

1865 – Café Royal opens in Regent Street, London

1915 – The Moulin Rouge is destroyed by fire; Cabaret Voltaire is created in Zurich

1965 – Liza Minnelli makes her debut on Broadway

2015 – *The Violet Crab at DRAF* opens in Camden, London...

*The Violet Crab at DRAF* looks to cabaret past and present in new commissions, live acts and works from the David Roberts Collection, taking residence in an extravagant mise-en-scene designed and directed by artist Than Hussein Clark. *The Violet Crab at DRAF* takes cabaret as a situation for queering the inscriptions of time and space.

“The white cube of the gallery must no longer be so terrified of the black box of the theatre. Turning the spatial and temporal architectures of exhibition-making upside down, cabaret provides a narrative framework in which to rearrange hierarchies between subject and object and performance.

I think here of a series of protagonists: Kander & Ebb, two Jewish homosexuals who gleefully pen a new fascist anthem two-thirds of the way through their score for the musical Cabaret; Christopher Isherwood and WH Auden, on whose lucky escape to the musical and sexual underworld of Weimar the same musical was based; and the French Futurists without whose radical disdain for order the erotic incoherencies of Weimar would have never been possible.

So like *The Black Cat* before it, *The Violet Crab at DRAF* opens its doors to questions of how the erotic, the melodramatic, and the tragic might satirise the rules of production in the present.”

- Than Hussein Clark

Than Hussein Clark dramatically reconfigures the structures and architecture of the gallery – from furniture (stages, tables, mirrors, curtains and screens) to concierge to printed matter to opening times. The exhibition spaces become cloakroom, bar, stage, backstage and shadow theatre to explore the dynamics of subject and object, attitude and identity. New commissions by other artists include wall paintings by Allison Katz, flower arrangement sculptures by Carter Mull, a selection of paintings by Anj Smith as well as contributions by science fiction writer Nina Allan, jewellery maker Frances Wadsworth-Jones, iconic designers Claude and François Xavier Lalanne and poet and theatre director Juan José Gurrola. Artworks from the David Roberts Collection include works

by Enrico David, Roy Lichtenstein, Helmut Newton, Grayson Perry, Cindy Sherman, Joana Vasconcelos, Mark Wallinger, Andy Warhol and Emily Young. Numerous live acts will animate The Violet Crab, with a climax in March with three evenings of live musical, literary and acrobatic acts.

*The Violet Crab at DRAF* is designed and directed by Than Hussein Clark; it is produced by Vincent Honoré (Director) and Nicoletta Lambertucci (Curator), with Dan Munn (Curatorial Assistant).

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