photography. The programme includes commissions, new writing, participation and exceptional projects including the national Jerwood/Photoworks Awards, Photoworks Annual and Brighton Photo Biennial. Our aim is to connect outstanding artists with audiences and to champion talent and ambition. Photoworks is based at the University of Brighton, UK and is a National Portfolio Organisation supported by Arts Council England.

**[photoworks.org.uk](http://photoworks.org.uk)**

**Stay in touch:**

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