

Ariel Jackson: The Origin of the Blues, July 21, 2017-February 25, 2018

Multidisciplinary artist Ariel Jackson creates alternate dimensions, narratives, and characters to unpack the larger systemic issues and traumas that have formed her experience as a Black woman and the experiences of other people of color in the United States. Her work follows in the Afrofuturist tradition, a movement that combines science fiction, fantasy, and Afrocentric references to develop empowered, otherworldly narratives. In *The Origin of the Blues* (2015), Jackson's alter ego—Confuserella—journeys from the fictional world of Panfrika to Plastica to study the history, conditions, and beginnings of blues music. Jackson juxtaposes archival footage of racially oriented violence with images from everyday Black life to further reveal the unsettling coexistence of the brutal and the mundane in Black communities. Her use of the metaphor of the blues refers not only to the genre of music but to the color; her aim to “turn [it] down” represents the undoing of trauma resulting from overwhelming violence, so that healing can take place.

Ariel Jackson lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. After earning her BFA from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York 2013, she participated in the Bruce High Quality Foundation University's Summer Emerging Artist Residency Program in 2015 and as a Van Lier Fellow in the Visual Arts Program at Wave Hill in New York 2016. Jackson's work has been shown at the Studio Museum in Harlem, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Bronx Museum, and Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit. She uses video, animation, performance, and sculpture to explore historical memory and cultural identity

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Ariel Jackson
American, b. 1991
The Origin of the Blues, 2015
Video, stop-motion animation, 3-D compositing, sound
Courtesy of the artist TL45.2017

