June 11, 2021–September 18, 2022

Every Earthly Morning the Sky's Light touches Ur Life is Unprecedented in its Beauty

Precious Okoyomon

Aspen Art Museum

Preserved sound into accelerationist light
Explosions into the black inferno
the last future we all would become
the portal into
the Quadraphonic playground
Of exploding hearts, of new errant roots

PRECIOUS OKOYOMON'S *Every Earthly Morning the Sky's Light touches Ur Life is Unprecedented in its Beauty* represents the artist and poet's most ambitious installation to date. This unique eighteen-month commission at the Aspen Art Museum, organized by curator-at-large Claude Adjil, will feature the institution's rooftop reimagined with each passing season. The project furthers Okoyomon's ongoing investigation into the ways in which the miracles and terrors of our natural world have been indexed into strictly policied and racialized categories.

For the summer, Okoyomon has collaborated with local growers to construct a garden that celebrates the abundance and mutability of plant life while challenging the taxonomies we impose onto it by combining invasive plants such as Japanese knotweed and honeysuckle alongside those indigenous to the region like dandelions, mugwort, and milk thistle. The exhibition presents a major new sculpture cast in concrete titled *My heart makes my head swim (ditto, ditto battle angel)* after a line from post-colonial theorist Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*. The winged figure's features have been borrowed from the caryatids on the facade of the Our Lady of Victories Cathedral in Dakar, Senegal. Smaller ceramic angels and tiles are nestled throughout the garden to guide and ground visitors along their journey. Collectively these figures constitute an artwork titled *Ojujokuruju,* a Urhibo word from the Urhobo delta state that directly translates to past darkness and means spirit or ghost. A stream of black algae water courses through the grounds endlessly hydrating the garden. Okoyoman and jazz musician Gio Escobar of the ensemble Standing On the Corner have collaborated to produce a system of cassette tape loops burrowed into the garden that will continuously compose and recompose a chaotic randomized symphony giving voice to the universal hum of plants.

Okoyomon makes visible the geological processes and reminds us that we are constantly living in a state of rebirth and will be developing and transforming the installation over its entire eighteen-month duration, making it a live and responsive commission that will literally grow and replenish over time featuring a series of offerings with various collaborators.

To celebrate the passing of one season to the next, Okoyomon will hold services on the solstices. These rituals will focus on self-fragilization, the miracles of ecological terror, and the importance of building new portals.

LIST OF WORKS

My heart makes my head swim (ditto, ditto battle angel)
2021. Concrete, wire, blood

Ojujokuruju
2021. Red clay, black glaze, wire

To see the earth before the end of the world
2021. Clay

MYSTERIUM PHYTOGEOGRAPHICUM
2021. Audio
Gio Escobar and Precious Okoyomon

PRECIOUS OKOYOMON (b. 1993) is a poet and artist living in New York City. They have had institutional solo exhibitions at the LUMA Westbau in Zurich (2018), the MMK in Frankfurt (2020), Performance Space New York (2021), as well as major performances commissioned by the Serpentine Galleries, London (2019) and the Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2019). Their second book *But Did U Die?* is forthcoming from Serpentine and Wonder Press in 2021. They are the recipient of the 2021 Frieze Artist Award.

Standing On The Corner is an Earth-based art ensemble founded in 2016 by Shamel Cee Mystery, aka Gio Escobar, that functions best in Brooklyn, New York. Inspired by, made for, and consisting of the resilience and upheaval of all people of the African diaspora, Standing On The Corner thrives in fugitivity. They can appear on any particular night as the beat of one drum, as an orchestra of 30, or as a ghost entirely, but are always on the run. The ensemble produces musical, visual, and experiential works that equate hyperlocal incidence to cosmological wisdom. Visiting sites of emotional resonance under the weight of subjective histories and traumas, the art ensemble seeks to uncover the mysteries and the ghosts of hidden truths through focused interpretation.

READING LIST

Black and Blur
by Fred Moten

Dear Science and Other Stories
by Katherine McKittrick

How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human
by Eduardo Kohn

M *Archive: After the End of the World*
by Alexis Pauline Gumbs

The Matrixial Gaze
by Bracha L. Ettinger

Rare Plants of Colorado
by Colorado Native Plant Society

Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals
by Alexis Pauline Gumbs

Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939
by Georges Bataille

Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals
by Saidiya Hartman

Words in Motion: Toward a Global Lexicon
Edited by Carol Gluck and Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing

PLANTS

Achillea millefolium
Achnatherum hymenoides
Agastache foeniculum ‘Blue Fortune’
Ajuga reptans
Alcea rosea ‘Blacknight’
Alchemilla mollis ‘Thriller’
Amelanchier spp.
Amsonia hubrichtii
Anemone canadensis
Anemone tomentosa ‘Robustissima’
Anthyrium filix-femina
Aquilegia alpina
Aquilegia caerulea
Aquilegia canadensis ‘Little Lanterns’
Arabis Spp.
Artemisia dracunculus
Artemisia ludoviciana
Asclepias fascicularis
Asclepias tuberosa
Bouteloua gracilis ‘ Blonde Ambition’
Calamagrostis Acutiflora ‘Karl Foerster’
Calendula officinalis ‘Radio’
Campanula rotundifolia
Clematis ‘Jackmanii Superba’
Clematis spp
Clematis terniflora
Convolvulus sabatius
Convolvulus sabatius
Coreopsis lanceolata
Cornus sericea ‘Artic Fire’
Corydalis flexuosa ‘Porcelain Blue’
Corylus avellana ‘Contorta’
Dicentra spectabilis ‘Valentine’
Digitalis purpurea ‘Camelot Cream’
Digitalis purpurea ‘Camelot Lavender’
Digitalis purpurea ‘Camelot Mix’
Digitalis purpurea ‘Camelot Rose’
Echinacea purpurea ‘Magnus’
Erigeron compositus
Erigeron divergens
Eriogonum grande rubescens “Red Buckwheat”
Gaillardia aristata
Geranium x ‘Roazanne’
Gleditsia spp.
Helianthus ‘Aurora Gold’
Helianthus ‘Red Courtesan’
Helianthus annuus
Iris siberica ‘Caesars Brother’
Juniperus horizontalis
Lathyrus odoratus
Liatris punctata
Lonicera spp
Lonicera x heckrottii ‘Goldflame’
Lotus berthelotti
Lupinus polyphyllus ‘Gallery Blue’
Lupinus polyphyllus ‘Gallery White’
Lupinus polyphyllus ‘Gallery Yellow’
Mahona repens
Maianthemum racemosum
Melissa officinalis
Mentha × piperita
Monarda fistulosa
Mugo spp
Nepeta Faassenii ‘Six Hills Giant’
Oenothera ‘Rosea’
Oenothera macrocarpa
Oxalis acetosella
Penstemon “Elfin Pink’
Phlox subulata
Picea abies ‘Pendula’
Polygonum orientale
Populus deltoides
Potentilla verna
Pueraria montana
Ratibida columnifera
Ribes uva-crispa
Rubus spp
Rudbeckia fulgida ‘Goldstrum’
Sagina subulata
Sagina subulata ‘Aurea’
Salix babylonica
Salvia officinalis
Salvia rosmarinus
Schizachyrium scoparium
Sedum spp.
Solidago rugosa ‘Fireworks’
Sporobolus heterolepis
Stachys byzantina ‘ Silver Carpet’
Thus typhina
Thymus pseudolanuginosus
Tragopogon porrifolius
Verbena lilacina ‘De La Mina’
Veronica pectinata
Waldsteinia ternatap
Zinnia spp.

ABOUT THE ASPEN ART MUSEUM

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums in 1979, the Aspen Art Museum is a thriving and globally engaged non-collecting contemporary art museum. Following the 2014 opening of the museum's facility designed by Pritzker Prize–winning architect Shigeru Ban, the AAM enjoys increased attendance, renewed civic interaction, and international media attention. In July 2017, the AAM was one of ten institutions to receive the United States' National Medal for Museum and Library Services for its educational outreach to rural communities in Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley and its fostering of learning partnerships with civic and cultural partners within a 100-mile radius of the museum's Aspen location.

Aspen Art Museum
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Aspen, Colorado 81611

aspenartmuseum.org
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Hours
Tuesday–Sunday, 10 AM–6 PM
Closed Mondays

Admission to the AAM is free courtesy of Amy and John Phelan.

Every Earthly Morning the Sky's Light touches Ur Life is Unprecedented in its Beauty is curated by Claude Adjil, AAM Curator at Large.

Landscape design by Bluegreen: Rio Crandall and Preston Linck

3D printing courtesy of Anderson Ranch: Leah Aegerter

3D modeling by Jefferson Wenzel

Sculpture fabrication by Jonathan Hagman, Eric Angus, Ryan Baker, and Charlie Childress

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