

EXHIBITION GUIDE

JENKIN
VAN ZYL

20 OCT 2023 - 28 JAN 2024



“THE MARATHON WAS A
PLACE FOR DREAMING.
AND IF REALITY WAS
FAILING US, WE COULD
COUNT ON EACH OTHER
(IF NO-ONE ELSE) TO
DREAM BIG.”

JENKIN VAN ZYL
SURRENDER
20 Oct 2023 - 28 Jan 2024

GALLERY OPENING TIMES
Tue - Sun, 11:00 - 18:00
Free entry

Courtesy the artist and Edel Assanti. Sculptural elements
commissioned by FACT Liverpool with support from the
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Culture
LIVERPOOL



JENKIN VAN ZYL

SURRENDER (2023)

Jenkin van Zyl's work invites us to consider the common anxieties of our society, and how they may be influencing the culture of our present and future. Exploring ideas of productivity, escapism and community, *Surrender* brings us into Jenkin's hallucinatory film-world, centred around an endurance dance marathon and the cryptid lore of the 'rat king'. Spilling into physical space, he has transformed FACT's galleries into a series of immersive environments, from a dancefloor inside the belly of a rat, to an energy-drink lined trophy room.

Surrender draws inspiration from the dance marathons of the 1930's Great Depression. In an America obsessed with the idea of public endurance, contestants were pushed to their limits, dancing continuously for days in exchange for food, shelter and the possibility of a prize. Assigned partners, participants had to follow strict rules that often led to often bizarre workarounds: beds on the dance floor where contestants could rest for intensely short periods of time, as well as the completion of basic tasks, such as eating and bathing, whilst continuing to dance. If one half of a couple failed to adhere to strict competition rules and stopped moving, both contestants would face elimination. The film conflates this 'rat race' with the 'rat king', a rare natural phenomenon that occurs when the tails of multiple rats fuse together in the process of trying to stay warm.

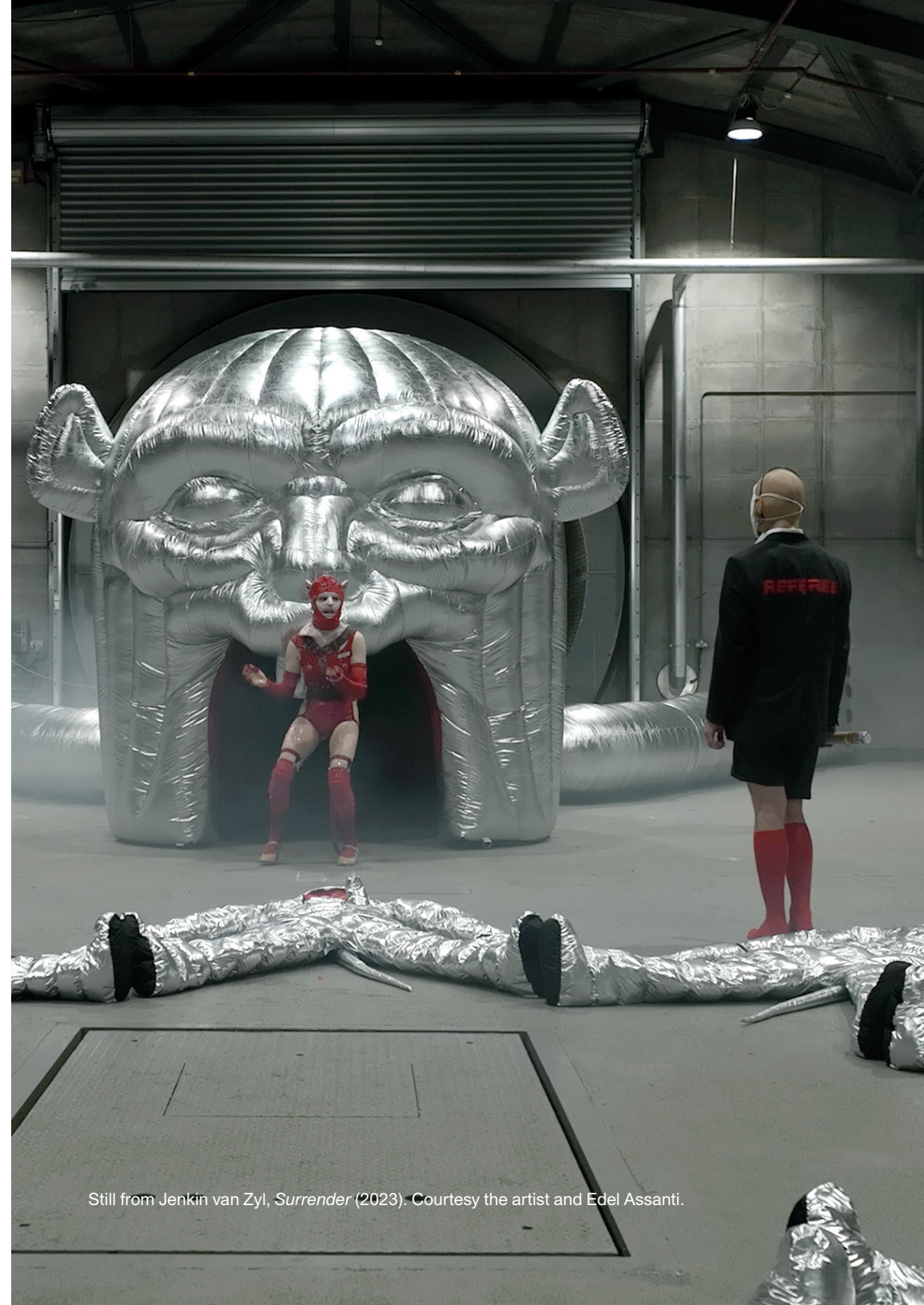
In an endlessly looping narrative, queer fantasy and irreverent role-play create a carnivalesque atmosphere throughout *Surrender* as we follow the experience of GRACE, a visitor to the Paradise Engineering Endurance

Partnership (P.E.E.P.) Hotel. Inspired by the transient nature of Japanese love hotels - short-stay fantastical spaces that can be booked by the hour for 'rest' - GRACE checks in. Along with other paired couples, she begins to compete in a series of increasingly strange tournaments in the hotel ballroom that play with the limitations and expansiveness of the body. Fuelled by an endless stream of 'Limitless' branded energy drinks, it's unclear whether GRACE's drive to participate emerges from an insatiable yearning; or from a desire for escapism, community, oblivion, or plain victory in the marathon. The P.E.E.P. Hotel offers "the chance to revise...the chance to redo...to disappear, if only briefly".

Through these works, Jenkin blurs ideas of spectatorship, suffering, endurance and entertainment. Opposing binaries - productivity and failure, repulsion and desire, joyfulness and destruction - collapse into each other. Ideas of individuality and collectivity are questioned: building communities fosters belonging, allyship and resistance, but often societal frameworks pit us against each other in a neoliberal quest for basic survival. In *Surrender*, Jenkin evokes a sense of menace and anxiety that reflects the needs and fears of our current moment. Our need for productivity and success competes with our desire for community, resulting in exhaustion and, ultimately, surrender.

CREDITS FOR *SURRENDER*

One-half-of-GRACE played by Alex Margo Arden
One-half-of-GRACE played by Ted Rogers
One-half-of-FAITH played by Emma Belabed
One-half-of-FAITH played by Max Cookward
One-half-of-JENNIFER played by Ayo Babatope
One-half-of-JENNIFER played by Finn Love
One-half-of-SAMANTHA played by Wet Mess
One-half-of-SAMANTHA played by Webster Opiyo
Maids, P.A.I.N. Nurses, Referees, Bellhops and Chauffeurs played by Theodore Pantelopoulos and Eugenia Shishkina.
Production crew - Baran Caliskan, Sam Keelan, Liv Preston, Agnieszka Szczotka, Jordan Tannahill, Betsie van Zyl, Piet van Zyl, Magda Viljoen, Magnus Westwell and David Wilson.
Primary camera, edit, sound design, set and costume by Jenkin Van Zyl.
Second camera operation by Kevin Brennan.



Still from Jenkin van Zyl, *Surrender* (2023). Courtesy the artist and Edel Assanti.

ABOUT JENKIN VAN ZYL

Jenkin van Zyl is a multi-disciplinary artist based in London who makes hallucinant, narrative installations, typically centred around film.

Conjured with a queer irreverence that is attentive to the power and politics of fantasy, these films perform carnivalesque explorations of abandoned yet grandiose landscapes. Often initiated by guerilla filmmaking on the ruins of Hollywood movie sets, van Zyl's projects orbit around fantastical and subcultural communities: ghouls breeding cakes in aircrafts, latex inflatables hazed in a desert fortress, and rats competing in dance marathons. Here binaries of front and back-stage, self and other, desire and revulsion are displaced by instability, entropy and multiplicity in a celebration of the vital and complex world-building that occurs within fringe spaces, and how the body can be reimagined within them.

Van Zyl's recent presentations include solo shows *Surrender*, Edel Assanti, London; *Machines of Love*, Tramway, Glasgow; *Vore*, Rose Easton, London; *Cabin Pressure*, Amanda Wilkinson Gallery, London; *Oblivion Industry*, The Horse Hospital, London and selected group presentations at *Barbe à Papa*, CAPC, Bordeaux, *Kiss my Genders*, Hayward Gallery, London and *The Horror Show!*, Somerset House, London.



Jenkin Van Zyl on the set of *Surrender*. Image by Jordan Tannahill. Courtesy the artist.

WHAT'S ON

Our winter season presents two major solo shows by Jenkin van Zyl and Uma Breakdown. Beyond the exhibitions, our events will delve into the research, references and inspiration behind the artworks, with a series of talks, performances, and film screenings.

EXHIBITION TOUR: JENKIN VAN ZYL

Sat 21 Oct / 12:00 - 13:00 / Foyer
Free, booking required, suitable for all
Join us for a tour of Jenkin van Zyl's *Surrender* (2023), led by the artist and a group of young people.
Jenkin and our Learning team have worked with the group to design a tour that shares their unique perspective on the exhibition.

BIRTHDAY PARTY AND EXHIBITION OPENING

Sat 21 Oct / 17:00 - 20:00 / Foyer, Galleries 1 and 2
Free, drop in, suitable for all
Join us for the launch of our winter exhibitions!
There will be complimentary drinks, food available, and to keep the energy high, our DJs will be spinning tunes throughout the evening.

FILM: LAST DANCE

Sat 21 Oct / 17:00 - 20:00 / Arthouse Square
Free, drop in, suitable for all
For one night only, take a seat inside a limousine parked outside FACT to discover a new short film that expands Jenkin van Zyl's psychotropic world.

AFTER PARTY

Sat 21 Oct / 20:00 - 04:00 / District
Free, booking required, suitable for 18+
After our exhibitions launch, head over to District to bring our 20th anniversary celebrations to a memorable close.
To ensure this event is truly unforgettable, we're partnering with local collectives, performers, DJs, and producers to amplify the sound of the city. And that's not all – get ready for a special headline set by our exhibiting artist, Jenkin van Zyl.

MASTERCLASS: JENKIN VAN ZYL

Wed 22 Nov / 14:30 or 18:30 / Studio/Lab
£5-7.50, suitable for 18+
In an intimate masterclass, Jenkin shares insights into the research, world-building and politics that inform his practice. Join us for the afternoon or the evening.

PERFORMANCE: ENCORE

Thu 23 Nov / 19:00 - 21:00 / Foyer, Gallery 1, The Box
Free, booking required, suitable for 16+
Cast members of Jenkin van Zyl's *Surrender* invite you to an evening of durational performances that mirror the

film's wider themes. Witness athletic gogo dancing, a Wicked Witch of the West performance, and dance with live percussion.

EXHIBITION TOUR: JENKIN VAN ZYL AND UMA BREAKDOWN

Sat 25 Nov / 12:00 / Foyer
Free, booking required, suitable for all
Join us to learn more about Jenkin van Zyl's immersive installation *Surrender* and Uma Breakdown's exhibition spanning installation, writing and video games, *Earth A.D. 2*, led by our Senior Producer Charlotte Horn.

ONLINE DISCUSSION: UMA BREAKDOWN WITH JOSEPH BUCKLEY, DR KAREN DI FRANCO AND DR ALICE REKAB

Thu 18 Jan / 19:00 / Online
Free, booking required, suitable for all
Exhibiting artist Uma Breakdown will be joined by Joseph Buckley, Dr Karen Di Franco and Dr Alice Rekab to discuss the concept of 'relics'. Often defined as an object invested with historical significance or ideology, what happens to our understanding of them when their stories are incomplete or unstable?

FAMILIES: DO SOMETHING SATURDAYS

Selected Saturdays / 12:00 - 15:00 / Studio/Lab
Free, drop-in, suitable for ages 6-12
Inspired by our current exhibitions, our family-friendly workshops investigate the genres of horror and fantasy, and ask you to consider what we need to create spaces of care and support.
This season, workshops will be held in a brand new space made especially for artists (of all ages!) to make and play.
Join us in Studio/Lab on the third floor of FACT on Saturdays 4 Nov, 26 Nov and 9 Dec.

ARTIST SELECTS FILM SEASON

Multiple dates / 18:30 / The Box
Tickets £6-10, booking required
This season, we asked exhibiting artists Jenkin van Zyl and Uma Breakdown to guest curate a film club that unpacks some of the pop-culture references found in their installations.
Kicking off in November, Uma selects John Carpenter's post-apocalyptic cult action sequel *Escape From L.A.* and *Viy*, a must-see for fans of folk-horror and dark fairytales.
Jenkin presents Sydney Pollock's *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*, a psychological drama about the gruelling dance marathons of the Great Depression and Gasper Noé's psychedelic cinematic dance party, *Climax*.

29 Nov / *Escape From L.A.* (1996)
6 Dec / *Viy* (1967)
17 Jan / *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1969)
24 Jan / *Climax* (2018)

BOOK TICKETS



For more information and bookings, visit fact.co.uk/whats-on or speak to a member of our team.

Discover more events online and in our season guide.