
Exhibit B Show Canceled in UK After Concerns Over Racism

30/09/2014



Anti-racism activists in the U.K. are claiming victory after the controversial 'art' show, "Exhibit B", was canceled on the heels of protests against the exhibition.

Directed by white South African director Brett Bailey, Exhibit B features black actors recreating human zoos.

The show was set to exhibit in Europe's largest multi-arts center the Barbican, but the center canceled the show after protests. The Metropolitan Police arrived on the scene but did not make any arrests at the London arts center. The Barbican released an official statement calling off the five day run of the show.

Protestors called the art exhibit "an outrageous act of complicit racism." An online petition received more than 20,000 signatures advocating that the Barbican cancel the show. Sara Myers who started the petition called Exhibit B "racism masquerading as art."

Some critics denounced the Barbican, accusing the arts center "with exhibiting institutional racism for agreeing to stage this poison."

Director Bailey responded to concerns saying that, "Nowhere do I term Exhibit B a 'human zoo'. Exhibit B is not a piece about black histories made for white audiences. It is a piece about humanity; about a system of dehumanization that affects everybody within society, regardless of skin color, ethnic or cultural background, that scours the humanity from the 'looker' and the

'looked at'."

Baily also defends that the installation as a subversion the human zoo of the 19th and 20th centuries that displayed African adults and children for white audiences' entertainment.

"We state categorically that the Barbican is not neutral on the subject of racism; we are totally opposed to it and could not present a work that supported it," said the Barbican in an official statement. The arts centre added that the cancellation of the exhibit's run was a hit to creative freedoms, however.



-

[Slavery exhibition featuring black actors chained in cages shut down](#)

[Protest campaign that saw entrance to Brett Bailey's Exhibit B blockaded by 200 protesters leads to Barbican closing it](#)