

PRESS RELEASE

Raven Chacon
Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński
Oscar Tuazon

November 15 – December 20, 2024
Opening on Thursday, November 14, 6 – 8 pm
Performance with Raven Chacon, 6.30 pm
Maag Areal, Zahnradstr. 21, CH-8005 Zurich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present a group show of three large-scale installation works by the acclaimed contemporary artists **Raven Chacon**, **Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński**, and **Oscar Tuazon**.

Raven Chacon (b. 1977, Fort Defiance, Navajo Nation, US) is a composer, performer, and visual artist, creating videos, prints, photographs and installations. Score-based compositions are fundamental to his practice, encouraging generous forms of collaboration among performers and audiences, sights of significance, nonhuman actors, found sounds, and natural elements. In this way, he connects Native American (Navajo/Diné) worldviews and relationship models with Western classical, avant-garde, and art-music traditions.

Report (2001/2015) is a multimedia work combining a printed score in the entrance area with a 3:48-minute color video featuring sound in the first room of the exhibition. Chacon states about the work: "I wanted to write a piece of music that is going to have limitations on myself. No pitch. No timbral changes. No volume. I can't control the volume. And maybe no tuning, no harmony. Nothing. No time. Of course, I found you can't escape time. In writing this piece, I found that audiences are going to have very certain feelings and assumptions about what they are hearing, those themselves being another limitation. I wanted the music to raise more questions than it resolved."

Chacon has appeared on over eighty releases on national and international labels. He has exhibited, performed, or had works performed at LACMA, Los Angeles, CA, US; The Whitney Biennial, NY, US; Borealis Festival, Bergen, NO; SITE Santa Fe, NM, US; The Kennedy Center, Washington D.C, US, and more. As an educator, Chacon is the senior composer mentor for the Native American Composer Apprentice Project (NACAP). In 2022, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his composition *Voiceless Mass*, and in 2023 was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship.

The sculptor **Oscar Tuazon** (b. 1975, Seattle, WA, US) works with natural and industrial materials to create inventive objects, structures, and installations that can be used, occupied, or otherwise engaged by viewers. With a strong interest in and influence from architecture and minimalism, Tuazon turns both disciplines on their heads as he mangles, twists, combines, and connects steel, glass, and concrete as well as two-by-fours, tree trunks, and found objects. Tuazon produces objects and environments that draw out humanity's relationship to buildings, interior and exterior spaces, and other objects and structures.

On view in the second room, the large installation *Quonset Tent* (2016), made of aluminium, acrylic, wood, and glass, is juxtaposed with four new water paintings. Tuazon states about the works: "I conceived *Quonset Tent* as a base utilitarian structure, with all of the intelligent economy of military design. It is used in numerous ways: in temporary housing, public works, and on Antarctica, the Quonset form is efficient, designed to withstand extreme weather and winds, and simple to manufacture. It evokes a classic American west coast design. I want to design a tent platform as a structure with two states: as a skeleton, an open-air framework – a roof would have been too oppressive and would have broken the space – which can be 'permanently' installed as a space, a stage, a sculpture, and, occasionally, as an enclosed space, a tent large enough to sleep a family. Not quite architecture, it is a hybrid structure, with different things at different times. In a permanent installation it could include pier footings, a second, fixed awning roof, a wood stove in the place where the tree trunk is now. The modular system suggests different scenarios and interpretations: it is an ephemeral habitat and a temporary space to sleep."

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My new *Water Paintings* (2024) are a way of painting directly on water. Since 2016, my *Water School* project has grown to become a long term, collaborative process of working with water in a variety of specific ecological, social, and political contexts. Lately, I began searching for a form that would allow me to work with water as an artistic medium and remembered my experience as an apprentice to Peggy Skycraft, a master of the ancient craft of paper marbling. The process of floating paint on the surface of the water has the immediacy of a chemical reaction, a sculptor's way to make a painting."

Tuazon's first solo-exhibition at Galerie Eva Presenhuber took place in 2012. Between 2006 and 2013 he lived in Paris where he co-founded the collective-run artist's gallery castillo/corrales. In 2011, he designed one of the four para-pavilions at the 54th Venice Biennale. Solo-exhibitions in major museums took place at institutions including FJK3, Vienna, AT (2024); Kunst Museum Winterthur, Winterthur, CH (2023); Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Bielefeld, DE (2023); Bergen Kunsthalle Bergen, NO (2023); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, US (2016); Castro, Antiparos, GR (2015); Le Consortium, Dijon, FR (2015); Museum Ludwig, Cologne, DE (2014). He participated in group-shows at institutions including Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV, US (2022); 34th Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, BR (2021); Yuz Museum, Shanghai, CN (2018); fifth edition of Beaufort, Het Zwin, BE (2015); Arnolfini, Bristol, UK (2014); and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, DE (2013).

Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński's (b. 1980, Vienna, AT) practice spans video installation, performance, and text. Her work is research-based and influenced by Black feminist theory and practice. It addresses life in the African diaspora while developing a unique artistic methodology, oscillating between haunting and hunting, something the artist refers to as *h(a)unting*. Often working with archives, she challenges conventional boundaries between documentary and speculative narratives. In recent years, the artist started exploring breath/lessness, leading to collaborations with sound artists and musicians.

The third room shows *Respire (Liverpool)* (2023) and *Keep On Keepin' On (for Nile)* (2023), an expansive 3-screen video and sound installation (20 min loop) that was first premiered at the Liverpool Biennial in 2023. Kazeem-Kamiński states: "This work is dedicated to creating a meditative space for Black breath to expand. Individual and communal breathing is embraced here as a rhythmic, repetitive insistence on survival in a world where Black people's ability to breathe freely remains precarious. I conceived this sound installation with sound artist **Bassano Bonelli Bassano** and it tributes to Curtis Mayfield's song *Keep On Keeping On* (1971), which I refer to as a metaphor for Black life. Based on recordings of the people involved and myself, the installation creates a sonic vortex in which the breath/voices of the performers become the basis of a shared breathing space from which to think about collective and individual liberation."

On view in the last room, Kazeem-Kamiński's green neon light work *a breathing* (2024) takes up a quote by African-American theorist and writer Christina Sharpe. The neon light serves as a signal and a reminder of the centrality of breath and breathing together in African and African Diasporan liberation struggles.

Kazeem-Kamiński's works have been exhibited in solo presentations at leading institutions, including Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, DE (2024), Phileas, Vienna, AT (2024), Camera Austria Graz, AT (2022), and Kunsthalle Wien, AT (2021). In addition, she has participated in prestigious international group exhibitions at IMMA Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, IRE (2024), Liverpool Biennial, UK (2023), Art X Lagos, NRA (2023), Les Rencontres d'Arles, FR (2022), and Museum der Moderne Salzburg, AT (2021). Kazeem-Kamiński's practice has earned her numerous accolades, including the Otto Mauer Award (2023), the Art X Prize for the African Diaspora (2022), and the Camera Austria Award (2021). Her works are in international collections such as of the mumok, Vienna, AT; Belvedere, Vienna, AT, and Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Paris, FR.

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