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Larry Achiampong: OPEN SEASON
September 16–October 30, 2016

RELATED EVENTS

Film screening and artist talk:

Friday, September 16, 2016, 7pm
Black Cinema House

Opening reception with artist performance:

Wednesday, September 21, 2016, 6–8pm

Logan Center Gallery

Gallery Hours:

Tue–Sat, 9am–9pm

Sun, 11am–9pm



Larry Achiampong, *Sunday's Best*, 2016, courtesy of the artist.

Logan Center Exhibitions presents first solo show of new and recent works by London-based artist Larry Achiampong
Exhibition premieres a newly commissioned video work exploring belief systems within the diaspora

CHICAGO (August 2016) – Logan Center Exhibitions presents **Larry Achiampong: OPEN SEASON**, the first US solo exhibition by London-based artist Larry Achiampong (b. 1984) featuring works from the past three years. The exhibition includes a new series of works titled *#OPENSEASON* as well as the newly commissioned video piece *Sunday's Best*. The exhibition will be on view at the Logan Center Gallery from September 16 through October 30, 2016.

Working across sound, video, performance, and installation, Larry Achiampong explores shifting notions of identity and belonging in our post-digital age. At the heart of the Achiampong's practice is an exploration of the different cultural spheres that he inhabits as a British-Ghanaian artist, deeply entrenched in the oftentimes anonymous and fluid citizenry of the digital realm. Mining a plethora of images, sounds, and texts from his personal archives and those freely available on digital search engines, social media platforms, and virtual environments including Facebook, YouTube, and Wikipedia, Achiampong investigates the ways in which mass information sharing have afforded multiple histories and cultural identities to emerge.

"Larry Achiampong is one of the most exciting emerging artists working with new media and sound today," says Yesomi Umolu, Logan Center Exhibitions Curator. "We are delighted to offer an ambitious presentation of the artist's work to date and to introduce him to audiences in Chicago, especially on the South Side, where the histories of countercultural movements and aesthetic and music innovation resonate deeply with Achiampong's practice."

OPEN SEASON focuses on works that address forms of collectivity and solidarity in our contemporary times. The exhibition premieres the newly commissioned video work *Sunday's Best*, 2016, which considers how belief systems within the diaspora are inflected by colonial histories. The work is a confluence of the vivid sounds and images of praise and worship sessions in a community church married with the stark interiors of a traditional church. Documented across a number of sites in London, *Sunday's Best* maps out a narrative of coming to terms with the incongruence of faith practices that straddle western and non-western influences.

Delving into the virtual spaces of everyday life and drawing on the artist's personal experiences, the exhibition also includes a new series of works titled #OPENSEASON that are based on Achiampong's ongoing series of blackboard drawings. Remixing hash tags and quotes from various social media feeds into poignant and sometimes irreverent statements, these handwritten works tease out the ironies of socio-political solidarity forged through fleeting digital interactions.

Also on view is the expansive sculptural installation *Battalion*, 2014-present, a collection of salvaged skateboards repainted by the artist in brightly hued abstract patterns. Here Achiampong expands his use of found materials to speak to the different subcultures that inform his work. *Battalion* also suggests an occupation of the gallery with its collective body finding counterparts in the religious and virtual communities represented elsewhere in the show.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Black Cinema House will host a film screening and artist talk on Friday, September 16 at 7pm. The event will include a conversation with artists Achiampong and David Blandy and moderated by Yesomi Umolu, Logan Center Exhibitions Curator. The screening will present two films in the *Finding Fanon* trilogy (2015–present), inspired by the lost plays of the radical philosopher, writer, and humanist Franz Fanon (1925–1961). Throughout the trilogy, Achiampong and Blandy negotiate Fanon's commentary on race and decolonization in the early 20th century, including its intersection with migration, industrialization, and socio-economic disparities in our globalized and technologically driven society. *Finding Fanon 1* uses still and moving images drawn from personal archives, news media, music videos, and Google searches to reveal how the artist's familial histories intertwine with British colonialism. Set within the simulated environment of the in-game video editor of *Grand Theft Auto 5*, *Finding Fanon 2* combines art-house cinema with digital culture's Machinima to explore the postcolonial condition.

Larry Achiampong: OPEN SEASON is presented by Logan Center Exhibitions and curated by Yesomi Umolu, Exhibitions Curator. Additional support provided by Arts Council England and the British Council.

The exhibition will be on view September 16 until October 30, 2016 at Logan Center Gallery, located at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E 60th St in Chicago. Exhibitions are always free and open to the public. For more information and related programming, visit arts.uchicago.edu/logan-center/logan-center-exhibitions or like Logan Center Exhibitions on Facebook.

RELATED EVENTS

***Finding Fanon* Film Screening and Artist Talk**

Friday, September 16, 7pm

Black Cinema House, 7200 S Kimbark Ave, Chicago

This screening of two films in the *Finding Fanon* (2015–present) trilogy will be followed by a conversation with artists Larry Achiampong and David Blandy, moderated by Yesomi Umolu, Logan Center Exhibitions Curator.

This event is presented by Logan Center Exhibitions and Black Cinema House, and co-sponsored by the Nicholson Center for British Studies. Additional support provided by Arts Council England and the British Council.

Opening reception with artist performance

Wednesday, September 21, 6–8pm

Logan Center Gallery, 915 E 60th St, Chicago

The opening reception of *Larry Achiampong: OPEN SEASON* will feature a live, in-gallery performance by Achiampong that draws out a relationship between aspects of history embedded in various audio samples and the future worlds of videogame visuals.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Larry Achiampong's solo and collaborative projects have been exhibited, performed, and presented at the EVA International, Limerick; Tate Britain and Tate Modern, London; Hauptbahnhof (dOCUMENTA 13), Kassel; The British Film Institute, London; Modern Art Oxford, Oxford; New Art Exchange, Nottingham; SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin; Bokoor African Popular Music Archives Foundation, Accra; and The Mistake Room, Los Angeles. Recent residencies include Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle; Praksis, Oslo; Sound & Music and The British Library, London, and Wysing Arts Center, Cambridge. Achiampong completed a BA in Mixed Media Fine Art at University of Westminster (2005) and an MA in Sculpture at Slade School of Fine Art (2008). Achiampong lives and works in London.

ABOUT YESOMI UMOLU, LOGAN CENTER EXHIBITIONS CURATOR

Yesomi Umolu is Exhibitions Curator at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago, where she is also a lecturer in the humanities division. Specializing in global contemporary art and spatial practices, Umolu recently curated *So-called Utopias* (2015) at the Logan Center Gallery. Prior to joining the Logan, Umolu was Assistant Curator at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at MSU where she curated *Material Effects: Contemporary Art from West Africa and the Diaspora* (2015-6), *John Akomfrah: Imaginary Possessions* (2014) and *The Land Grant: Forest Law* (2014) with Ursula Biemann and Paulo Tavares. Umolu was previously Curatorial Fellow for Visual Arts at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis where she curated *The Museum of Non Participation: The New Deal* (2013) featuring works by Karen Mirza and Brad Butler. Umolu has held curatorial positions at the 8th edition of the European biennial for contemporary art Manifesta and the Serpentine Gallery, London. Her writing has appeared in numerous catalogues and journals, including *Art in America*, *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism* and the Studio Museum in Harlem's *Studio* magazine. Umolu received an MA with honors in Architectural Design from the University of Edinburgh and an MA with Distinction in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London. She is a 2016 recipient of an Andy Warhol Foundation Curatorial Fellowship.

ABOUT LOGAN CENTER EXHIBITIONS

Logan Center Exhibitions presents international contemporary art programming at the Logan Center Gallery and throughout the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago. Reflecting the spirit of inquiry at the university, Logan Center Exhibitions focuses on open, collaborative and process-based approaches to cultural production.

Working closely with artists, students, scholars and community members, Logan Center Exhibitions presents innovative exhibitions by emerging and established artists; supports ambitious new commissions and research projects; disseminates knowledge through publications; and facilitates connections through talks and other public programs.

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