

INTERNATIONAL

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Kapwani Kiwanga

*ring the bells that still can ring...
there is a crack in everything*

Spring 2018 International Artist-in-Residence

In residence January 17 > March 26, 2018

On view March 22 > May 13, 2018

In her most recent works Kapwani Kiwanga appears like a scientist, mobilizing her knowledge in social sciences to develop research projects. Following a singular methodology, she creates specific protocols she uses like filters to observe specificities and capacity to change of cultures; the result can take the form of installations, videos or happenings.

Kapwani Kiwanga studied anthropology and comparative religion at McGill University (Montreal, CA). She has followed the program "La Seine" at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, and also works at Le Fresnoy (a french national center for contemporary art). She was artist in residence at the MU Foundation in Eindhoven (NL) and at the Box in Bourges (FR). Kapwani Kiwanga's works have been already exhibited in Centre Georges Pompidou (FR), the Glasgow Center of Contemporary Art (UK), the Museum of Modern art de Dublin (IE), the Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo de Almeria (ES), Salt Beyoglu in Istanbul (TK), the South London Gallery (UK), the Jeu de Paume in Paris (FR), the Kassel Documentary Film Festival (DE), the Kaleidoscope Arena Rome (IT) and at Paris Photo (FR). Kapwani Kiwanga has been nominated as commissioned artist by The Armory Show, where a solo show is devoted to her work in 2016. Twice nominated for BAFTA, her movies have been rewarded in several international festivals.

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Rafa Esparza Los Angeles, CA
Kapwani Kiwanga Paris, France
Carlos Rosales-Silva Austin, TX

Risa Puleo
Curator

ABOUT

THE EXHIBITION

ORIGINS OF AN IDEA

As with many projects, there may be a historic event, an anecdote, or a material that interests me. I don't always know why I am interested at first, but eventually, the idea emerges and the right time comes for it to materialise.

The first time I worked with this shade cloth material I was in Johannesburg, South Africa working on an exhibition whose main questioning was the natural world and how it is witness to colonisation and power imbalances. I was thinking about the use of land for monoculture and cash crops as well as how crops are produced in one area and sent elsewhere.

ALTERED ECOSYSTEMS

In South Africa as in other parts of the world which underwent colonisation (Texas may find its own examples), certain communities were de-invested of land use and denied free movement. They were relegated to strictly defined places of habitation while settler communities, coming mainly from Europe, farmed land and/or raised livestock on lands that other communities were barred from.

Agriculture is about creating artificial conditions in order to harvest crops. The material found in this exhibition, shade cloth, is one technology used to achieve such artificial environments. As the name suggests, the fabric creates shade. Some particular fabrics also filter out certain elements of the light spectrum and allow others through to encourage the growth of specific crops. It is a simple technology which speaks to humankind's relationship to nature and its manipulation not simply to sustain itself but to exploit it for capital.

FORMAL CONSIDERATIONS

Beyond the contemporary use of this fabric, what interested me was the quality of the material itself—namely its porosity and variable transparency. It simultaneously obstructs and allows the passage of light. Depending on how the material is arranged in space it can act as a screen or wall but its permeability allows one to imagine transgression. Metaphorically it functions as a call to circumnavigate or a formal materialisation of actions born out of hope that bypass rigid or exclusionary structures.

NEW EXPLORATIONS

When I first worked with this material the whole process was incredibly short and I did not have much opportunity to experiment. So during my residency at Artpace I wanted to spend time with the material and see what forms would emerge. I also wanted to work with it in a three-dimensional way on the walls. I had only worked with black fabric before so I was interested in working with color even though the color palette for this type of fabric is limited.

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