



**University Art Gallery**  
712 Arts Plaza  
Claire Trevor School of the Arts  
University of California, Irvine  
Irvine, CA 92697-2775  
(949) 824-9854  
gallery@uci.edu  
uag.arts.uci.edu

Tues.–Sat., 12–6 p.m.

## PRESS PREVIEW KIT



Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Detail of *White Zombie*, 2020, Image courtesy of the artist.

## The Intimacies Between Continents

Curated by Coleman Collins

Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) Gallery

On View: Feb. 8–Apr 5, 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday, Feb 8, 2025 - 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**IRVINE, Calif.** — The University of California, Irvine's CAC Gallery is pleased to present *The Intimacies Between Continents*, curated by Coleman Collins, featuring the work of Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Danielle Dean and Africanus Okokon

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*The Intimacies Between Continents* brings together the work of Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Danielle Dean and Africanus Okokon — three contemporary artists who work across video, sculpture and installation to unearth the often forgotten material traces of the historical processes that produced global capitalism. The show borrows its title from *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015) by Lisa Lowe, in which she ties seemingly private, individualized domestic tranquility to broader systems of extraction. In contradistinction to the dominant notion of intimacy as “being personally intimate”, (i.e. an emotional, typically romantic relationship between two people within/and in relation to bourgeois domesticity and marriage), Lowe associates the word as “residual” and “emergent” forms of connection: implied but less visible forms of alliance and affinity among variously colonized peoples upon which that dominant mode depends.

We might think of the difference as a matter of distance. Seen from a certain angle, the story of modernity is one of distance, of vast distances being collapsed, a story of obstacles overcome: space and time gradually made irrelevant by technological progress. Past events are rendered eternally visible on screens viewed from the comfort of one’s own couch. Goods — manufactured, assembled, and sold on disparate continents — delivered with the merest gesture, a flick of a finger. These activities necessarily occur within the home, the place where intimacy must occur, between two lovingly possessive individuals. They nestle against each other, satisfied.

All this is further structured by desire, an acquisitive desire: to have and to hold. To possess. To defend, because such bliss is invariably fragile. The artists in this show shed light on how these dominant forms of intimacy and their attendant comforts of consumption are materially reproduced. They re-enact the construction of trading castles and re-purpose the sea chests that conveyed goods from continent to continent. They index the raw materials — rice, salt, sugar, gold — whose fevered exchange ushered in the modern era. Collectively, the works in this exhibition scrutinize the racialized and gendered structures of economic power that undergird idealized domesticity — and in so doing, perform and instantiate an emergent intimacy.

The exhibition is part of Poetic Justice, a programming initiative and cluster hiring program established as part of the University of California, Irvine’s Black Thriving Initiative. This installation is made possible with the generous support of UC Irvine Claire Trevor School of the Arts, UC Irvine Jack and Shanaz Langson Institute and Museum of California Art and Patrick Collins and Liv Barrett.

### **Artist Bios:**

**Sula Bermudez-Silverman’s** sculptural practice is guided by the contextual origins and contemporary trajectories of her materials. With intensive research, she delves into mythological and historical narratives to examine their imprint. Materials such as sugar, salt, glass and resin often serve as physical homonyms, altering motifs such as the “ball and claw” through color, scale and translucency. Throughout Bermudez-Silverman’s catalog, objects that operate as a physical threshold — windows, saddles, staircases — are reintroduced to connect disparate epistemologies and question how history is camouflaged into the subconscious. She received her B.A. in Studio Art from Bard College and her M.F.A. in Sculpture from Yale School of Art in 2018. Solo exhibitions include *Bad Luck Rock*, Josh Lilley (London, 2023); *Ichthyocentaur*, Matthew Brown (Los Angeles, 2023); *Here Be Dragons*, Micki Meng (San Francisco, 2022); *Sighs and Leers, and Crocodile Tears*, Murmurs (Los Angeles, 2021); *Neither Fish, Flesh, nor Fowl*, California African American Museum (Los Angeles, 2020). She has also exhibited at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo; Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich.



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**Danielle Dean** works with archives, video, performance, social practice, sculpture, and drawing. Dean investigates the recursive loops between the circulation of ideas and the material reproduction of global capitalism. Operating across media and with a variety of collaborators and participants, her work examines the fault lines within this seemingly closed circuit. Dean received an MFA from California Institute of the Arts and is an alumna of the Whitney Independent Study Program. Recently completed projects include new commissions for Mercer Union, Toronto (2024), a solo show at Tate Britain, London (2022), and Performa, New York (2021). Other recent solo shows include: *Long Low Line*, Times Square Arts, NY (2023); *Bazar*, ICA San Diego (2023); and *True Red Ruin*, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (2018). She participated in the Whitney Biennial in New York (2022). Group exhibitions include: *This Land*, at The Contemporary Austin (2023); *Freedom of Movement*, at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, Netherlands (2019); *The Centre Cannot Hold*, Lafayette Anticipation, Paris (2018); and *Made in LA*, at The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2014).

**Africanus Okokon** works with moving image, performance, painting, assemblage, collage, sound and installation to explore dialectics of forgetting and remembrance in relation to shared, cultural and personal mediated histories. He received a B.F.A. in Film/Animation/Video from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in 2013 and an M.F.A. in Painting/Printmaking from Yale University in 2020. He is an assistant professor in Film/Animation/Video at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). Africanus has screened films at various festivals including the BlackStar Film Festival, the Chicago Underground Film Festival, True/False Film Festival, Ottawa International Animation Film Festival, the Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation and the Chale Wote Street Art Festival. His work has been exhibited at von ammon co., Washington D.C.; Sean Kelly Gallery, Los Angeles; Helena Anrather, NYC; Microscope Gallery, NY; Print Center New York; Perrotin Los Angeles; and The Kitchen, NY.

### **Curator Bio:**

**Coleman Collins** is an interdisciplinary artist, writer, and researcher whose work explores notions of diaspora in relation to technological methods of transmission, translation, copying, and reiteration. His most recent projects examine the connections between things-in-the-world and their digital approximations, paying particular attention to the ways in which real and virtual spaces are socially produced. Working across sculpture, video, photography, and text, Collins' practice attempts to locate a synthesis between seemingly opposed terms: subject and object; object and image; original and duplicate; freedom and captivity. Recent exhibitions and screenings have taken place at Ehrlich Steinberg, Los Angeles; Herald Street, London; Soldes, Los Angeles; the Palestine Festival of Literature, Jerusalem/Ramallah; Larder, Los Angeles; Hesse Flatow, New York; Brief Histories, New York; Carré d'Art, Nîmes; and the Kunsthalle Wien in Vienna. His work is in the permanent collection of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. He received an MFA from UCLA in 2018, and was a 2017 resident at the Skowhegan School for Painting and Sculpture. In 2019, he participated in the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Art at the University of California, Irvine.



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### **About Poetic Justice**

Focusing on the nexus between UCI and California’s cultural economy, Poetic Justice supports the creative talents of Black Southern Californians, students, faculty, staff and other system-impacted people on UCI’s campus and beyond, promoting campus- and societal-level visions of reparative justice.

**UCI** Claire Trevor  
School of the Arts

Please follow our Instagram [@uag\\_ucirvine](#) for updates  
For questions: [gallery@uci.edu](mailto:gallery@uci.edu)

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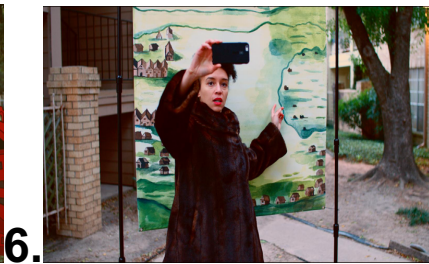


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1. **Africanus Okokon, *Nsibidi Loops (Plenty Money)*, 2024**, Two channel video, animation, sound, found 19th century Ghanaian sea chest, 24½ x 37 x 41 inches, Courtesy of the artist and von ammon co, Washington DC
2. **Africanus Okokon, Installation image of *Second Contact (Cage of Brass)*, 2024**, Brass, glass, found 19th century Ghanaian sea chest, 26½ x 30¼ x 7 inches, Courtesy of the artist and von ammon co, Washington DC and **Africanus Okokon, *Bonny and Blithe, Good and Gay*, 2024**, Brass, glass, found 19th century Ghanaian sea chest, 32 x 31 x 9½ inches, Courtesy of the artist and von ammon co, Washington DC
3. **Africanus Okokon, Detail of *The Breadwinner*, 2024**, Collaged found vinyl billboards. silkscreen and inkjet on collaged found vinyl billboards, 135½ x 84 inches, Courtesy of the artist and von ammon co, Washington DC
4. **Africanus Okokon, Installation image of *Nsibidi Loops (Plenty Money)*, 2024**, Two channel video, animation, sound, found 19th century Ghanaian sea chest, 24½ x 37 x 41 inches, Courtesy of the artist and von ammon co, Washington DC
5. **Danielle Dean, Film still of *True Red Ruin (Elmina Castle)*, 2016-2017**, HD video, color, sound, 9 minutes 39 seconds, Courtesy of Patrick Collins and Liv Barrett
6. **Danielle Dean, Film still of *True Red Ruin (Elmina Castle)*, 2016-2017**, HD video, color, sound, 9 minutes 39 seconds, Courtesy of Patrick Collins and Liv Barrett
7. **Danielle Dean, Film still of *True Red Ruin (Elmina Castle)*, 2016-2017**, HD video, color, sound, 9 minutes 39 seconds, Courtesy of Patrick Collins and Liv Barrett
8. **Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Detail of *White Zombie*, 2020**, Isomalt sugar, food dye, transparency film, epoxy resin, 45 x 20 x 44 inches, Courtesy of Angella and David Nazarian
9. **Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Detail of *White Zombie*, 2020**, Isomalt sugar, food dye, transparency film, epoxy resin, 45 x 20 x 44 inches, Courtesy of Angella and David Nazarian
10. **Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Detail of *White Zombie*, 2020**, Isomalt sugar, food dye, transparency film, epoxy resin, 45 x 20 x 44 inches, Courtesy of Angella and David Nazarian
11. **Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Detail of *White Zombie*, 2020**, Isomalt sugar, food dye, transparency film, epoxy resin, 45 x 20 x 44 inches, Courtesy of Angella and David Nazarian
12. **Sula Bermudez-Silverman, *beetle of Our Lady*, 2023**, Lady bugs, epoxy resin, transparency film, 9 x 8 x 1 inches, Courtesy of the artist, Josh Lilley Gallery, and Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles

All images are courtesy of the artists

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### **About the UAG**

The University Art Galleries are committed to promoting an intergenerational dialogue between 60s/70s neo-avant-garde art and contemporary visual culture. Accordingly, the curatorial mission is to keep an eye on the modernist past while promoting the most innovative aesthetic and political debates of the postmodern present. From this vantage, the projects commissioned provoke intelligent debate on the subject of art in its most expansive poetic definition. What distinguishes the program is its unwavering commitment to publishing scholarly texts in catalogue/book form in order to disseminate research-based information into the community, providing a venue for the promotion of innovative discourse surrounding mixed media production today. The UAG program provides several exhibition platforms for inter-generational and interdisciplinary dialogue. The Major Works of Art Series commissions original projects by canonical artists working today. The Emerging Artist Series features solo projects by a set of younger artists informed by the legacies showcased in the Major Works series. The Critical Aesthetics Program commissions new work by internationally renowned mid-career artists. Augmenting this intergenerational dialogue, UAG also produces larger thematic group exhibitions alternately showcasing historical and contemporary art and film projects. UAG further promotes an active dialogue between UCI residents and the local and international art communities through colloquia, conferences, visiting artist lectures and theme-based films series, all of which are open to the public. As the galleries continue to mature, they stand committed to being an experimental exhibition space different from the current - but largely traditional - art biennial and film festival platforms. For more information, please visit [uag.arts.uci.edu](http://uag.arts.uci.edu)

### **About UC Irvine's Claire Trevor School of the Arts**

As UCI's creative laboratory, the Claire Trevor School of the Arts explores and presents the arts as the essence of human experience and expression, through art forms ranging from the most traditional to the radically new. The international faculty works across a wide variety of disciplines, partnering with others across the campus. National-ranked programs in art, dance, drama, and music begin with training but end in original invention. Students come to UCI to learn to be citizen-artists, to sharpen their skills and talents, and to become the molders and leaders of world culture. For more information, please visit [www.arts.uci.edu](http://www.arts.uci.edu).