

Grove  
Collective

## *A War With No Winner: Bodies and their Spaces*

*Dates:*

*25.03.21 – 12.04.21; PV: 25.03.21 from 6pm*

*Location:*

*grovecollective.co for virtual reality*

*Participating Artists:*

*Shannon Bono*

*Kim Booker*

*Sikelela Owen*

*Corinna Spencer*

*the message of jo*

*my body is a war  
nobody is winning  
my birthdays are tired.  
my blood is a white flag,  
waving.  
surrender,  
my mother darling,  
death is life.*

*– Lucille Clifton*

Press Release

Grove Collective is pleased to present the upcoming group exhibition *A War With No Winner: Bodies and their Spaces*, featuring the UK-based artists Shannon Bono, Kim Booker, Sikelela Owen, and Corinna Spencer, on view online in virtual reality through the Grove Collective website. This is the first time these artists have shown together as a group, and marks the first time Grove Collective has worked with all of these artists.

When considered together, the work of Bono, Booker, Owen, and Spencer creates thematic and discursive overlap that extends far beyond what meets the eye. While often expressed through disparate styles and processes, each

artist's practice places a primacy on human(oid) forms, while negotiating those bodies' positioning – and status – within their works. Yet, this similarity in itself only functions as a springboard for far larger, more pressing points of intersection: Shannon Bono's powerful insistence on the body – particularly, the black female body – as a signifier of both strength and opposition contrasts Booker's diffuse, often semi-abstracted figures. These bodies still, however, are not without their own curious allure, drawing to mind Sikelela Owen's work in their own linear uncertainty. At once regal, if not intimidating in their command of space, Owen's figures often remained blurred, as if by equal parts nostalgia and equivocation, not wanting to set in stone that which may be misremembered. But still, this sense of memory is evinced by Spencer's work: often eerie or nightmarish, aptly noting memory's ability to reimagine, reshape, and distort the body in ways that can grant it power that exists seemingly out of our own control. Collectively, they prove a timely and virtuosic group of artists that demand the viewer's consideration of their own body as a vessel in which to navigate the world.

Furthermore, this expands on Grove Collective's exhibitional practice of foregrounding the body as subject for interrogation, having already explored adjacent themes in their recent exhibition, *Fragmented Intimacy*. Co-Directors Jacob Barnes and Morgane Wagner remain keen to examine that which has sat at the crux of much social, political, and medical debate over the last year, while in doing so, posit a means of moving forward. While in no way a reaction to the current climate, *A War With No Winner* offers the opportunity to reflect on the current moment, while considering much broader themes alongside this.

### *For Editors*

Shannon Bono (b. 1995) is a visual artist, MA Art & Science graduate from Central Saint Martins (2019) and an Associate Lecturer at Central Saint Martins living and working in London. Shannon identifies as an Afrofemcentrist, a term that describes a consciousness that asserts race, sex and art as a way of living, where black women are the subject depicted by black women. Shannon's group exhibitions include SGFA (Sound, Gender, Feminism, and Activism) Tokyo conference, Tate Exchange 'Come Together', Feminist Library 'Archiving the feminist experience' and the Koppel Project Central Gallery 'Xhibit 2019'. Her work has been featured in the 0.1% publication 'Genomics, Race, Gender Politics through scientific research', I-Science magazine, Dazed Magazine, Elephant Magazine, Wallpaper Magazine, Bustle, i-D and Soho House.

Kim Booker is a London-based painter who works from her studio in Croydon. Booker graduated from City and Guilds of London Art School (BA Fine Art) in 2019. She has exhibited in London and Europe. Previous exhibitions include: New Paintings, Galerie Dutko, Paris; Galerie Tassilo Usner at Parallel Vienna; and Exceptional, Collyer Bristow Gallery, London. Her work has been placed in private collections in Europe and the USA.

Sikelela Owen (b. 1984) is a British-born artist, living and working in London. She holds a PG Diploma from the Royal Academy Schools and her work was featured in 2015 Thames and Hudson publication '100 Painters of Tomorrow'.

She has exhibited nationally and internationally, including solo exhibitions at the James Freeman Gallery (2020), HSBC space London (2018), and LdM University Gallery, Florence (2020). Group exhibitions includes Mall Gallery, London (2020), Gesso Space, Vienna (2019); Jerwood Space, West Sussex (2015) and Spaces, London (2017). In 2019, Owen was an Abbey Fellow at the British School at Rome and in 2020 worked with Hospital Rooms Charity.

Corinna Spencer (b. 1973) is a London-born painter currently living and working in Devon, UK. Spencer studied at KIAD Maidstone, followed by gaining her BA in Fine Art Painting in 1996 and an MA in Painting in 2008 from Coventry University School Of Art and Design. Corinna has regularly exhibited in group shows nationally and internationally, as well as solo shows including 'Mourning Portraits' at Automatic Sweat Salon, Los Angeles in 2015, 'Portrait Of a Lady' an installation of one thousand portraits at Nottingham Museum and Art Gallery, in 2016 and more recently 'Lovely Creatures' in 2018 at That Art Gallery, Bristol.

Grove Collective was founded in late 2020 by Morgane Wagner and Jacob Barnes. The gallery works to exhibit exciting work from around the world, making art from a diverse range of practitioners available to an equally diverse collector base.

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