

# KADIST

NECTAR

## A solo exhibition by Xaviera Simmons

A collaboration with Afro Charities, Baltimore (United States)

KADIST Paris  
May 5th - July 24th, 2022

Xaviera Simmons, *Sundown (Number Fifty)*, courtesy the artist and David Castillo Gallery with images from the *AFRO American Newspapers Archives*, 2022.



KADIST presents *Nectar*, a solo exhibition by New York-based artist Xaviera Simmons. For her debut exhibition in France, Simmons has created new photographic, painting and video works that draw upon the *AFRO American Newspapers'* massive and pertinent collection of historic images.

Simmons's work contextualizes our historical and contemporary engagements with the systems, ideas, people and architecture that undergird American empire building as a seemingly ever forward process of expansion. While the *AFRO's* images offer life sustaining nuances and glimpses of viable paths forward, Simmons's new works use the subtle textures of these source images to highlight the inherent tensions of seeking autonomy within systems built on historical amnesia.

Continuously drawing upon the brief history of photography and its uses today, Simmons's images, animated videos and text and color based paintings lean into photographic fundamentals like the rule of thirds, while using color, pattern and performance to create abstracted environments that are anchored by material reality. The subjects in Simmons's works alternate between offering a direct gaze and refusing to be seen, underscoring their agency within the frame.

As she arranges a nuanced narrative where harm, pleasure, refrain, spiritual engagement, resistance and repair are foregrounded, she never loses sight of the fact that the United States and its European models base their empires on the premise of white supremacy. For this show, her works revel in the tonal qualities of black and white, while her superposition of archives, human figures, text, physical and virtual landscapes hint at the stratified images that the *AFRO's* photographers and illustrators would enhance by hand, adding detail and contrast to their documentation of everyday life.

Simmons's engagement with the archive highlights its potential as a repository of language that we can draw from as we propose new models of repair. In this alliance, the archive is not an object of the past, nor a reflecting mirror of a present situation, but is radically drawn towards a yet to be articulated future.

This project is a collaboration between Simmons, KADIST and Afro Charities, a US-based non-profit organization that manages the 130-year-old *AFRO American Newspapers'* archives and produces programming inspired by the collection.

The exhibition is supported by Villa Albertine and the Ford Foundation. Additional support was provided by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Arts.

In collaboration with:

**AFRO**  
CHARITIES



CULTURAL SERVICES  
FRENCH EMBASSY  
IN THE UNITED STATES



**AMBASSADE  
DE FRANCE  
AUX ÉTATS-UNIS**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*



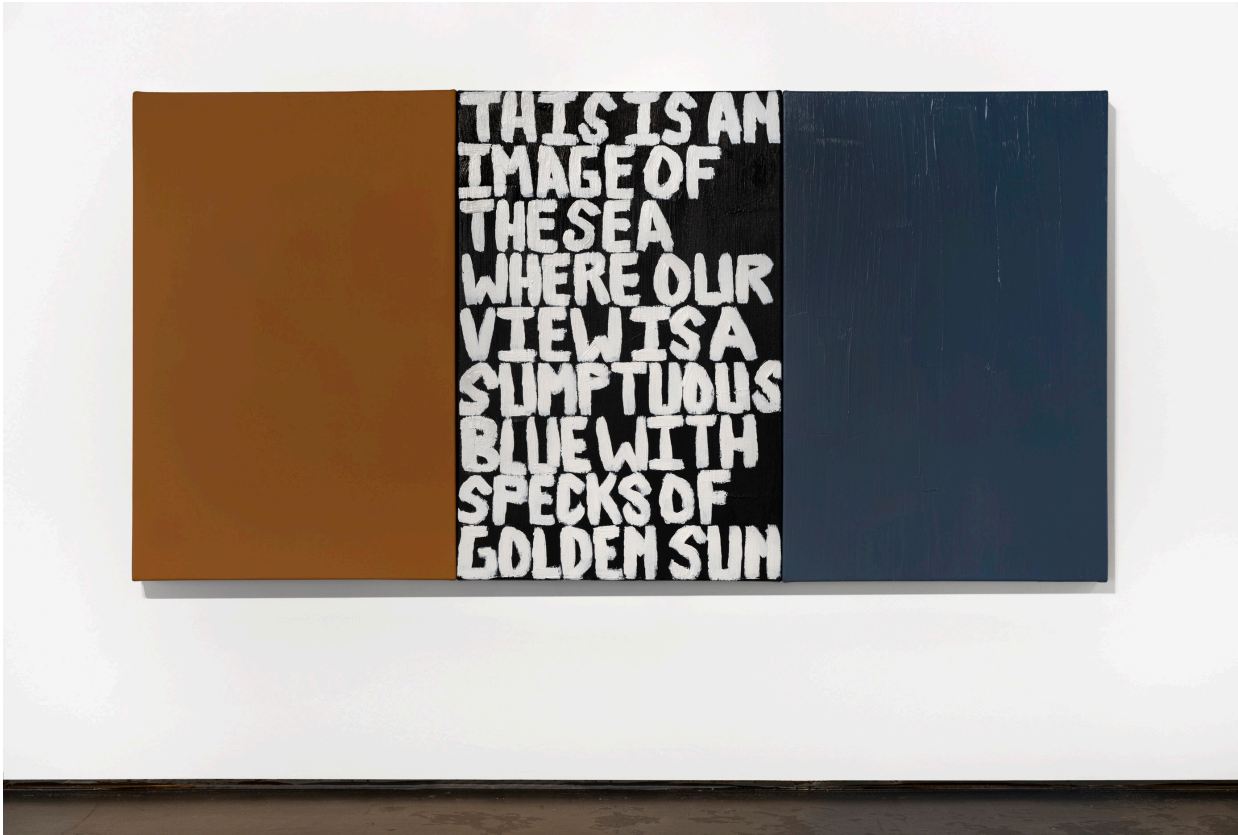


Xaviera Simmons, *The structure the labor the foundation the escape the pause*, 2020.  
Courtesy the artist and Socrates Sculpture Park.



Xaviera Simmons, *Sundown (Number Twenty)*, 2019.  
Courtesy the artist and KADIST Collection





Xaviera Simmons, *Triptych Five (In the dim Light)*, 2021.  
Photography by Zachary Balber. Courtesy the artist and David Castillo Gallery



Desert X installation view of  
Xaviera Simmons, *Because You  
Know Ultimately We Will Band A  
Militia*, 2021.

Photography by Lance Gerber.  
Courtesy the artist and Desert X.

Portrait by John Edmonds, 2021



Xaviera Simmons' sweeping practice of photography, painting, video, sound, sculpture, text and installation engages the construction of landscape, language, and the complex histories of the United States and its continuing empire building internally and on a global scale. Simmons received her BFA from Bard College (2004) after spending two years on a walking pilgrimage retracing the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade with Buddhist Monks.

She completed the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program in Studio Art (2005) while simultaneously completing a two-year actor-training conservatory with The Maggie Flanigan Studio, NY. Simmons is a recipient of Socrates Sculpture Park's Artist Award (2019) Agnes Gund's Art for Justice Award (2018), as well as Denniston Hills' Distinguished Performance Artist Award (2018). In Spring 2020 she was awarded The Charles Flint Kellogg Award in Arts and Letters from Bard College.

The artist has exhibitions, performances and projects slated to open globally through 2023.

Main exhibitions and projects include Sundown at David Castillo Gallery, Miami, "The Restless Earth" curated by Massimiliano Gioni, at the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. (2019); Miami-Dade County Art in Public Places Commission (2018-2019), among many others.

Recent solo exhibitions include "Convene" at Sculpture Center, New York; "Overlay" at Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University; "The Gold Miner's Mission to Dwell on the Tide Line" at The Museum of Modern Art- The Modern Window, New York; and "CODED" at The Kitchen, New York.

Current and recent museum group exhibitions include The Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro; MassArt, Boston; The Renaissance Society, Chicago; Seattle Art Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Nasher Museum of Art, Durham; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; Prospect.4, New Orleans; Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan; Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Cincinnati Art Museum; Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, among others.

Simmons' work has been featured and reviewed in many publications over the years, most recently in ArtNews, The Art Newspaper, Artnet News, Artforum, Hyperallergic, New York Magazine, Bloomberg, Paper Magazine, The New York Times and others.

Simmons' works are in major museum and private collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Deutsche Bank, New York; UBS, New York; The Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Agnes Gund Art Collection, New York; The De La Cruz Collection, Miami, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The Studio Museum in Harlem; ICA Miami; Perez Art Museum Miami; The Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro; The Nasher Museum of Art, Durham; The High Museum, Atlanta; among others. She has held teaching positions at Harvard University, Yale University and Columbia University.

For more works, see [here](#).

Afro Charities is a US-based non-profit organization that manages the 130-year-old AFRO American Newspapers' archives and produces artistic and educational projects inspired by the collection.

The *AFRO American Newspapers* has been chronicling world history from a Black perspective since its founding in 1892. With editions across the eastern seaboard of the United States, and European bureaus during World War II, the archives' geographical reach extends well beyond its home city of Baltimore, Maryland.

This collection represents one of the best preserved Black newspaper archives in the country, comprising approximately three million photographs, thousands of letters, rare audio recordings, and other ephemera related to the publishing business. In 2022, the AFRO is celebrating its 130th year of continuous publishing.

Afro Charities works with the *AFRO American Newspapers* to maintain its archives and to increase public access to this collection. In addition to producing artistic and educational programming, Afro Charities is currently re-developing an abandoned building in the heart of Old West Baltimore to become the permanent home and research center for the *AFRO* Archives. They are working to ensure that future generations will have access to the critically important history documented in this collection.

Learn more at [www.afrocharities.org](http://www.afrocharities.org).



Virtual rendering of the future Afro Charities building's exterior. Courtesy of Afro Charities





*Diaspora at Home*, 2022, KADIST, Paris. Courtesy Nidhal Chamekh and KADIST.  
Photo: Aurélien Mole.

KADIST believes contemporary artists make an important contribution to a progressive society, their work often addressing key issues of our time. KADIST, a non-profit organization dedicated to exhibiting the work of artists represented in its collection, encourages this engagement and affirms contemporary art's relevance within social discourse. KADIST's local hubs in Paris and San Francisco present exhibitions and events, and organize residencies and educational initiatives, as well as producing projects online and via social media. Concurrently, KADIST is actively establishing networks across five areas – North America, Europe, Middle East & Africa, Asia and Latin America – inviting new artists into the collection and initiating collaborative programs, especially exhibitions with museums of each region. Together, they aim at facilitating new connections across cultures and creating vibrant conversations about contemporary art and ideas.

## KADIST, PARIS

19 bis-21 rue des Trois Frères  
F-75018

Metro stations:

Abbesses (12), Anvers (2)

## WEB

[www.kadist.org](http://www.kadist.org)

Facebook: @kadistonline

Instagram: @kadistkadist

Twitter: @kadistkadist

Vimeo: [vimeo.com/kadist](https://vimeo.com/kadist)

## PRESS CONTACT

Juliette Delpech  
[j.delpech@lartenplus.com](mailto:j.delpech@lartenplus.com)  
01 45 53 62 74