

S.M.A.K.

PRESS RELEASE

Grace Ndiritu

Healing The Museum

1.Apr.2023 – 10.Sep.2023



Grace Ndiritu works as a visual artist, filmmaker, activist and shaman. Both inside and outside the museum, she employs alternative methodologies for sharing, living together, caring, healing and reconciliation, with the aim of breaking the established cultural and social order and proposing new models for how to live.

Healing The Museum is the first mid-career retrospective dedicated to Grace Ndiritu's diverse artistic practice. Performance, film, shamanism, social actions, publications, textile work and research into museum collections are all part of this multi-layered exhibition project, in which she argues for the re-energization and ethicalization of the museum space and, by extension, the whole of society.

Ndiritu has conceived the exhibition for S.M.A.K. as a holistic journey through the museum galleries. Through a 'spiritual overlay' that follows the direction of the four cardinal winds, she introduces visitors to urgent themes along the way, including community, issues relating to indigenous peoples, ecology, blackness and feminism. The journey ends at *The Temple*, an architectural structure intended for a critical collection presentation but also a spiritual space for encounter, transformation and healing.

Healing The Museum is part of Grace Ndiritu's long-term research project of the same name, which she initiated in 2012 as a response to the spiritual decline in cultural institutions. It also encompasses Ndiritu's artist residency at S.M.A.K. Under the title

'A Spiritual Inventory of A 21st Century Museum', the artist has spent the past year reflecting with staff on how to shape the museum of the future.

The exhibition will be followed by the first monograph dedicated to Grace Ndiritu's work, published in collaboration with Motto Books.

Image: Grace Ndiritu © 'Labour: Birth of a New Museum', shamanic performance inside The Temple, 2021, Nottingham Contemporary, photo credit Scene Photography

Biography

Grace Ndiritu (b. 1982, Birmingham) is a travelling British-Kenyan artist based in Brussels and London. Her projects have recently been featured in *The Guardian*, *Artforum*, *Art Review*, *TIME* and in Phaidon's *The 21st Century Art Book*. Her work can be found in museum collections such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), The British Council (London), LACMA (Los Angeles) and The Modern Art Museum (Warsaw). The artist's writings have been published by the Migros Museum, Bergen Kunsthall, Whitechapel Gallery, *The Paris Review*, MIT Press, the art magazine *Metropolis M* and Oxford University Press. Ndiritu's archive of 'handmade' videos, textiles, paintings, photography, shamanic performances and films have been exhibited widely, including at The British Art Show (2021 to 2023), Wellcome Collection, London (2022), Gropius Bau, Berlin (2022), Kunsthall Gent (2021), Nottingham Contemporary, UK (2021) and at international film festivals such as the 72nd Berlinale, FID Marseilles and BFI London Film Festival (2022). She won the Jarman Award in 2022, presented in association with Film London.

From 17 February 2023 to 7 January 2024, Grace Ndiritu presents a major collection exhibition at FOMU (Fotomuseum Antwerp) entitled *Grace Ndiritu Reimagines The FOMU Collection*.