The Listening Room
James Baldwin | Derek Jarman
June - September 2024

"*As long as the music's loud enough we won't hear the world falling apart.*"
– *Jubilee*, dir. Derek Jarman (1978)

"*It was as though we were a picture, trapped in time: this had been happening for hundreds of years, people sitting in a room…and listening to the blues.*"
– *If Beale Street Could Talk*, James Baldwin (1974)

"*Music is our witness, and our ally. The 'beat' is the confession which recognises, changes, and conquers time. Then, history becomes a garment we can wear, and share, and not a cloak in which to hide; and time becomes a friend.*"
– *The Cross of Redemption*, James Baldwin (1979)

Bold Tendencies is a not-for-profit arts organisation – revolutionary in terms of what it does, and where and how it does it. Established in the rooftop spaces of Peckham's Multi-Storey Car Park, it has transformed a disused building in the heart of South London into an iconic, much-loved place of culture and assembly. Bold Tendencies is a place for everyone; an alternative to the mainstream, where the marginal can come centre stage.

Bold Tendencies creates space to make ideas happen; where the creative process and creative act is nurtured, supported and celebrated and where artists and audiences come together, take part and challenge themselves. With a fearless approach to research, programming and production, our ambitious annual programme of Visual Art, Creative Learning and Live Events has broad and popular appeal.

Each annual Artistic Programme presents a series of responses from a new generation of voices alongside acclaimed international artists in visual art, music, dance, poetry, spoken word and opera to a central theme.

Bold Tendencies brings radical practices, new generations of talent, opportunities for learning, and sought-after disciplines at a world-class level to Peckham – a bustling London community with a long and colourful history.

Creativity can take us beyond our limits, and Bold Tendencies is a beyond the limits place. Challenging expectations, the site's unique nature and feeling is activated with our Programme of creativity, culture and community: with conviction, without compromise, and outside the comfort zone.

It is special and it is spectacular.

2024 Annual Programme theme: COMMUNION

Our annual theme engages with one of life's "big questions". This allows for multiple entry points for the public, artists and audiences, as well as placing our work in conversation with wider cultural happenings and conversations. In 2024 the theme is COMMUNION. Our most ambitious Programme to date addresses a world of social relations in modern Britain, paying heed to the daily acts of community, reverence, transition and memorial that produce and progress society. At a time when our world has never been more divided, it is crucial that we create space for intimacy, collective ecstasy and revolutionary ferment; for profound reflection on our past, our ancestry and what connects us day to day. In 2024 the Bold Tendencies programme will empower collective artistic practice and assert our collective right to meet, share, and enjoy.

The Listening Room

As part of our Live Programme we have researched and reconstructed the record collections of iconic cultural figures: writer James Baldwin (1924-1987) and artist and filmmaker Derek Jarman (1942-1994). Drawn from catalogues of their prolific collections as found in their final homes, we will invite audiences to select and play these records in our Straw Auditorium, in a late night act of communion. Revisiting an age before MP3 players, smartphones and headphones; before listening to music was an algorithmic and largely solitary activity; our Listening Rooms are an act of celebration and gathering.

One of the most important aspects of music is the sense of community between artist and audience; between one listener to another. Whilst Bold Tendencies' Live Events are designed to be accessible to all, the sessions go one step further in the universalisation of comfortability and access to cultural experiences – with attendees free to speak, eat, drink and dance, this mode of listening extends the ethos of our Live Programme.

Fostering interpersonal connections over a shared love of various musicians, singles and albums, the sessions will carve out a space for participation and collective nostalgia; community, friendship and conversation-making. In the act of sharing records, we hope to empower visitors with a sense of ownership and belonging within the space making for common enjoyment and appreciation.

Sample Record Lists

James Baldwin
Ray Charles, *Over the Rainbow* (2005)
Diana Ross, *An Evening with Diana Ross* (1977)
Nina Simone, *I Put a Spell on You* (1965)

Dinah Washington, *What A Diff'rence a Day Makes!* (1959)
Donna Summer, *Love to Love You Baby* (1975)
Frank Sinatra, *Songs for Swingin' Lovers* (1956)
Bill Withers, *Menagerie* (1977)

Derek Jarman
Carmel, *Willow Weep For Me* (1983)
Marc Almond, *Tenderness is A Weakness* (1984)
Billy Hyena, *Wide Boy Awake* (1984)
Bryan Ferry, *Windswept* (1985)
The Smiths, *There Is a Light That Never Goes Out* (1986)
Pet Shop Boys, *It's A Sin* (1987)
Patti Smith, *Memorial Tribute* (1993)

Technical Requirements
1 of record deck with phono or balanced output
(NB If only aux with ground is available then a DJ mixer would be required)
1 of small mixing desk with at least 6 mix outputs and Dante enabled.
7 of full range compact passive speakers (e.g. Yamaha CZR10).
2 of subs.
Appropriate amps

2025:

- Susan Sontag
- Edward Said