

# CLAUDE MCKAY

QUEER, BLACK & RADICAL



RUDY LOEWE



AS A BOY, LONDON'S FACTORY SMOKE SEEMED SO EXCITING



BUT NOW LONDON FEELS ENGULFED IN IT



CLOAKED IN SMOKE



WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND YOU

AND BREATHING IN THE NIGHTMARE

LONDON FELT SO HOSTILE, AT TIMES I WELCOMED BEING LOST IN FOG



AND IMAGINE HAVING TO WEAR AN OVERCOAT ALL YEAR ROUND!



IT'S ONLY BY THE EXISTENCE OF TWO CLUBS THAT I HAVE SURVIVED. THE DRURY LANE CLUB AND...

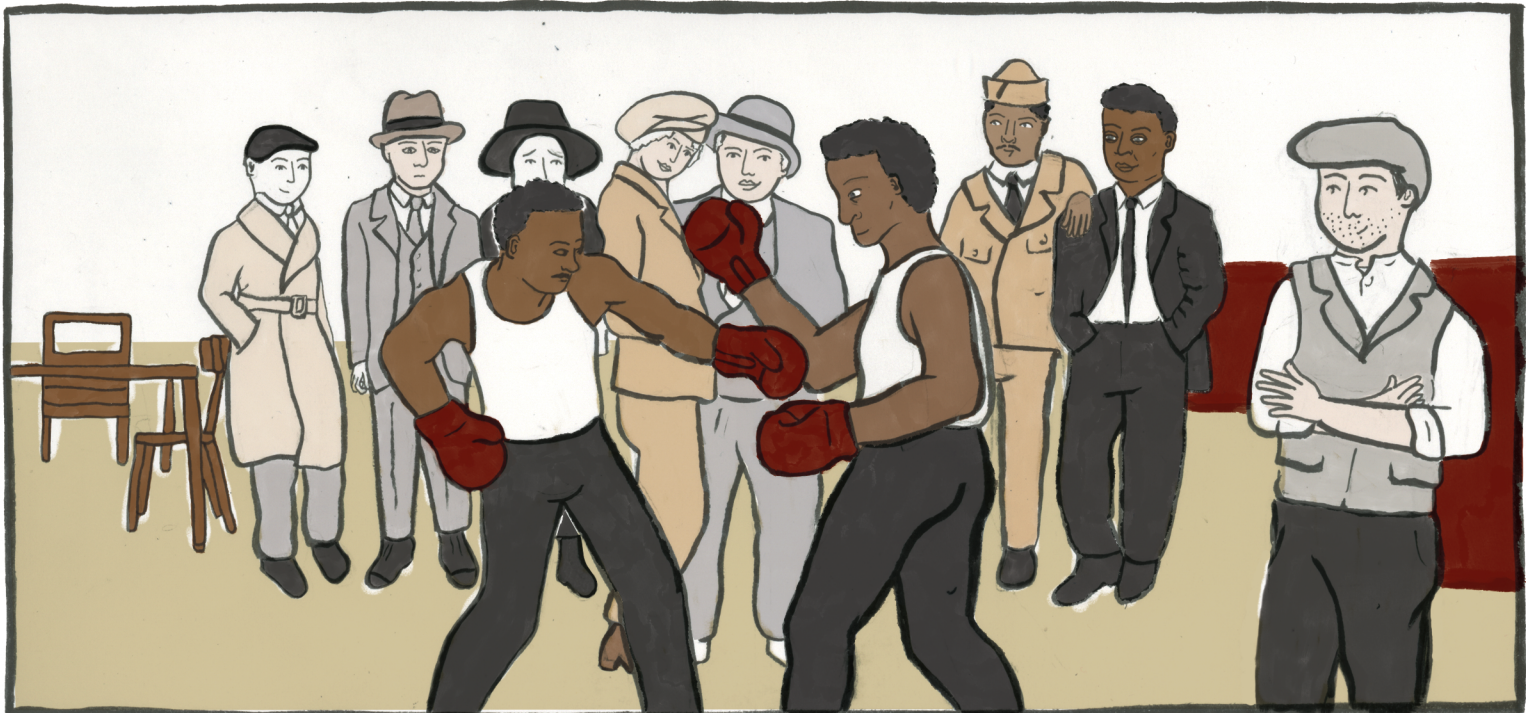




THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB  
AT FIRST I WAS THE ONLY AFRICAN



SO I BROUGHT ALONG OTHERS, INCLUDING  
SOLDIERS FROM THE DRURY LANE CLUB  
AND SOME BOXERS





# THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CLUB, 1920



THE WORKING MAN MUST UNITE!

VOUS ÊTES FRANÇAIS?

YOU DO LOOK RATHER DASHING WENDY

AND YOU JANE

AS JEWISH PEOPLE WE MUST COME TOGETHER

WAKE UP TEDDY!





ANARCHISM IS THE ONLY WAY TO REVOLUTION!

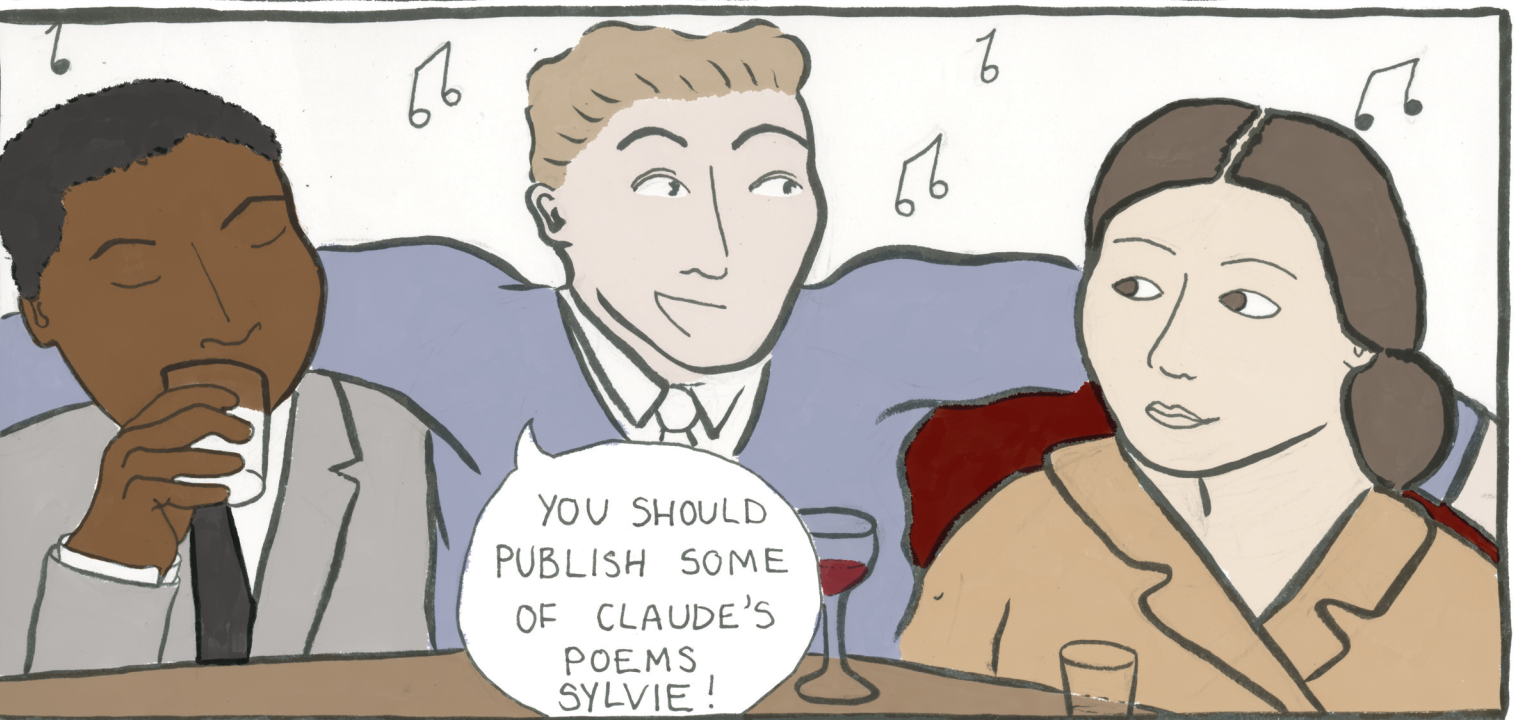
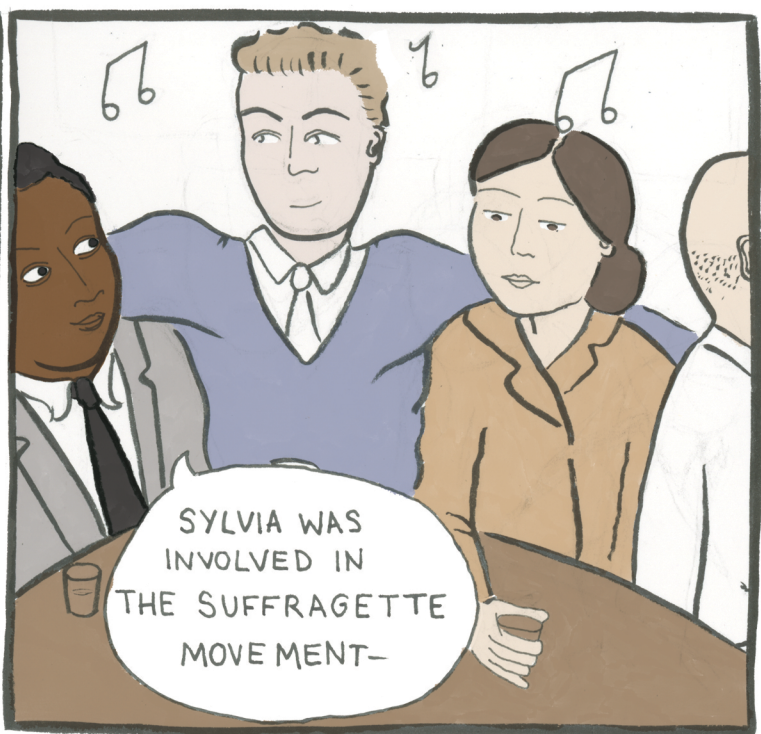
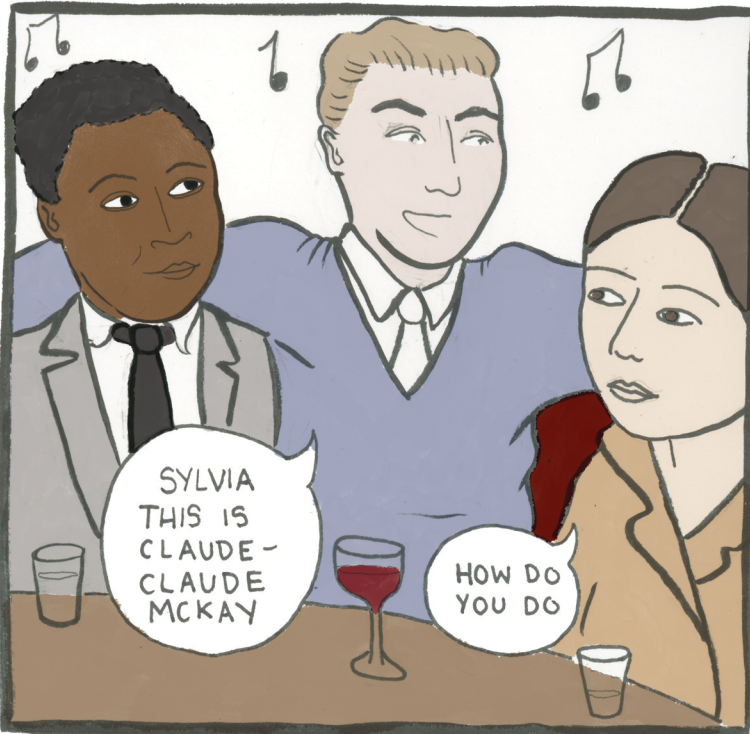
DIE ENGLISHEN LEUTE SIND SO UNBEHOLFEN

AND SO MARX BELIEVED...

I MYSELF WRITE POETRY









Daily Herald

SATURDAY APRIL 10, 1920

# BLACK SCOURGE IN EUROPE SEXUAL HORROR BY FR



April 24, 1920.

## A BLACK MAN REPLIES.

Dear Editor: The following letter, replying to E.D. Morel's article on the black troops in Africa, was sent to the *Daily Herald* on April 11th, but apparently the *Herald* refuses a hearing to the Black side, which is quite inarticulate:—

The Editor of the *Daily Herald*.

Sir: The odiousness of your article headline "Black Scourge in Europe; Sexual horror in Africa" is not mitigated by your explanatory editorial note stating that you are not encouraging racial prejudice and that you champion native rights in Africa. If you are really consistent in thinking that you can do something to help the white and black races to a better understanding of each other, then you should do much that you might learn from Liberal and Conservative organs like *The Nation*, *The New York Times* and the *Edinburgh Review*, which have long been exposing the iniquities of



FROM THEN ON I BECAME A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE DREADNOUGHT



AND SO I FOUND SOME KIND OF STEADY RHYTHM IN LONDON FOR THE TIME BEING



CLAUDE WRITES FOR WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT



AH SO YOU'RE A COMMUNIST!



I AM AN INTERNATIONALIST.



AND I MUST ASK... IS IT JANE OR TOM THAT TAKES YOUR FANCY?



I FIND MYSELF DRAWN TO MANY PEOPLE.

THE ANSWER OF A POET...

HA!  
HA!  
HA!



C.K OGDEN WAS HELPING ME TO PUBLISH  
A VOLUME OF POEMS

# CHELSEA BOOK CLUB



IN THE MEANWHILE I FOUND WAYS  
TO KEEP MYSELF ENTERTAINED



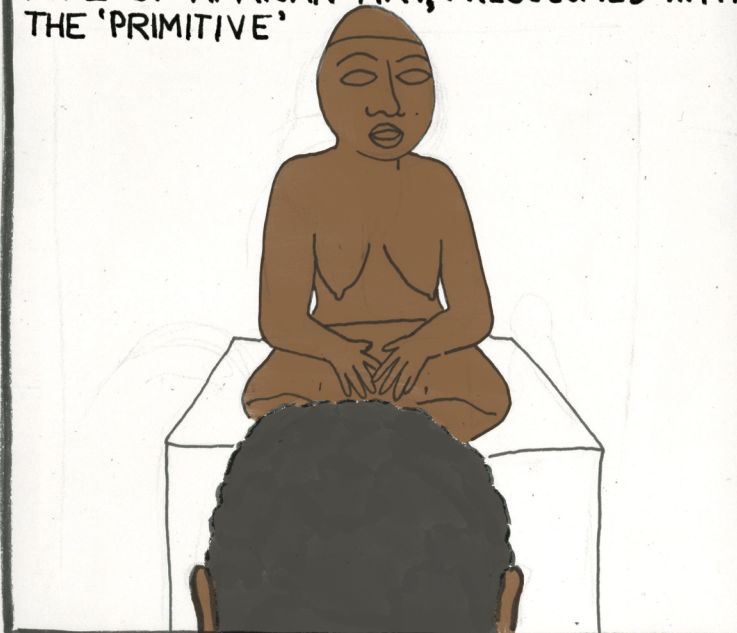
I OFTEN NAVIGATED SPACES AS AN  
OUTSIDER SO IT WAS REFRESHING TO  
SEE WORKS CREATED BY AFRICANS



BUT I WAS DISAPPOINTED TO SEE  
NONE OF THE ARTISTS WERE NAMED



EUROPEANS PROMOTED ONLY A CERTAIN  
TYPE OF AFRICAN ART, PREOCCUPIED WITH  
THE 'PRIMITIVE'



AND FURTHERING THE FETISHISATION  
OF AFRICA

I COULDN'T STAND IT

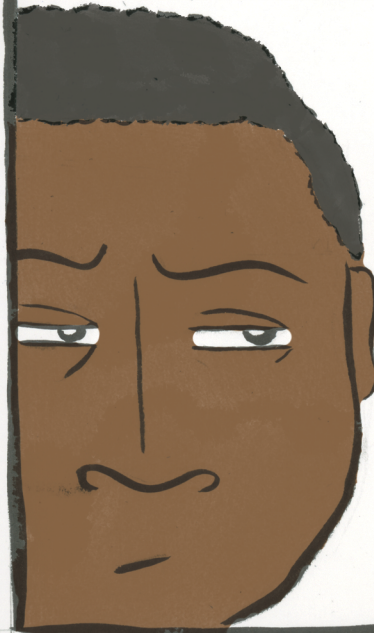




THE POEMS TOOK LONGER THAN EXPECTED TO PUBLISH



I NEVER INTENDED TO STAY IN LONDON SO LONG AND AFTER A CONTROVERSIAL ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED...



MISS PANKHURST?

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT OFFICES WERE RAIDED



JUST PLAY THE STEREOTYPE THEY EXPECT YOU TO BE



I DESTROYED WHAT THE POLICE WERE SEARCHING FOR



BUT I LIVED IN CONSTANT FEAR OF SURVEILLANCE



I CONTINUED WRITING FOR THE DREADNOUGHT UNDER PSEUDONYMS, NEVER AT EASE



CLAUDE...  
I RECEIVED  
AN ANONYMOUS  
LETTER ABOUT  
YOU...

BEING  
A SPY..



WHAT?!

I WANTED TO LEAVE LONDON IMMEDIATELY, THEN AND THERE



WHO WOULD  
HAVE SENT IT?  
WHO CAN I  
TRUST?

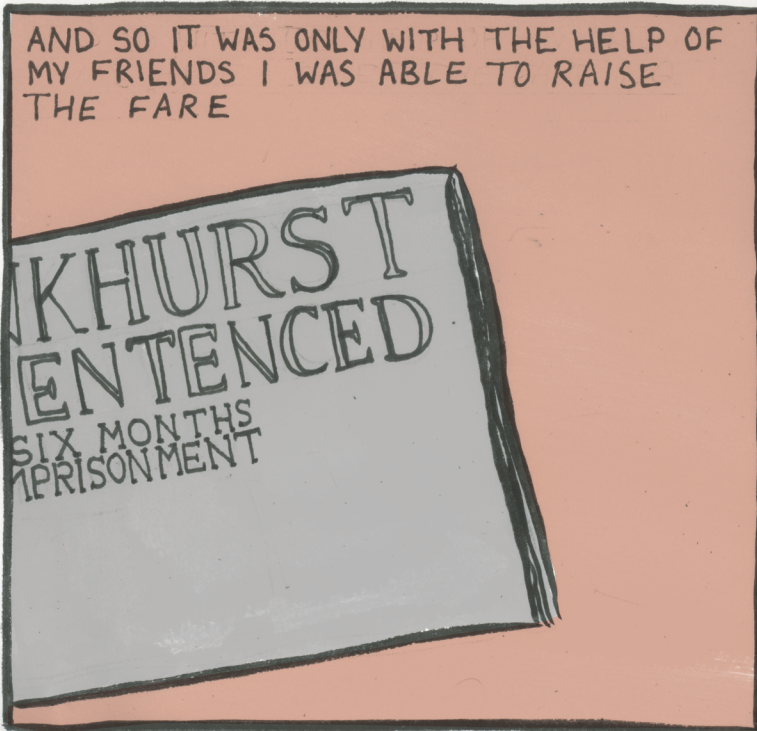
WHY WOULD  
THEY SEND  
IT?

THEY WANT TO  
TURN MY  
COMRADES  
AGAINST ME!

BUT MY POEMS WERE NOT MAKING ME MONEY



AND SO IT WAS ONLY WITH THE HELP OF MY FRIENDS I WAS ABLE TO RAISE THE FARE



AND BEGIN MY DEPARTURE





“THOUGH ONLY IN LONDON FOR A SHORT WHILE  
FROM 1919 TO 1921, MCKAY’S  
LEGACY IN BRITAIN IS AN SIGNIFICANT ONE.  
DURING THIS TIME HE WAS AN IMPORTANT  
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL VOICE IN THE BRITISH  
CULTURAL AND JOURNALISTIC LANDSCAPE”

– DR GEMMA ROMAIN

Created as part of the AHRC-funded Black Modernism project  
(AH/M003469/1), The Equiano Centre, Geography, UCL run by  
Dr Caroline Bresseley and Dr Gemma Romain