



Why Do I Never See You At The Club?

**Places - a Hamilton Radio-DJ
Collective**

April 4 - May 17, 2025

words by adeola egbeyemi

I have a loose personal manifesto of what makes a good party.

Honestly, I think most attendees of Hamilton Artist Inc's second launch event of 2025 do too.

Why Do I Never See You at the Club by Places was the first exhibit I flitted around, upon entry from the dry, but buzzy, Friday night air on James Street North. I took in the various artistic corners much like one surveys a club they've just entered. Right to the heat of the dance floor? Or should we hang out at the bar... oh, shoot my jacket's on.

Ink prints, a short film about house dance with really sexy typography, a collage poster board hung with what seemed to be the hem of a white slip dress. In the center, a lounge had been constructed around the undoubtable centerpiece of the evening: a DJ booth. I didn't know where to start—and then I remembered what I'd brought in my purse. I excuse-me'd my way to the entrance corner of the exhibit, awkwardly swirling my hand around my offering that attendees had been asked

to bring.

Feeling unnecessarily self-conscious about it though, I opted instead to slip into the second exhibit, TENDER LIKE A BRUISE featuring eli nolet and aryd n gibbs.

Adeola's good party rule #1: A good party needs segmentation, pockets, ebbs for energy to shift and flow.

A friend I was with this evening termed it best: if Why Do I Never See You at the Club was the club, TENDER LIKE A BRUISE was leaving the party to step outside, into the chill, the dark, the relative quiet.

The exhibition featured four installations on the three walls of the James Gallery, and two works in the center of the room. I started on the wall. Two 3D printed sculptures hung, each softly illuminated by a single multi-coloured projection. The first was shaped like a star and furrowed with swirling pillow-like grooves. Likely due to the printing method,

various spots were also “glitchy”, pixelated. A long silver ribbon wrapped the spout at the bottom of the sculpture, transforming the work into something like a balloon. To have something that wasn’t light at all, be fashioned to float like a balloon reminded me of the gravity defying emotion of grief—amplified by a melancholic “Yeah, I’m sad” single light on it. The pixelation also reminded me of how much grief has been and is continually expressed online daily.

Adeola’s good party rule #2: No good party without indulging in a tiny sip of angst.

The other sculpture, a 3D print of the word feel in cursive, had a rounder shape, almost giving the print a topographic effect. I thought about how feelings physically move through the landscape of the body, anger in my face, excitement in my legs, heartbreak in my chest.

The dimly lit, minimalist exhibition, tinged light blue by a 3D render holofan, reminded me of a grown up 2014 grunge aesthetic (if you weren’t there: silver space buns, Crybaby & Arctic Monkeys, the

alien emoji, desaturated Tumblr posts) down to the smooth integration of various digital components. I got surprised by the subtle wall etching, touched the Touch me stone, and watched a few minutes of a clip that seemed to indulge in a Wes Anderson, Riptide music video flat space, close up film style. I saw torsos; I saw hands. With that I was ready to ditch my cigarette, hop the hole in the gate, and head back into the club.

The still images—mid-dance poses, smoking and drinking with friends, snapping pictures against grimy walls—evoked a gratitude for Hamilton’s night scene. The fun of this exhibit, curated by Places, Hamilton’s beloved radio-DJ collective, doesn’t end after the launch; with film screenings, panel talks, and weekly broadcasts planned over the duration of the exhibit, the passion for dance and nightlife culture and connection is clear.

It’s a welcome ripple of the zeitgeist that club and rave culture is currently experiencing in pop culture, of course spotlighted by the brat juggernaut, but also, I would argue, the popularity

of those addictive live DJ mix reaction clips. Are any of those being recorded in Hamilton? Promise I'll dress cute.

At some point, I found myself in the lounge of the "club" admiring a brown marble centre table, the type a rich psychiatrist in, like, the 80s, would have in her waiting room. With a selection of other suave furniture and decor, antique looking chaises, colourful mod-ish seating and lush plants, one cannot help but reminded of the crown jewel of Hamilton's nightlife scene: &thenyou.

While *Why Do I Never See You At The Club* certainly captured Hamilton's crowd, I did wonder about the title itself. Who don't we see at the club? I lacked something to chew on regarding topics I don't think are discussed enough within club culture of exclusivity, beauty politics, and substance over usage. I didn't dwell on this long though: out of the corner of my eye I spotted a couple making out on the wall next to a Chimeric wheat paste mural. Hey, if it flies in the club, surely it flies in here.

I did, though, finally approach the back wall and remove my item from my purse. Folks were encouraged to bring an item that reminded them of their clubbing experience. The wall was shrined with wads of gum, mints, elastics, lighters, BDSM stickers, bracelets à la PLUR and old club night posters. I placed my token down (an I Heart NYC baby tee), thought of 21-year old Adeola—blonde, fresh out of summer 2021 isolation, anxious to party, anxious about life, anxious about life after university parties—and then let her go.

With an evening spent talking with new friends, appreciating the fashion-forward mog of attendees (I saw those Tabis, sir!), congratulating peers on their exhibits and wishing I'd remembered to pull myself away from conversation to buy Hamilton Artist Inc's tasty-looking spicy mango and gin evening special, I was, gladly, unable to follow my third party rule:

Leave while the party's hot.



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ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



Canada Council Conseil des arts
for the Arts du Canada

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ISBN: 978-1-926454-32-0



EVERYONE
THEIR OWN REASON
Dawning