



13 Mansfield Avenue, Unit G, Toronto, ON, M6J 2A9 | Tel. +16474475303 | info@crutchcac.com | crutchcac.com

TONY COKES: BLACK CELEBRATION
SCREENING FEBRUARY 15, 2019

In “Black Celebration,” Cokes merges newsreel footage of riots in urban black neighborhoods in the 1960s with popular music and text commentary to create a counter-reading of rioting as a refusal to participate in the logic of capital, as an attempt to de-fetishize commodity through theft and gift. Subtitled “A Rebellion against the Commodity,” this reading of the urban black riots of the 1960s references Guy Debord’s Situationist text “The Decline and Fall of the Spectacle-Commodity Economy” alongside commentary adapted from Barbara Kruger, Morrissey, and the Canadian Industrial band Skinny Puppy.

Tony Cokes’ practice questions how our modes of political and civic articulation are guided and shaped by media image circulation, and how that in turn defines the horizon of emancipatory struggles. Asking audiences, “How do people make history under conditions pre-established to dissuade them from intervening in it?”¹

Tony Cokes lives and works in Providence, Rhode Island. Recent exhibitions include the 10th Berlin Biennale in Berlin; Hessel Museum in Annandale-on-Hudson; the Whitechapel Gallery in London; ZKM in Karlsruhe; REDCAT in Los Angeles; SFMOMA in San Francisco; the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the Pera Museum in Istanbul; and the Louvre in Paris.

1. Tony Cokes, “Black Celebration” (1988) Digital video, 17:11 duration, b/w

¹ “Black Celebration: Tony Cokes” Video Data Bank, School of the Art Institute of Chicago <<http://www.vdb.org/titles/black-celebration>> Accessed December 31, 2018.