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Francheska Alcántara & kara lynch:
Strange & Oppositional

On View: February 3, 2023 – March 19, 2023

Opening: First Friday, February 3, 6:00-9:00 PM

Francheska Alcántara Artist Talk: Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 5:30pm

kara lynch Artist Talk: Thursday, March 9, 2023 at 5:30pm

For Immediate Release-

A sorrow song
A fugitive space
The quiet of our interior sovereignty

108 | Contemporary is proud to announce the opening of *Francheska Alcántara and kara lynch: Strange & Oppositional*, a collective meditation on Black feminist fugitive aesthetics, mourning, and liberation. This exhibition presents a critical, reflective political art practice that considers generations and histories of Indigenous, Black and Brown migrations. *Strange & Oppositional* honors where we come from, and is a deep listening to where we are. It is an offering.

Strange & Oppositional draws its name and inspiration from feminist scholar/bad-ass bell hooks' 1990 essay "An Aesthetics of Blackness – Strange and Oppositional." In this essay, hooks states: "Black Aesthetics is more than a philosophy or theory of art and beauty; it is a way of inhabiting space, a particular location, a way of looking and becoming." This way of seeing and knowing emerges from African Indigenous legacies and life-ways that honor objects as sacred and animate while at the same time reckoning with the persistent purview of racial capitalism – a system of relationships where objects, people and land are understood as property – bought, sold, kidnapped, sequestered, and stolen. *Strange & Oppositional* points to aesthetics that draw the beauty, terror, and celebration of our lives as African diasporic people.

The exhibition comes out of our desire to reflect on our experience living and learning in Tulsa, Indian Territory. We arrived in the summer of 2020 on the wave of uprisings collectively honoring Black Life while mourning Black Death. We landed in the midst of the historic McGirt decision and debates around Indigenous sovereignty and calls for land back. We actively witnessed the centennial commemorations of the 1921 Tulsa race massacre and show up for local movements for "**generational vision, justice and liberation.**" The legacies of stolen land and labor on Turtle Island are in full relief in Oklahoma.

To live and work in Tulsa incites a different sense of time-passing as many buried histories are coming into the light to be contested and rectified. The vastness of the open blue sky, the progressing of light, the sunsets, the weekly tornado siren, the resolute freight train and tracks separating North and South – the contradictions of politics and liberties here bring about a strange sense of being. Things have a patina; there's a contradiction of time and space where physically



Francheska Alcántara, *Constant Strangeness II*

constructing buildings and metaphorically constructing histories on top of something that already exists is a common practice. Meanwhile, vestiges of the ruins remain vividly alive or are erased in the memories of locals.

Our hope is to create a site of cross-pollination and a space where communities that live and cross each other meet. *Strange & Oppositional* presents our practices through the rework, repurposing, and transformation of artifacts and ideas that combine storytelling, sewing, documenting, weaving, folding, building, listening, cutting, moving, and layering. *Strange & Oppositional* stands firmly on methods of research and play and ideas of collectivity, queerness, claiming space, anti-colonial African diasporic liberation, abolition, reparations, land back, the wisdom of our ancestors, and the beauty of the everyday – that can feel foreign in this context, yet that make a case for engaging questions that others do not dare to ask.

Francheska Alcántara is a queer Afro-Caribbean interdisciplinary artist based between The Bronx and Tulsa, OK. Their work explores material histories, detritus accumulations, and slippages between memories, fragmentation, and longing. Alcántara holds an MFA in Sculpture + Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University (2019), a BFA in Painting from Hunter College (2015), and a BA in Art History from Old Dominion University (2009). They have participated in residencies like Recess Art's Session (2022), Wave Hill Gardens Workspace (2021), Creative Capital Professional Taller (2019), Vermont Studio Center (2019), Shandaken: Storm King (2018), Bronx Museum's AIM Program (2017), and EMERGENYC (2016). Francheska has shared their work at Lehmann Maupin Gallery (2022), Chashama Art Space (2021), BronxArtSpace (2020), Queens College Art Center (2019), Brooklyn Museum (2018), Queens Museum (2018), and the Bronx Museum of the Arts (2017). Alcántara is a grantee of the OVAC's Thrive Grant (2022), City Artist Corps Grant (2021), and Interchange Artist Grant (2021). Currently, they are a fellow at the Tulsa Artist Fellowship. ***Join us for an artist talk with Francheska Alcántara on Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 5:30pm in the gallery. Deaf-friendly interpretation will be provided.***

kara lynch, a time-based artist, lives en exilio in Indian Territory. Conjuring autonomy for Black and Indigenous people across Diaspora, kara's art practice is re-memory, vision, and movement – collective feminist practice and social intervention animate lynch's aesthetic/political explorations of time + space. This artist's practice is vigilantly raced, classed, and gendered – Black, Queer and Feminist. lynch is anchor artist for INVISIBLE – episodic, multi-site installations excavating the terror and resilient beauty of Black-Indigenous experiences, and co-editor of 'We Travel the Space Ways: Black Imagination, Fragments and Diffractions' – an edited volume of Black Speculation, and director of 'BlackRussians' – a feature documentary video. Current explorations include: RuleReverse! a series of video interventions learning from Sylvia Wynter's Maskerade; "Come Prepared or Not At All" a series of drawings concerned with Black Towns and Futures. "Stories from the Core" a collaboration with Sarah and Maryam Ahmed; and Blues U – a bi-monthly radio show on radiocoyote.org/FM 90.1 Greenwood in Tv/asi/Tulsa OK. kara completed the MFA in Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego and has been a research fellow at the African and African Diaspora Studies Department, University of Texas Austin and the Academy of African Studies at Bayreuth University in Germany. kara is an emerit@s Professor of Video and Critical Studies at Hampshire College, a 2020-23 Tulsa Artist Fellow, a principled artist with GalleryOfTheStreets, and a co-shaper of Black August In Motion. ***Join us for an artist talk with kara lynch on Thursday, March 9, 2023 at 5:30pm in the gallery. Deaf-friendly interpretation will be provided.***

This exhibition is generously sponsored by the Flint Family Foundation, Tulsa Artist Fellowship and Tulsa Community College.

108 | Contemporary is a non-profit community arts organization that supports Oklahoma's contemporary fine craft artists. We envision a community where world-class craft and design exhibition programming inspires and educates audiences of all ages; where Oklahoma's cultural traditions flourish, and local artists thrive. All participants are welcome. If you need disability-related accommodations, please call +1 (918) 895-6302 or email info@108contemporary.org.

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