

# The Kitchen

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Katherine Hubbard: *Bring your own lights*  
September 8 – October 22, 2016

Performances in the gallery: Friday, October 14 and Friday, October 21 at 7pm. Free.  
Capacity is limited.

The Kitchen is pleased to present *Bring your own lights*, a new body of work in photography, performance, and writing by Katherine Hubbard. Taking The Kitchen's physical building as a starting point – its history as an ice storage facility and today as a black box theatre and gallery, the work considers the specificity of these constructed spaces and others. Foregrounding the experiential nature of still images, the installation constructs multiple possibilities for looking, addressing the standing body and the seated body, as well as the positions of viewer and audience. Through a writing practice which forms the core of the performances, Hubbard also proposes alternate narratives about cities and class, as well as image making itself.

In a series of seven images titled *The state and the cause*, photographs made in the black box theater at The Kitchen follow the shifting perspective of two fixed spotlights, both focused on the same area of ground plane where the floor of the theater meets the wall. Each image in the series marks the photographer's shifting point of view in order to materialize the relationship between the mechanics of photography and the optics of human vision. The weight of the absence of an assumed subject within the spotlight calls attention to the impossible task of photographing light, the elusive protagonist within a medium that *is* a registration of light. By extension, these works, along with the rest of the exhibition, pull apart the various roles in the production of images and the construction of meaning.

Another series of ten silver gelatin prints were produced by exposing large format negatives through ice. In specially designed boxes, negatives were placed in brackish water collected from Red Hook, Brooklyn. Each negative was then individually positioned in a box at every ten-degree angle between zero and ninety. After the water had frozen, the negatives, now embedded in ice, were exposed from a stationary projection of light above. The ice then became a lens through which the negative is exposed, but not a lens that is crafted with a determined focal point or capacity for repetition; a lens of ice with a shifting set of variables. The rotation of the negative from zero to ninety degrees in relation to the light source alters the temporary focal capacities of the ice lens, as the ice "images" itself.

These two series have been placed in sequence, moving around the room from two directions – the spotlight images progressing in increments up from number 1 in a clockwise direction, while the ice images move counterclockwise. The photographic works throughout the exhibition suggest systems of accretion, with changes becoming marked as shifts between slight differences.

The body is a central concern in Hubbard's work, and this installation asks us to both move through it and remain still. *Clear to the legs. Clear for thighs. Your body matter.*, an installation of stools throughout the gallery, allows the viewer to sit within one of the sight lines from which the show is intended to be viewed. Hubbard is considering the terms viewer and audience in relationship to the ways in which the body, either seated or standing, is cued towards stillness and motion by the work. The etymology of the word audience dates from the late 14th century and means "the action of hearing," from Latin *audentia*, while the earliest roots of the word viewer come from a history of visually surveying and inspecting, most often in the case of property or land.

*Fifty percent distance*, a light work at the entrance to the exhibition slows down the reception of a place and engages the quality of light itself, differentiated from its employment as a tool in the main gallery. This work asks what forms of deprivation might be necessary to become embodied, as our sensory systems have become increasingly hijacked and oversaturated; it materializes the ways that things become a part of us.

With *Bring your own lights*, Hubbard continues to plumb photography's continuing relevance, asking how the mechanics and processes of analog photography, being in mimesis with the body, might be called upon to investigate social politics, history, and narrative. She engages the physical positioning of the body as having an essential relationship to our processing of images and the possibility of engaging with photographs as an expanded sensorial experience. Hubbard asks, "If narrative acknowledges that everything is scripted, then how do we begin to re-script? How is photography failing us in our efforts to do so, and how is this failing a social issue having nothing to do with images of the world yet having everything to do with how we see the world itself?"

This project is curated by Matthew Lyons.

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