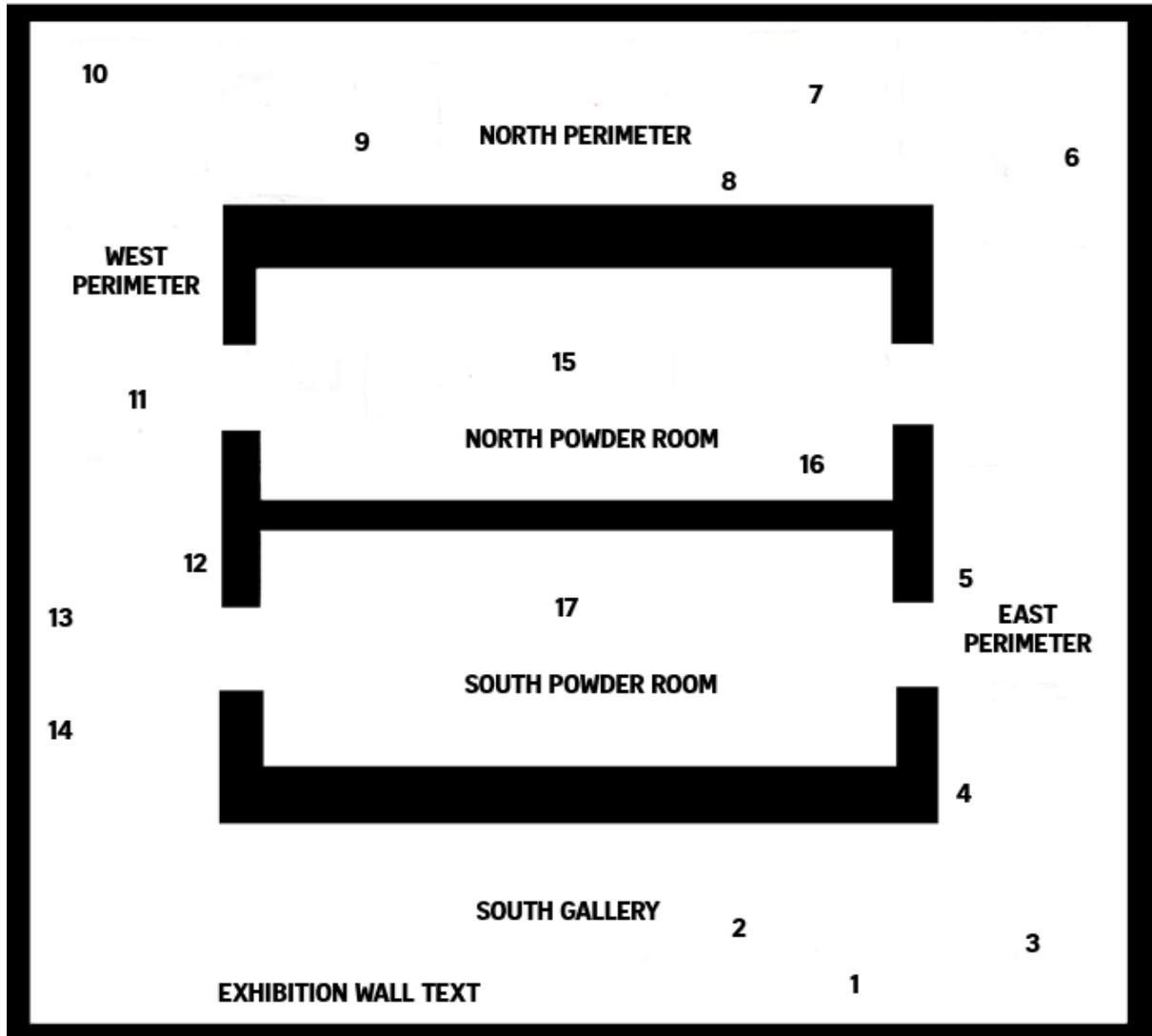


**GRACE WALES BONNER
A TIME FOR NEW DREAMS**

LIST OF WORKS WITH EXTENDED CAPTIONS



SOUTH GALLERY

1 - Ben Okri

Printed and recorded words and invocations

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Poet and novelist Ben Okri has devised a series of invocations that are presented in the Gallery through text and sound, building a poetic narrative thread throughout the space. Drawing upon ritualistic acts of devotion that can be both meditative and ecstatic, Okri's words permeate Wales Bonner's exhibition and highlight the significance of shrines as symbolic portals to other worlds, activated by the beliefs and movements of those who use them. A central inspiration and informant to Wales Bonner's thinking around ideas of shrines and magic, Okri's collection of essays, *A Time for New Dreams* (2011), gives the exhibition its title. Itself a series of propositions for how to live and dream, Wales Bonner connects to Okri's publication through her own desire to create a space to imagine new possibilities and worlds.

2 - Rashid Johnson

Untitled (daybeds 1 and 6) 2012

Branded red oak, zebra skin, black soap, wax, rug

Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Rashid Johnson is an American artist working across painting, sculpture, photography and video, exploring the idiosyncrasies of personal identity within a wider context of African American intellectualism and creativity. These two daybeds incorporate vintage zebra skins, found Persian carpets and chaise lounges, together referencing the exoticisation of artifacts and materials from Africa and Iran (historically known as Persia) within Western aesthetic frameworks. Through his work, Johnson also engages with the academic impact of certain black intellectual figures throughout history and the presence of secret societies within these narratives, such as in his ongoing series *The New Negro Escapist Social and Athletic Club*. Significantly, Wales Bonner draws upon the example of sociologist, W. E. B. Du Bois, to imagine the largely unknown history of his own society of black intellectuals and the kinds of private spaces they would have inhabited. Johnson's daybeds connect to Du Bois, who on his travels through Persia collected carpets that he used to adorn his home on moving to Ghana.

3 - Kapwani Kiwanga

Flowers for Africa: Mozambique 2014

Signed protocol by artist including iconographic documents

Collection Gabriel Nallet Grenoble

Flowers for Africa: Uganda 2014

Signed protocol by artist including iconographic documents

Thibault Poutrel Contemporary Art

Flowers for Africa: Nigeria 2014

Signed protocol by artist including iconographic documents

Collection NOMAS Foundation, Rome

Flowers for Africa: Tunisia 2015

Signed protocol by artist including iconographic documents

Collection FRAC Île-de-France

Kapwani Kiwanga is a Franco-Canadian artist based in Paris whose work often manifests as installations, sound, video, and performance. A trained anthropologist and social scientist, Kiwanga's work is based in research and the reimagining of certain histories. She intentionally confuses truth and fiction in order to unsettle hegemonic narratives and create spaces in which marginal discourse can flourish. Presented as part of this exhibition is Kiwanga's work, *Flowers for Africa*, an ongoing series that the artist began in 2012. In each iteration of these works, Kiwanga recreates floral arrangements of cut flowers based on archival images which document an event or ceremony related to the independence of an African country. Left to wilt over the course of the exhibition, the flowers gesture to an important moment in time, whilst their demise traces the fading memory of an historical moment and the fragility of sovereignty. This exhibition includes works relating to four different African countries and notably the largest rendition of *Uganda* presented to date.

EAST PERIMETER

David Hammons

One of the most inventive and influential artists of our time, Hammons creates work that addresses the experiences of African American life and the role that race plays in American society. He began his career in Los Angeles in the late 1960s, where he was influenced by the politically charged imagery of the Black Arts Movement. His work explores politics through poetry and humour, encompassing sculpture, photography, video, found object, painting and performance. Referencing his belief that 'outrageously magical things happen when you mess around with a symbol', this exhibition features four works by Hammons, each of which appropriate everyday objects and render them political, funny or absurd. Hammons' work can also be understood in relation to the collective tradition of African American material culture and its African antecedents; as photographer Dawoud Bey describes in his text 'In the Spirit of *Minkis*': 'it is [the] avowal to keep his work true to the communal spirit that continues to mark Hammons as one whom history will show to have been firmly aligned with an art practice more ancient than contemporary'.

Hammons has an intrinsic connection to magic within his practice. Embedded within his approach to objects is the magical potential in the act of creating and transforming objects both through sculpture and performance. Hammons might respond to and engage with contemporary African American life, however he simultaneously draws upon certain lineages, rituals and gestures that connect his work to past histories and temporalities of black experience.

4 – *Money Tree* 1992

Sepia print photograph

Private Collection

The photograph, *Money Tree*, builds upon Hammons' interest in basketball and its aspirational force within black culture, as something that could provide an escape from urban poverty. The sense of ambition that is embedded within this title is unravelled by the static reality of Hammons' composition, which merges the natural and the artificial through the deadpan image of a bicycle wheel stuck into a tree. Yet within the everyday nature of Hammons' image lies an inherent magic in its transformation, becoming a space of communal gathering that is framed by the ritual of sport.

5 - *Fly Jar* 1998

Glass, wood, metal zipper sliders, metal mesh, metal wire, glue
Private Collection

The sculptural work, *Fly Jar*, similarly uses satirical visual language in order to create multi-layered meanings. Flies trapped within a jar are represented by clothing zips attached to small twigs. The work conjures a sense of entrapment, but one that is constructed out of the everyday, found material, an artificiality that undermines the suggestion of life denoted by the title. Hammons' transformation of an object in this way highlights his status as a trickster within the art world and his ability to re-signify items that appear familiar.

6 - Eric N. Mack

Traversing both painting and sculpture, whilst referencing the traditions of abstraction, Eric N. Mack transforms worn clothes, rags and textiles into architectural assemblages that dance through space; their dynamic form suggests the presence of bodies performing, passing by, or gathering together.

Capital Heights (via stretch) 2019

Assorted cloth, Spandex, cotton, silk, polyester, rope and straight pins
Courtesy the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

In this new work, Mack has responded to the architecture of the Gallery by creating a tent-like canopy, a space for meditation or reflection. The work alludes to the context of the marketplace and the feeling of being sheltered, whilst also encompassing a multiplicity of different fabrics, colours and textures. This sense of an enclosure is key to Mack's desire to draw attention to the visitor's own sense of movement in space.

NORTH PERIMETER

7 - Rotimi Fani-Kayode

Nothing to Lose XII, from the series *Bodies of Experience* 1989

Archival C-type print

Courtesy the artist and Autograph, London

Maternal Milk c. 1986

Silver Gelatin print

Courtesy the artist and Autograph, London

Dan Mask 1989

Silver Gelatin print

Courtesy the artist and Autograph, London

Every Mother's Son/Children of Suffering 1989

Silver Gelatin print

Courtesy the artist and Autograph, London

Half Opened Eyes Twins 1989

Silver Gelatin print

Courtesy the artist and Autograph, London

Rotimi Fani-Kayode was a Nigerian-born photographer, who moved to England at the age of 12 to escape the Nigerian Civil War. During his tragically brief six-year career, Fani-Kayode produced a complex body of photographic work, exploring themes of race, sexuality, spirituality, and the self. Fani-Kayode's work deals with the multi-layered, personal questions of being an outsider: as a gay man, in terms of geographical and cultural dislocation, and the sense of feeling other to the expectations of his parents. The photographs presented in this exhibition utilise the body as a locus for the artist's investigations into these questions through staged set-ups that foreground the presence and gesture of the body. The images use different props, such as fruit or masks, in order to demonstrate how these objects become charged in relation to certain rituals of the body.

Fani-Kayode was raised in a prominent Yoruba family and it was the religious and spiritual traditions of this upbringing that was continuously placed in tension with his own homosexuality. This interplay is often present in the photographer's compositions; as he says: 'I try to bring out the spiritual dimension in my pictures so that concepts of reality become ambiguous and are open to reinterpretation. This requires what Yoruba priests call a technique of ecstasy'.

8 - Black Audio Film Collective / Reece Auguiste

Twilight City 1989

16mm film transferred to digital video, 52 min, colour, sound

Copyright Reece Auguiste, Black Audio Film Collective. Courtesy Smoking Dogs Films

Black Audio Film Collective is a group of artists, filmmakers and writers formed in 1982, whose output focuses on an interest in memory, history and aesthetics that engages specifically with black popular and political culture in Britain. This film directed by Reece Auguiste, one of Black Audio Film Collective's members, brings together their characteristic use of found footage with interviews with several intellectual figures, such as Homi Bhabha, Paul Gilroy and Gail Lewis. Each of these vignettes forms a poetic meditation on the city that is both personal and political, weaving together multiple stories to create a portrait of London.

David Hammons

One of the most inventive and influential artists of our time, Hammons creates work that addresses the experiences of African American life and the role that race plays in American society.

9 - *The Holy Bible: Old Testament* 2002

1002 pages, 225 colour plates, soft cover, leather-bound, edge gilding, slip case

Private Collection

The Holy Bible: Old Testament takes the object or fetish as a means to subvert authority. The book on display is in fact another title: a 1997 softcover edition of *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*, which has been rebound to resemble a Bible. Here, Hammons both celebrates and criticises the notion of the readymade, which originated with Duchamp, acknowledging its significance within his own practice, whilst ridiculing the near-sacred status and the ease with which objects can be elevated in systems of power, such as the segregated art world.

10 - Liz Johnson Artur

There is only one...one 2019

Photograms, bamboo, felt, wood, cloth, linen, prints, stone, transparencies, rope
Courtesy the artist

Traversing a plethora of subjects, locations and situations – from weddings, birthdays and nightclubs to life on the street – the Russian-Ghanaian photographer Liz Johnson Artur's images capture the nuances of daily life, subtly bringing forth a certain magic that shifts our gaze beyond the materiality of the everyday. For this exhibition, Johnson Artur has created a new shrine, which she describes as a form of storybook that brings photographs from different moments in time together and thereby creating new realities. Embedded with the lasting energy of the artist's process of collecting over time, Johnson Artur's shrine invites the visitor into her own, idiosyncratic space within the Gallery.

WEST PERIMETER

David Hammons

One of the most inventive and influential artists of our time, Hammons creates work that addresses the experiences of African American life and the role that race plays in American society.

11 - Rock Head 2000

Hair, rock and metal stand
Private Collection

Rock Head comprises a large rock with black, afro-textured hair applied to its top. This is one of a series of works whereby Hammons collects hair from Harlem barbershops and models it onto rocks to give the effect of a shaved haircut. The work evokes the modernist form of a sculpture by Constantin Brâncuși, through its anthropomorphic appearance and monumental presence. Whilst Hammons' use of hair symbolically refers to racial identity, it also creates a delicate and magical interplay between materials that decay and those that withstand the passing of time. For Hammons, hair is a charged and potentially magic material; as he says:

Our hair is positive, it's powerful, look what it can do. There's nothing negative about our images, it all depends on who is seeing it and we've been depending on someone else's sight ... We need to look again and decide.

12 - Paul Mpagi Sepuya

A Ground (IMG6936) 2015

Archival pigment print
Private Collection

A Ground (OX5A1495) 2018

Archival pigment print
Courtesy DOCUMENT

Darkroom Mirror Study (OX5A1519) 2017

Archival pigment print
Courtesy Nicole Berry

Paul Mpagi Sepuya is an American photographer whose work focuses on the production of portraiture in the artist's studio as a site of homoerotic social relations. Centred upon a series of intimate engagements with

representation and identity, Sepuya utilises the studio as a social environment, employing mirrors to confuse the boundaries between artist and subject. Moving beyond a simple surface of reflection, these mirrors act as portals into multiple frames of reality and temporalities, which the artist allows to coalesce within a single composition. Each of the three works in this exhibition demonstrate Sepuya's interest in revealing and shrouding, archiving and regenerating, and staging and collapsing within the frame of the image. The structural framework of each image is laid bare, while the use of drapes suggests another space behind that of the photograph. For Wales Bonner, Sepuya's use of mirrors connects to their symbolism within Haitian voodoo traditions, as portals through which spirits can traverse.

13 - Grace Wales Bonner

Shrine I 2019

Research material, archival photographs, cabinet, altar objects, feathers, monitor, cables
Courtesy the artist

Looped installation:

Interview conducted with Ben Okri, Athens c. 1994

Digital video, 26 min, colour, sound

Kindly provided by Stathis Paraskevopoulos

Ishmael Reed plays Tadd Dameron's 'If You Could See Me Now', 2008

Digital video, 02:14 min, colour, sound

Courtesy Ishmael Reed

Ishmael Reed at the Brockport Writers Forum, Brockport, New York, 1974

Digital video, 14:58 min, black and white, sound

Courtesy Ishmael Reed

As part of the exhibition, Grace Wales Bonner has created two shrines – *Shrine I* and *Shrine II*, each of which incorporate a series of what she calls 'altar objects'. *Shrine I* refers to several key figures who have been formative to her thinking towards this exhibition: Ben Okri, Ishmael Reed and James Hampton. Together, these three figures form a certain lineage of black intellectuality and creativity that Wales Bonner accesses in this exhibition, highlighting the significance of ancestry within black cultural practices throughout time and the idea of the writer as an oracle. Included as part of the exhibition is a looped video installation, comprising an interview with Ben Okri from 1994 and two videos of writer Ishmael Reed. Reed's 1972 text, *Mumbo Jumbo*, is a work of magic realism and satire that draws upon how ideas of voodoo and ritual can affect and subvert reality as we know it. This seminal book has been foundational to Wales Bonner's ideas around magic realism and forms the title for her forthcoming Autumn/Winter 2019 collection. An open book on the floor in front of *Shrine I* depicts outsider artist, James Hampton, who by day worked as a caretaker but secretly, over the course of 14 years, built a large assemblage of religious art from found materials, such as aluminium, gold foil, cardboard, light bulbs and shards of mirror. Titled the *Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations' Millennium General Assembly*, this visionary work is now housed within the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

14 - Grace Wales Bonner

Shrine II 2019

Speakers, research material, cables
Courtesy the artist

Sound installation:

Chino Amobi

Ancestors 2018

Light IV selected excerpts 2018

Courtesy the musician

The Howard University Chamber Choir

Ain't Got Time to Die 1994

Copyright 1995 Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

Wales Bonner's second shrine in the exhibition incorporates sound and literature to explore ideas of ritual and rhythmicity within black aesthetic practices. *Shrine II* incorporates sounds by the American artist, Chino Amobi, which 'functions as a conflating portal between disparate rhythmic lineages, lived histories, redacted geographies, intellectual schools of thought, and spiritual realms' (Amobi), together with distorted sounds from the Howard University Chamber Choir. Activated at certain moments throughout the day, the otherworldly presence of Wales Bonner's shrine suggests a portal into another world through the bodiless sounds that emanate from it.

NORTH POWDER ROOM

15 - Eric N. Mack

Traversing both painting and sculpture, whilst referencing the traditions of abstraction, Eric N. Mack transforms worn clothes, rags and textiles into architectural assemblages that dance through space; their dynamic form suggests the presence of bodies performing, passing by, or gathering together.

A Lesson in Perspective 2017

Wool net curtain, tent cover, acrylic paint, linen, silk, polyester, velour

Courtesy the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

This work builds upon Mack's interest in reconfiguring the traditions of painting and perspective by stretching out multiple fabrics throughout the space of the North Powder Room. Describing his work, Mack states:

'In my work, as in styling an outfit, I am constructing something from selections to create a space of subjectivity. The rearrangement of sensibility, the mood board, becomes the subject. I'm interested in images that are located in multiple spaces: textured experience-images, images with pasts'.

As suggested by the title, *A Lesson in Perspective* creates a series of viewpoints for the visitor immersed within the work, whilst it also traverses multiple images and time frames through Mack's eclectic approach to his materials.

16 - Sahel Sounds Radio

Boombox speaker, Mauritanian carpet

Featuring:

Abba Gargando *Zinezju Meghdem* 2010

Mdou Moctar *Tahoultine* 2013

Fatou Seidi Ghali and Alamnou Akrouni *Inigradan* 2016

Tallawit Timbouctou *Hali Diallo* 2018

Mdou Moctar *Nikali Talit* 2013

Field recordings by Chris Kirkley

Selected by Grace Wales Bonner

Courtesy the musicians

Sahel Sounds is a record label and online platform that explores arts and music of the Sahel region through non-traditional ethnographic fieldwork across countries including Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso and Sudan. Sahel Sounds' work explores the interplay between localised musical traditions, transglobal influences and new media models of cultural transmission. For this exhibition, Grace Wales Bonner has selected a series of musicians with whom Sahel Sounds works, which is played through a boombox presented on a Mauritanian rug, creating the effect of a transmission from another place. Together, Wales Bonner's selection forms a sound shrine within the Gallery, acting as a portal to another place.

SOUTH POWDER ROOM

17 - Laraaji

Transformation 2019

Altar objects

Courtesy the musician

Featuring images by Nick Sethi

Courtesy the artist and Arthur de Borman

Laraaji is a musician, multi-instrumentalist, mystic and laughter meditation practitioner, who led a series of performances and workshops throughout the opening days of Wales Bonner's exhibition within a site-specific shrine realised in conversation with the designer. Informed by ideas of healing and devotional offerings, this material assemblage incorporates various ephemera, fruit, and images by artist Nick Sethi, and acts as a carrier of Laraaji's ambient sounds.

Laraaji began playing music on the streets in the 1970s, improvising trance-inducing jams on a modified autoharp processed through various electronic effects. It was during this time that he began to study Eastern mysticism, believing that he had found a new path for his music and life. In 1979, Brian Eno saw Laraaji playing in Washington Square Park and invited him to record an album for his seminal *Ambient* series. A celestial music pioneer whose work traverses the monastic and the ecstatic, Laraaji has continued to expand his mystic studies with gurus such as Swami Satchidananda and Shri Brahmananda Sarasvati, founder of the Ananda Ashram in Monroe, New York.