

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) presents

**A season of exhibitions dedicated to photography
in the African Diaspora**

Plus a solo exhibition of the video work of Rashaad Newsome

(San Francisco, CA)—This fall, the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) presents an exhibition season dedicated to photographic practices. Highlighting some of the most significant photographers living and working in America today, as well as the work of fifteen diverse African photographers, four exhibitions, including the only U.S. showing of the traveling exhibition *Africa State of Mind*, Adama Delphine Fawundu's *The Sacred Star of Isis and Other Stories*, Laylah Amatullah Barrayn's *Baye Fall: Roots In Spirituality, Fashion And Resistance*, and *Black is Beautiful: The Photography of Kwame Braithwaite*, celebrate the diversity of photographic representation throughout the African Diaspora.

The Museum also presents a solo exhibition of the video work of Rashaad Newsome, whose work is deeply invested in how images used in media and popular culture communicate distorted notions of power. He draws attention to the contributions that marginalized communities, whose culture is often absorbed and co-opted by mainstream advertising platforms, have made to pop culture and society in general. The works on view focus on voguing, the highly stylized dance form that emerged in the 1980s from Harlem's queer ballroom culture.

In addition, MoAD will be showing the work of DeShawn Dumas as part of its Emerging Artist Program.

Africa State of Mind
September 4-November 15, 2019

Curated by the eminent British writer, broadcaster, and curator Ekow Eshun, this major exhibition is produced by New Art Exchange, Nottingham, UK and has also travelled to Impressions Gallery, Bradford, UK. It presents the work of a new generation of photographers from across Africa, who collectively interrogate ideas of 'Africanness' through highly subjective renderings of life and identity on the continent. Along the way the fifteen artists from eleven different countries reveal Africa to be a psychological space as much as a physical territory; a state of mind as much as a physical location. This is the only U.S. showing of *Africa State of Mind*.

Africa State of Mind is curated around three main themes. **Hybrid Cities** documents the modern African city in all its dynamism and contradictions. **Zones of Freedom** addresses the fluidity of gender and sexual identity through compelling portraiture, as well as the legacy of history, from slavery and colonialism to apartheid. **Inner Landscapes** draws on the artists' memories and fascinations to conjure individual interpretations of the African past and present.

The exhibition features photographers working in numerous fields from fashion to film, architecture to literature and include **Emmanuelle Andrianjafy, Sammy Baloji, Raphaël Barontini, Neil Beloufa, Girma Berta, Eric Gyamfi, Kiluanji Kia Henda, Lebohang Kganye, Namsa Leuba, Michael MacGarry, Sabelo Mlangeni, Musa N Nxumalo, Ruth Ossai, Athi-Patra Ruga and Michael Tsegaye.**

Eshun says, “...popular Western views of the continent remain distorted. Ethnographic imagery of the colonial period presented Africans as the primitive people of a dark place. Today, contemporary news reports still portray the continent as a place of chaos, corruption and disease. By contrast, *Africa State of Mind* features photographers that seek to address the complexity of what it means, and how it feels, to live in Africa today”.

Ekow Eshun (born London, 1968) is a writer, broadcaster and curator. He is Chairman of the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group, overseeing London's public art programme in Trafalgar Square, and Creative Director of the Calvert 22 Foundation, a leading arts space dedicated to the contemporary culture of Eastern Europe. He was the Director of the ICA, London, from 2005–2010. Eshun's writing has appeared in publications including *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, *Granta*, *Vogue*, *New Statesman* and *Wired*. He is the author of *Black Gold of the Sun: Searching for Home in England and Africa*, nominated for the Orwell prize, and the editor of *Africa Modern: Creating the Contemporary Art of a Continent*. He appears on BBC Radio 4 shows Saturday Review and Front Row and has been a regular contributor to BBC 2's Newsnight Review.

New Art Exchange (NAE) is a contemporary arts space in Nottingham that celebrates the region's cultural richness and diversity. It is the largest gallery in the UK dedicated to culturally diverse contemporary visual arts. The venue presents an ever-changing programme of art exhibitions, creative activities for families and young people, film screenings, symposiums, lectures, festivals and a live performance programme of music, dance and theatre.

The Sacred Star of Isis and Other Stories
Photography by Adama Delphine Fawundu

September 4 –November 15, 2019

As the only child in her immediate family born in America, Fawundu's mixed media photographic works explore the tension between her family's traditional Mende beliefs (Sierra Leone) and Westernized values. By incorporating ancestral gifts of colorful handmade batik fabrics and layering these complex and distorted histories, her work uncovers personal and universal cultural patterns that are present within herself and the African Diaspora.

Adama Delphine Fawundu is a visual artist, author and educator based in Brooklyn, NY. She is the co-founder of *MFON: Women Photographers of the African Diaspora*. Her extensive exhibition record includes the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Steve Kasher Gallery, Pulse Art Fair, the Lagos Photo Festival, The Brighton Photo Biennial (UK), Norton Museum of Art, Villa La Pietra (Italy), and the Museum of Contemporary Photography (Chicago). Fawundu's works can also be found in the private and public collections of the Brooklyn Museum of Art, The Brooklyn Historical Society, The Norton Museum of Art, Corridor Art Gallery, The David C. Driskell Center at the University of Maryland, and The Museum of Contemporary Art at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. In recognition of her artistic practice, Fawundu was nominated for and won the Rema Hort Mann Emerging Artist Award and named one of OkayAfrica's '100 Women making an impact on Africa and its Diaspora.' She was also included in the Royal Photographic Society's (UK) 'Hundred Heroines.' Fawundu received her MFA from Columbia University.

Baye Fall: Roots In Spirituality, Fashion And Resistance

Photography by Laylah Amatullah Barrayn

November 27, 2019 –March 1, 2020

This exhibition is a photographic series that visually engages the Baye Fall, an enterprising subgroup of Senegal's notable Sufi Muslim Community, the Mourides. **An integral part of the cultural fabric of Senegalese society**, the Baye Fall possess a unique aesthetic that includes "locked" hair, patchwork garments, symphonic chanting, and artisanal leather talismans. Through witnessing the lives of the Baye Fall, and the Senegalese cities in which they dwell, this series shows how pre and post-colonial politics have influenced their spiritual practice.

Laylah Amatullah Barrayn is a documentary photographer based in New York City. Her projects have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *BBC*, *OkayAfrica*, *Vogue*, *PDN*, *CBS*, *Quartz Africa*, among other publications. She has curated exhibitions at the Brooklyn Historical Society, the Brooklyn Public Library, the Port Authority of NY/NJ, and more. She has given talks

on her photography at Yale University, Harvard University, The International Center of Photography, Tate Modern, New York University, Howard University, and The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Her work has been exhibited internationally and has been published in the Smithsonian-produced anthology, "BLACK: A Celebration of a Culture," edited by photography historian and professor Dr. Deborah Willis of New York University. She is currently a member of Kamoinge, a pioneering collective of African American photographers founded in 1963. Barrayn is the co-author of *MFON: Women Photographers of the African Diaspora*.

Black is Beautiful: The Photography of Kwame Braithwaite

December 4, 2019 –March 1, 2020

In the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, Kwame Brathwaite used photography to popularize the political slogan "Black Is Beautiful." This exhibition—the first ever dedicated to Brathwaite's remarkable career—tells the story of a key figure of the second Harlem Renaissance. Inspired by the writings of activist and black nationalist Marcus Garvey, Brathwaite, along with his older brother, Elombe Brath, founded the African Jazz Arts Society and Studios (AJASS) and the Grandassa Models. AJASS was a collective of artists, playwrights, designers, and dancers. Grandassa Models—the subject of much of this show's contents—was a modeling agency for black women, founded to challenge white beauty standards. From stunning studio portraits to behind-the-scenes images of Harlem's artistic community, this show offers a long-overdue exploration of Brathwaite's life and work.

Exhibition organized by Aperture Foundation, New York and Kwame S. Brathwaite.

Black Is Beautiful: The Photography of Kwame Brathwaite is organized by Aperture Foundation, New York. The exhibition and the accompanying Aperture publication are made possible in part with generous support to the Aperture Foundation from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Photographic Arts Council Los Angeles.

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OTHER EXHIBITIONS THIS FALL

Rashaad Newsome

STOP PLAYING IN MY FACE! and ICON

September 4, 2019 -March 1, 2020

Rashaad Newsome is a multidisciplinary artist whose work blends several practices together including collage, sculpture, film, music, computer programming, and performance, to form an altogether new field. He pulls intuitively from the world of advertising, the Internet, Black and Queer culture to craft compositions that walk the tightrope between intersectionality, social practice, and abstraction.

The exhibition focuses on video works inspired by the origins and continued dynamism of Vogue, a dance phenomenon that emerged from Harlem's queer ballroom scene.

Newsome's work is also the main inspiration for MoAD's 2019 Afropolitan Ball, taking place October 19. The event will feature projection mapped videos created by Newsome's studio.

Newsome lives and works in New York City. He was born in 1979 in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he received a BFA in Art History at Tulane University in 2001. In 2004, he received a certificate of study in Digital Post Production from Film/Video Arts Inc. (NYC). In 2005 he studied MAX/MSP Programming at Harvestworks Digital Media Art Center (NYC).

He has exhibited and performed in galleries, museums, institutions, and festivals throughout the world including: The Studio Museum in Harlem (NYC), The National Museum of African American History and Culture (DC), The Whitney Museum (NYC), Brooklyn Museum (NYC), MoMAPS1 (NYC), SFMOMA (CA), New Orleans Museum of Art (LA), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), The Garage Center for Contemporary Culture (Moscow), and MUSA (Vienna). Newsome's work is in numerous public collections including the Studio Museum in Harlem, Whitney Museum of American Art (NYC), The Brooklyn Museum of Art (NYC), The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, McNay Art Museum (TX), The Chazen Museum of Art (WI), The New Britain Museum of American Art (CT), and The National Museum of African American History and Culture (DC). In 2010 he participated in the Whitney Biennial (NYC), and in 2011 Greater New York at MoMAPS1 (NYC).

Emerging Artists Program

DeShawn Dumas: Against the End of History

September 4-November 15, 2019

DeShawn Dumas, a conceptual painter, centers whiteness as a militarized socio-economic order and psychodermatological framework. These frameworks demarcate personhood -- boundaries of reason and unreason; valid and invalid subjective experience; normal and abnormal behavior. In writing, pedagogy, and painting, the artist investigates catastrophic climate change, critical aesthetics, futures of policing, and political ontology.

Represented by Ethan Cohen New York and Visiting Faculty at San Francisco Art Institute, Dumas received a Master of Fine Arts and the History of Art and Design from the Pratt Institute in 2016. He will attend the University of Irvine California in pursuit of Ph.D. in Culture & Theory in Fall of 2019.

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About MoAD

Opened in 2005 in San Francisco's Yerba Buena arts district, MoAD, a contemporary art museum, celebrates Black cultures, ignites challenging conversations, and inspires learning through the global lens of the African Diaspora.

For more information about MoAD, visit The Museum's website at moadsf.org.

For media information or visuals visit our online press gallery or contact:

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General Information

The Museum is open Wednesday-Saturday 11am–6pm and Sunday, 12–5pm. Museum admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and senior citizens with a valid ID. Youth 12 and under always get in free. For general information, the public may visit The Museum's website at

moadsf.org or call 415.358.7200. MoAD is located at 685 Mission Street (at Third), San Francisco, CA.

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