

# barbican



Jasmine Johnson © Ariel Majtas

## Jasmine Johnson **More Than Two: Omnibus**

Sun 16 Dec, 4pm

Running time approx.. 50 minutes

Presented by the full cast of  
collaborators and performers  
**Lauren Chandler**  
**Curtis Elvidge**  
**Yasmine Holness-Dove**  
**Naoko Nomoto**  
**Patrick O'Reilly**  
**Lalah-Simone Springer**  
**Shamira Turner**  
**Molly Ward**

Please be aware this work contains  
expletives and content of a sexual  
nature.

Supported by Arts Council England

**More Than Two: Omnibus is a concept album based on the real accounts of queer and polyamorous individuals. These conversations about 'alternative relationships' often happened online and via screens. Using earpieces, the performers reproduce the words, utterances, intonation and pacing of conversations where subjects such as coming out, sex apps and reproduction are handled with humour and anxiety.**

The cast, some of whom Johnson has met through dating apps and extended networks of 'alternative relationships', have collaborated over an eighteen-month period to produce individual 'episodes' or songs – whereby extracts of conversations conducted elsewhere (and consensually recorded by Johnson) are reformulated as scripts and performed within musical scores.

Today's live performance marks the end of Jasmine Johnson's week-long residency at the Barbican, where the full album was rehearsed and recorded.

Johnson's ongoing project *More Than Two* was initiated in June 2017. Previous episodes of *More Than Two* have taken the form of a sixteen-minute performance in the Barbican's Fountain Room in November 2017, a live radio broadcast on Eddie Peake's *Hymn Show*, and an exhibition at Almanac Project Space (both 2018).

Writer **Katrina Black** has provided an extract from her piece on *More Than Two* and Jasmine Johnson's practice below. You will be able to read the article in full and explore the project further on the Barbican website (search '*More Than Two*').

The mystic and political activist Simone Weil believed music could deliver her from 'time... and the vicissitudes of change'. The musical refrain has often been described in similar terms – the principle being that the repetition or loop of a chorus can create a form of order, or a shelter within which external chaos is contained. Held together in this way, *More Than Two: Omnibus* enacts a kind of collapsed and continuous present, in which the narrative of the conversations it recalls are edited out of linearity and viewed from above. In controlling the rearrangement of material from an archive of sound recordings, emotional material might be disarmed or neutralised. Every sound and its intonation becomes modular – blocks that can be slid into new positions for catharsis, or used to undercut one another's urgency. Early medieval music theory similarly understood music as freeing individuals from temporal attachments in order to reach higher or eternal truths, which, so the argument goes, verbal language is incapable of pursuing. In a later extension of this principle, philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer argued that the simple effect of music on our inner being 'is so entirely and deeply understood' as to be received in our 'inmost consciousness as a perfectly universal language'.

Music typically implies community or requires a body for inhabiting. The chorus we hear through *More Than Two* loops and knots on itself not to discredit the radical possibilities of conversation, but because often this is what conversation really does, what human subjects really do.

*More Than Two*'s application of voice to mimic the formal qualities of music (and its capacity to collapse time and narrative) points to both the unavoidable opacities of any conversation, and its ongoing potential for opening-up new modes of knowing one another.

#### About the artist

Jasmine Johnson's work incorporates video, drawing, installation and most recently, performance to produce increasingly ambitious portraits of globally dispersed individuals.

In 2017 Jasmine Johnson was a participant in alt.barbican, a Barbican and The Trampery artist development project for artists working at the intersection of art, technology and entrepreneurship.

Solo presentations include Almanac Project Space, London; Eddie Peake's Hymn Programme (London); DeVos Museum, Michigan, with Rachel Pimm; Jerwood Project Space; ANDOR Gallery, London, with MoreUtopia!; ASI & CCI Fabrika, Moscow.

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