

The Pan~Afrikan Connection

**an exhibition of work
by young black artists**

Claudette Johnson
Wenda Leslie
Keith Piper
Donald Rodney
Janet Vernon
Eddie Chambers

**Herbert Art Gallery
& Museum
Jordan Well
Coventry**

Feb 20 ~ Mar 20 1983

INTRODUCTION

The phrase "Pan Afrikan connection" was carefully chosen. It means three things.

1. There have been eight dispersions of Africans at various times in history. These artists are descended from Africans dispersed during the Atlantic Slave Trade (1500-1833).
2. We feel for our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are the victims of racial injustice.
"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."
ML King 1929-1968.
3. In developing our sense of "some bodyness", we are trying to avoid blind mimicry. We are trying to recreate and develop our humanity.

We hope that this exhibition will encourage more Black people to further develop their creative talents.

We would like to thank

The staff of the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, and the staff of Coventry Resource and Information Service Community Arts. Especially the help of Patrick Day and Phil Dunn, for giving us the opportunity to mount our sixth group exhibition.

Eric Pemberton

The sale of pieces of work in this exhibition is at the discretion of the student responsible. A price list is available on request.

ARTISTS PERSONAL STATEMENTS

CLAUDETTE JOHNSON

Foundation Course : Manchester Polytechnic, 1978-1979

Degree Course : The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton, 1979-1982
B.A(Hons) Fine Art

Within the term "Art" the work, experiences, culture and values of the black artist are too often either ignored, obsured, devalued, misrepresented, or misunderstood. This is perhaps inevitable in a society where the criteria that have defined and controlled the production of Western art, are blindly applied to the work of artists whose cultural heritage is Asian, African or Caribbean. The work of the black artist involves the expression of her or his life experience. Here in Britain that experience includes institutionalised racism and class oppression. Any assessment of 'black art' which fails to fully acknowledge these factors is at best superficial and at worst totally invalid.

The white woman, whose creativity and human potential are forcibly limited, distorted, or aborted, by male definitions of her sexuality, experiences sexism. The black man, who is subtly and brutally degraded by a skein of lies and violence designed to maintain and perpetuate his position of economic vulnerability, where his labour is cheap and abundant, experiences racism.

Whilst the black woman experiences oppression on the grounds of her sex, sexuality and race, there is not yet a word that properly describes the specific and deliberate nature of this oppression. She does not experience sexism exactly as the white woman nor racism exactly as the black man. The quality nature and forms relate to her specifically as a black woman with a history and struggle of her own. This is the present, out of which the black woman artist, creates her future.



Chaudhry Yehvess

ARTISTS PERSONAL STATEMENTS

WENDA LESLIE

Foundation Course : The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton, 1979/80

Degree Course : Buckinghamshire College of Higher Education,
1980-1983. B.A(Hons) Ceramics

Art is an appeal to a reality that surrounds and envelopes us in its infinite wisdom.

DONALD RODNEY

Foundation Course : Bourneville School of Art, 1980-1981

Degree Course : Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham, 1981-1984
B.A(Hons) Fine Art

To Whom it May Concern:

What is shown here on these hallowed art walls cannot change the world. Even so don't rest at ease in your bed tonight for this is only the foundation stone for tomorrows new "Black dream".

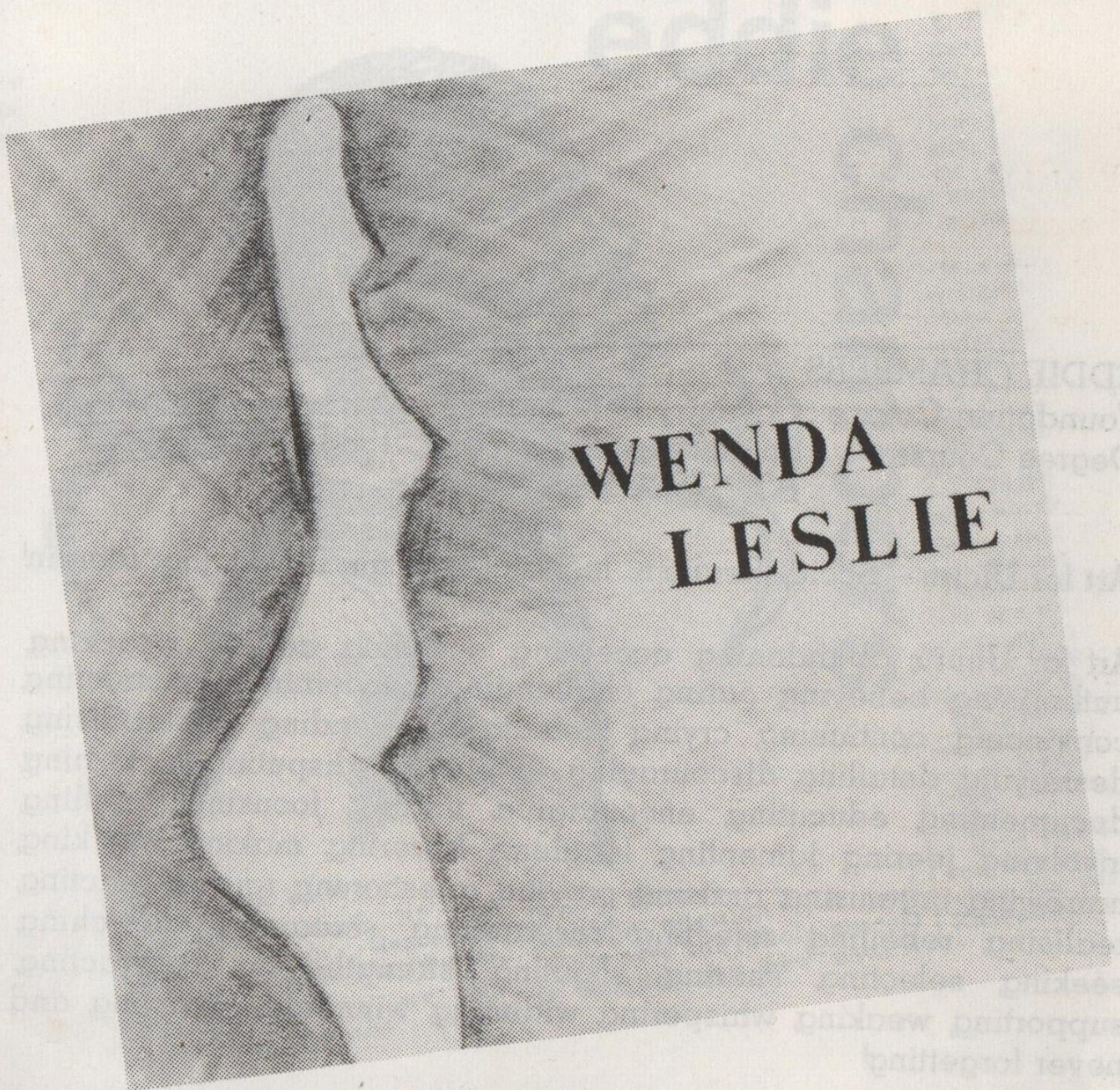
JANET VERNON

Foundation Course : The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton, 1980-1981

Degree Course : North Staffordshire Polytechnic, 1981-1984
B.A(Hons) Fine Art

My belief is that art is a universal language, like music it is diverse because everyone likes different types of music and different types of art (such as Black art).

I also believe that art should be enjoyable both for the artists and the viewer. At the same time it should be functional in making one think: if it achieves this, then it is successful.



WENDA LESLIE

EDDIE CHAMBERS

Foundation Course : Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic, 1979-1980

Degree Course : Sunderland Polytechnic, 1980-1983

B.A.(Hons) Fine Art

Art for Uhuru – Social Realism: to strengthen the Blacks that remain!

Art for Uhuru; abandoning, accepting, accusing, adding, attacking, authorising, believing, caring, challenging, concerning, constructing, convincing, continuing, crying, defeating, defending, destabilising, destroying, detailing, discouraging, disproving, disputing, disturbing, documenting, educating, encouraging, finding, focusing, fulfilling, involving, jeering, lamenting, laughing, lowering, making, mocking, narrowing, organising, praising, proving, questioning, raising, reacting, realising, rebelling, rejecting, researching, screaming, searching, seeking, selecting, sharing, shouting, strengthening, subtracting, supporting, weaking, whispering, widening, winning existing, and never forgetting!

Art for Uhuru – from a nigger of the diaspora

Art for Uhuru – taking the white man to task, and strengthening the Blacks that remain!

Art for Uhuru, watchit, its happening, Now go for it!

Political | **parad**
eddie

E P
 Many
 left t
 is the
 'ica c
 any, l
 on, s
 t anyth
 bring,

Is a 3
 rt with
 four ar
 comfortab
 sbury. It
 a pool
 ily can er
 d barbecue
 ed life. Th
 out £15,000
 now worth
 Dave thin
 rms the gov
 probably o
 black and wh
 believe any o
 or their follo
 the whites, o

He admits
 many of his
 job is highly
 from immed
 tion."

Dave was b
 and was only
 when his par
 Rhodesia in 1

chambers



Moderate ex
 pected to win 1-2 seats.

Ian Smith, 61, leads RF, the
 Rhodesia Front. Represents
 whites. Expected to win 20 seats.

In addition there are four
 minor parties: the United

people to accept
 But the question that now
 looms over the whole process
 is whether any new govern-



KEITH PIPER

Foundation Course : Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic, 1979/80
Degree Course : Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham. 1980-1983
B.A.(Hons) Fine Art

"Let us bend our art into an ensign around which to rally the people. Let it raise our consciousness and stimulate debate as to how most effectively we can conduct our struggle, inspire organised self-defence, expose and oppose our enemies and seize justice."

CITY OF COVENTRY
**LEISURE
SERVICES**

Parminder Vir OBE BLACK & ETHNIC ARTS ARCHIVE
GLC
1981-1986
Working for London
archive.parmindervir.com