

# Portfolio

## Whyte&Zettergren

Homepage: [www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2642054](http://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2642054)

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Whyte&Zettergren is an artistic duo comprising performance artist and dancer Orlando Whyte (b. Jamaica) and visual artist Rut Karin Zettergren (b. Sweden). Their collaboration, initiated in 2018 with the project, *Herring, Iron, Gunpowder, Humans & Sugar* (HIGHS). With the project they visit locations historically linked to the triangular trade, the economic system underpinning the transatlantic slave trade. At these historical sites, Whyte&Zettergren perform live acts with choreography, storytelling, and ceremonial actions. In the acts they use objects crafted from materials extracted, manufactured, or exported from these locations.

In March 2022, the duo launched a space-traveling program for healing *Historical Spiritual Vibrations* outside a saltfish factory in Reykjavik. A resistance act inspired by Afrofuturism, dub, and speculative fiction, envisioning space as a realm of freedom. This initiative originated from their participation in the collaborative artistic research project *ÓNÆM* (2020-2022), organized by Bryndís Björnsdóttir. During the project, they explored colonial interlinks between the North and the Caribbean, first focusing on food, and then moving in to research the relationship between plans for new space exploration and colonization, along with their connections to legacies stemming from the Enlightenment.

The duo's artistic works constitute an ongoing investigation into the historical memory held by a place, material, and body. Their process visualizes the entanglement between geographically distant locations, objects, cultures, and times. Through their creative processes, they seek potential methods for healing historical trauma and strive to craft rites that envision possible futures.

Whyte&Zettergren is currently working on their space-traveling program along with a video artwork on historical trauma and the collaborative research project *Contingency Sample* with Bryndís Björnsdóttir that explore extractivism in the era of the new space age.

Their works have previously been performed and presented at various venues, including, and the Living Art Museum in Reykjavik (IS).



## Herring, Iron, Gunpowder, Humans & Sugar

Year: 2018- 2023

Medium: Live actions with objects

By: Whyte&Zettergren

Herring, Iron, Gunpowder, Humans & Sugar investigate how the triangle trade, the economic system underpinning the transatlantic slave, still influences contemporary economic and cultural structures. With the project they visit locations historically linked to the triangular trade, the economic system underpinning the transatlantic slave trade. At these historical sites, Whyte&Zettergren perform live acts with choreography, storytelling, and ceremonial actions. In the acts they use objects crafted from materials extracted, manufactured, or exported from these locations.

Activating the sites and materials through their process, Whyte & Zettergren aim to find artistic methods for addressing historical trauma. Their goal is to spark discussions about memory, heritage, and responsibility. Performances have taken place at various locations, including the Great House of the sugar plantation Stokes Hall, Fd Molyne's Sugar Estate, Fort Charles in Port Royal Harbor (JA), Klippan harbor, Botnafjorden, and Gammelbo Bruk in Sweden. The work has been featured in shows and performance events at installations such as Tredje Våningen, Malongen - The Nordic Art Association (NKF), TEGEN2, Galleri Thomassen, and Galleri Gerlesborg (SE).

Projects homepage:

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2920735/2920736>



#### No4

× Molyne's Estate × Skagerrak  
Gather the saltfish and cut it in pieces with a sharp iron object. Make a sculpture by placing the pieces on the ground and pour boiling sugar on it.

× Skagerrak  
Tell us about the Royal Academy of Art, Gustav III and the Swedish West India Company

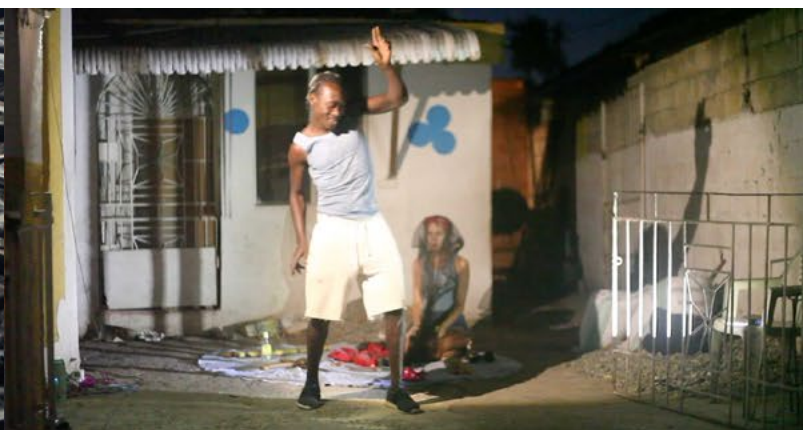


#### No5

× Molyne's Estate  
Tell us about the

× Skagerrak  
Put on the veil  
screen that covers  
Molyne's Estate  
close your eyes

× Molyne's Estate  
Pour out sugar  
on a gun tune  
on top of the



Live actions No3: Bottnafjorden, Skagerrak, SE (2019), No9 and No10: Fd Molyne's Estate, Kingston, JA (2020).





No 8: Live action with hand-dyed indigo and wax print-patterned flag at Fort Charles Port Royal, JA (2020)





*No11: Live action with burning room and objects, Kingston JA (2022)*





No12: Live action with sugar, iron objects, and conch at Lövsta Bruk, Lövsta, SE (2023)





*No13: Live action with sugar, salted herring, iron objects, and conch at Klippan, Gothenburg, SE (2023)*





*Sill, järn, krut, människor & socker - No2 Skagerak x Molyne's Estate. Installation with performance object. Galleri Gerlesborg (2019).*









*Sill, järn, krut, människor & socker - No3 Västindiska x Östindiska kompaniernas sammanflätning. Installation with performance object. TEGEN2 (2019).*





Digital Memory. Photogrametry and VR sculping with rest of performance. Kingston (2022)





Digital memory. Photogrametry with rest of performance. Kingston (2022)





## Studies for Intergalactic Survival

Year: 2020

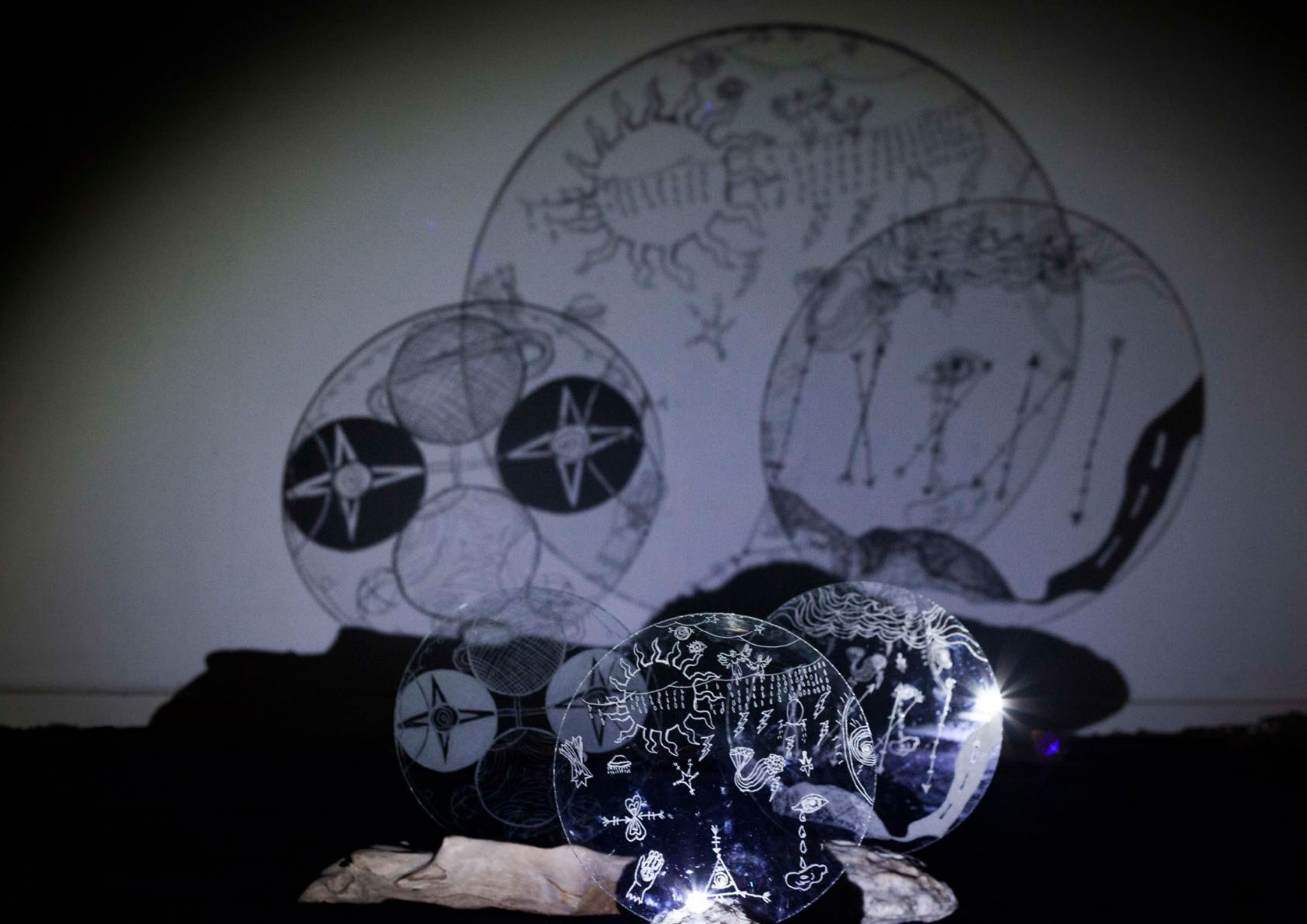
Material: Hand-engraving on glass and light projection on the wall, The glass discs are 30 cm in diameter each, and the light projection is approximately 1m x 1m.

Studies for Intergalactic Survival consists of fourteen glass discs with hand-engraved drawings and symbols. The plates was created during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic when restrictions in Jamaica were stringent.

Through the images, we could escape to other places, envision potential lives among stars and planets, and speculate about forms unseen by the human eye. The shadows created by the images formed worlds in our one-room apartment, extending into the universe. We could see beyond the nightly curfew and our confined everyday life. We needed these image worlds to mentally survive the pandemic's lockdown. Parts of the collection were exhibited at a group exhibition at TEGEN2 in 2021.

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2915909>







of violence + gangster + reproduction + trespass  
white + black + telephonic world + messengers + shipping + business + fear + jealousy  
NEW WORLD ORDER + planets + EARTH + EUROCENTRISM + plantation class + Mirror  
REVOLUTION + MONEY + TRADE + EXTENSION + TRAVELS + VIKINGS + INTERCITY  
past + FUTURE + SUGAR + SWEET + SUGAR + SWEET + SUGAR + SWEET  
TRAUMA + SLAVES + COMMODIFICATION + MACHINES + COLONIALITY + MODERNITY  
HISTORICAL + GUNS + SUGAR + SWEET + SUGAR + SWEET + SUGAR + SWEET  
HILLS + RIVERS + COMMUNICATION + FAMILIES + BLOOD + RIVERS + LEAF + GOLD + BLOOD + RIVERS + LEAF + GOLD  
INDUSTRIAL + INJUSTICE + FREEDOM + MODERNITY + SUGAR + SWEET + SUGAR + SWEET + SUGAR + SWEET  
OCEANS + HILLS + RIVERS + COMMUNICATION + FAMILIES + BLOOD + RIVERS + LEAF + GOLD + BLOOD + RIVERS + LEAF + GOLD  
HILLS + RIVERS + COMMUNICATION + FAMILIES + BLOOD + RIVERS + LEAF + GOLD + BLOOD + RIVERS + LEAF + GOLD











## Ackee and Saltfish - Transatlantic Memories

Year: 2022-2024

Medium: Live actions and installation with video documentation.

Material: Sugar, salt ackee and saltfish

In the video, you follow Whyte&Zettergren on a visit to the salt fish factory Vísir in Grindavík, Iceland. The export of dried cod and saltfish to West Africa and the Caribbean islands, such as Jamaica, from places like Iceland, Norway, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland has been ongoing since the 16th century, initially as part of the triangular trade. In the West Indies, the saltfish was used to feed the enslaved Africans on the plantations as a source of protein. Saltfish is still part of Jamaica's national dish, Ackee and Saltfish, together with the West African fruit Ackee, which is said to have been brought to Jamaica by enslaved Africans.

In the second part of the video, the duo perform live actions at one of the spots where fish heads and fish bones are dried by the fish factories of Grindavík for export to the West African market. Trading dried fish from the northern regions of the Atlantic Ocean to West Africa has been ongoing since the triangular trade. However, the trade in dried fish heads and tails started after Iceland and Norway exported these parts as aid during the Biafran War/Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970).

Filmed in 2022, video credits Bryndís Björnsdóttir

See the videos:

[www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2909216](http://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2909216)





Whyte&Zettergren on a visit to the salt fish factory Vísir in Grindavík (2022)





Whyte&Zettergren on do a live actions at a location where fish heads and skeleton are dried for the west african market in Grindavík (2022)





Installation view of *Ackee Saltfish- Transatlantic Memories*



Hands deep down in the virgin soil, as blue as the moon,  
so deep in the ocean. Dive down. People, kids, elders,  
bring them a new future. Start all over. Pressure, under,  
ground, truth. The story world will slowly blossom. Space  
fish, space fruit.

Year: 2022

Material: Salt, socker, ackee plantor, terarium i glas med handgravyr, växtlampor, conch skal, saltfisk, järn och sten från historisk plats, ljudverk.

Whyte & Zettergren was one of seven artist groups that participated in the research and production project Immune between 2020-2022. Immune focused on Nordic colonialism with Iceland as a point of departure. Within the project, Whyte&Zettergren investigated the intertwining of transatlantic colonial legacies through the Jamaican national dish of Ackee and Saltfish consisting of a fruit with west African origin's and salted codfish from the north Atlantic's. During the work, we investigated both how Icelandic dried cod ended up in Jamaica through the triangular trade and how plants were moved and planted over the world as part of the colonial projects during the Enlightenment. In our work, this is also linked with contemporary plans for space colonization where Iceland is one of the places that astronauts since the Apollo fathers have been trained to land on the moon and Mars. We connect plans for interplanetary colonialism as a legacy of historical imperialism. At the same time, it also examines dreams of space as used in Afrofuturism and feminist speculative fiction as a place to connect dreams of freedom and utopia.

In the exhibition, Whyte&Zettergren showed an installation with small greenhouses where we grew Ackee plants from seeds brought from Jamaica. In our speculation, Ackee and saltfish is the space food that will be used in our space program that searches for exoplanets to find a place for healing. The installation included five islands of sugar and salt on which engraved glass mini-greenhouses, Ackee seeds, plant lamps, small conch shells, pieces of stone, brick and iron from a historically charged site, sea water, salted cod, speakers in the form of large conch shells and a sound work were placed.

Immune: [www.immuneonaem.com/Whyte&Zettergrens work](http://www.immuneonaem.com/Whyte&Zettergrens%20work)























## Historical spiritual vibration A space traveling program for healing

Year: 2022 - Ongoing

Materials: Video documentations of live actions

*Historical spiritual vibration- a space travel program for healing* was funded by Whyte&Zettergren in 2022. Within the project, Whyte&Zettergren visit places in Iceland that have been used as training grounds for space missions.

Iceland has historically been used as a training site for the Apollo 11 astronauts before the moon landing and as a filming location for various space films. In the work we used methods from live action role-playing game (LARP) to interact and investigate this locations as characters. Like how the Apollo astronauts had an Icelandic journalist with them during their training, we had the Icelandic artist Bryndís Björnsdóttir with us, following us with a video camera in our work with the launch to prepare us for space.

Within the work we are interested in space as it is a place where future colonial projects are planned. But also as a fictional place to day dream of alternative worlds following traditions within feminist speculative fiction, and Afrofuturism.

Video documentation:

Geological training in the area of Húsavík:

<https://youtu.be/a7uLNrEKw>

Live action at sulfur mine near Húsavík:

<https://youtu.be/uFcS89O9iqo>

Whyte&Zettergren training in the area where the Apollo astronauts trained near Húsavík (2022)





Whyte&Zettergren holding Neil Armstrong Apollo 11 Mission Patch at The Exploration Museum, Húsavík (2022)





Whyte&Zettergren doing a ritual at an old sulfur mine in the area where the Apollo astronauts trained near Húsavík (2022)





*Historical Spiritual Vibrations- A space traveling program at Museum of Impossible Forms in Helsinki (2022)*





## Historical spiritual vibration - a space traveling program for healing (opening performance)

Year: 2022

Medium: Performance in three acts, 3 hours.

Materials: with a replica of a merchant ship from the 18th century that is rebuilt into a spaceship. Salt, cane sugar, cracked cane sugar and salt fish, fueling merchant ships/spaceships with rum, conch shell trumpet, the sea. Two performance artists dressed in their space training cloths.

The performance *Historical spiritual vibration- a space travel program for healing* was performed as part of the exhibition *Immune* at the Living art museum in April 2022. The performance consists of three acts to launch our space travel program. In the first act, a model of a transatlantic merchant ship from the 18th century is rebuilt into a spaceship. Part two consists of a ceremony with salted fish and melted sugar. The third act takes place in the harbor of Reykjavik next to fishing boats and a salt fish factory.

See the documentation of part three of the ceremony:

<https://youtu.be/FOpiTkX6cns>









## Ljuset - Ayodamola Okunseinde and Whyte&Zettergren at Konstall C

Year: 2024

Materials: Islands of suagar and salt with tv screens with documentation of performance and performance objects.

Ljuset (The Light) is this spring's first exhibition at Konsthall C. Here, the Nigerian-American artist Ayodamola Okunseinde meets the Jamaican-Swedish duo Whyte&Zettergren. These two practices explore violent historical and contemporary global conditions. Through interactive technology and ritual performance, Okunseinde and Whyte&Zettergren search above and beyond our world. Together they present a complex web of economic and political connections. Here, art becomes a starting point for change.

Despite the exhibition's title, The Light does not offer any salvation for our time. It is the visitor, encountering the art, who can take the first step towards a solution. We at Konsthall C want to invite you as a visitor to find yourself, among the smoke, salt, sugar and fabric.

You are the Light.

Curated by Ulrika Flink

[www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2909289](http://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2642053/2909289)





*Historical Spiritual Vibrations- A space Traveling Program for Healing, Konsthall C (2024)*





*Historical Spiritual Vibrations- A space Traveling Program for Healing, Konsthall C (2024)*





*Historical Spiritual Vibrations- A space Traveling Program for Healing, Konsthall C (2024)*





*Ackee Saltfish - Atlantic oral entanglement, Konsthall C (2024)*





*Herring, Iron, Gunpowder, Humans & Sugar, Konsthall C (2024)*