

**Grada Kilomba, *Illusions Vol. I and Vol. II*, 6 February – 24 March, 2019**

Wilfried Lentz is pleased to present *Illusions Vol. I and Vol. II*, two installations shown over 3 weeks, by Grada Kilomba (b. 1968 Lisbon; lives and works in Berlin). In her *Illusions* series, Kilomba interrupts the white cube, revealing the suppressed history of colonialism and its traumatic legacy. With each volume of her two channel video installation Kilomba retells Greek myths, gradually turning metaphors upside down and unpacking a deep analysis of the oppressive racialized and gendered social relations that form their structure. Applying the African oral tradition of storytelling, using strong elements of choreography, theatre, performance, music composition and film, Kilomba raises the questions: How stories are told, why they are told, and who can tell them? *Illusions Vol. I and Vol. II* address the myths of Narcissus and Echo, and Oedipus.

*Illusions Vol. I, Narcissus and Echo*, 2017, was commissioned by the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, and is dedicated to the politics of invisibility and misrepresentation. Kilomba recreates the story of Narcissus as a metaphor for a society which has not resolved its colonial history, and takes itself and its own image as the only objects of love. Thus, Narcissus is enchanted by his own reflection on the surface of the lake while Echo is reduced to endlessly repeating Narcissus' words. Kilomba questions, how do we break out of this colonial and patriarchal mould?

*Illusions Vol. II, Oedipus*, 2018, was commissioned by the 10th Berlin Biennale, and is on view here from March 4<sup>th</sup>. Dedicated to the politics of violence, the work references the myth of Oedipus who was predestined to kill his own father. In the story the King, fearing this prophecy, sends his own child to be killed in a field. In referencing this myth, Kilomba explores the role that destiny can play for those embedded within a system of reproductive and cyclical oppression.

Grada Kilomba is an interdisciplinary artist and theorist whose work focuses on memory, trauma, race, gender, and the post-colonial condition. She holds a Doctorate in Philosophy, and has been a guest professor at several international universities. In her work, she creates a hybrid space between the academic and the artistic languages, by bringing text into performance, and giving body, voice and image to her own writings. She entered the contemporary art world in 2016, when she was invited for the 32nd São Paulo Biennial - expanding her practice to film and installation. Kilomba's work has been described to have the powerful beauty of touching 'the colonial wound' with a surgical precision, 'bringing a new, experimental and compelling voice to contemporary art and discourse' (ARTEBrasileiros 2016).

Her recent solo exhibitions include "Secrets to Tell" at The Power Plant, Toronto (2018) and MAAT, Lisbon (2017-18) and "Speaking the unspeakable" at Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg (2018). Her work has been featured in major international events and group exhibitions such as 10th Berlin Biennale (2018); Documenta 14, Kassel (2017); 32nd Biennale of São Paulo (2016); Biennale Balticum, Rauma, Finland (2016), Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam and Bozar Museum, Brussels, among others. In 2017, her work *Illusions Vol. I, Narcissus and Echo* was the winner of the Grant Award for Emerging Talents by International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Kilomba's upcoming shows includes: Kadist, Paris; Pavilion Contemporary Art, Milan; Guggenheim Museum, New York - as part of the 5 invited artists in dialogue with the Hugo Boss Prize winner Simone Leigh's exhibition; and Bienal Sud America, Buenos Aires. She will also hold solo exhibitions at the Pinacoteca Museum, São Paulo; and at the Bildmuseet, Umea, Sweden.

The opening takes place on Thursday 7 February from 6–8pm and coincides with Patricia Kaersenhout's show *Objects of Love and Desire* on the 2nd floor. *Vol. I* will run from the opening Thursday February 7th (preview a day earlier on the 6th) till March 3, and *Vol. II* from March 4 till March 24, 2019. The gallery is open Friday through Sunday from 1pm–6pm and by appointment. Extended opening times during Rotterdam Art Week Wednesday and Thursday 6-7 February from 10am - 6pm. For further information and visuals, contact the gallery: [office@wilfriedlantz.com](mailto:office@wilfriedlantz.com) or +31(0)104126459.