

TAI SHANI

**MY BODILY  
REMAINS**

November 3, 2023 – April 14, 2024

Level 2

# My Bodily Remains

Tai Shani uses writing, painting, sculpture, installation, performance, and film to explore the politics of emancipation through a feminist lens. For her first solo U.S. museum exhibition, Shani presents work centered around the newly commissioned feature-length film *My Bodily Remains, Your Bodily Remains, and all the Bodily Remains that Ever Were and Ever Will Be* (2023). The film references sci-fi literature, video games, and horror films to craft a speculative journey narrated by four protagonists as they grapple with fundamental questions about love, grief, and societal change. Quotations by leftist revolutionaries of the last 150 years punctuate the narrative, offering a timely critique of the current global rise of fascist politics and war.

Accompanying the film is an immersive installation comprising a large-scale stepped platform accessorized with an array of artifacts—pearlescent spheres of various sizes, suspended columns, and a lightbox picturing an anthurium flower dripping with blood. These objects extend the film's central characters and themes and refer to ideas of spirituality, sexuality, and the uncanny. Related forms appear in an adjacent suite of watercolors and a triptych, which feature *trompe l'oeil* ribbons and whimsical bubbles layered upon paintings of portals, crypts, doorways, and windows.

Also in the exhibition is an earlier film that narrates the transformative effects of psychedelics as catalysts for social critique, transcendence, and liberation. Renderings of natural sites such as rivers, caves, and galaxies signify thresholds between otherworldly spaces, life and death, and different states of awareness. Together, the works in this exhibition draw from political ideologies of collectivism and propose love as a device for healing and resistance.

— Amara Antilla, Curator at Large

**Tai Shani** (b. 1976, London) draws from pop culture references, science fiction, and feminist theory to imagine post-patriarchal futures. Largely self-taught, she crafts vibrant worlds and mystical narratives that are rooted in feminism, anti-fascism, and capitalist critique. Shani's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions and performances at the Barbican, London (2010); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2015); Tate Modern, London; Serpentine Galleries, London (both 2016); Glasgow International (2018); Turner Contemporary, Margate (2019); and the Manchester International Festival (2021), among others. Group exhibitions include Prospect New Orleans (2011); *Mirrorcity*, Hayward Gallery, London (2014); *Reality Production*, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm (2016); *Still I Rise*, Nottingham Contemporary (2019); and *You Are a Wave and I am a Wave*, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2022). In 2019, she was a joint winner of the Turner Prize. She currently teaches at the Royal College of Art and lives and works in London.

Curated by Amara Antilla, Curator at Large, with Erin Adelman, Curatorial Assistant

## Ask Yourself

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- 1 Tai Shani's exhibition is a sensorial experience meant to transport you into another world. What feelings do the colors, sounds, and forms evoke?
- 2 Shani draws influence from ancient mythologies, history, and popular culture. What elements are familiar to you? Why do you think she pulls from such an eclectic mix of sources?
- 3 Shani's film is filled with quotes from political and cultural revolutionaries. How might love act as a catalyst for radical change?
- 4 There are multiple references to death in Shani's exhibition. Think about their varied meanings and what they might symbolize. How is the artist using death to explore contemporary injustices and other issues?



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The film *My Bodily Remains* (2023) is co-commissioned by the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; Art Night, Dundee; KM21, The Hague; and POR:TA, Lisbon. Additional support is provided by Southbank Centre, London; Creative Scotland, Edinburgh; the Henry Moore Foundation, Hadham; Luminous Art Foundation, Lisbon; and the Museum of London with support from Arts Council England.

Annual exhibition support is provided by Gale and Dave Beckett, Belflex and Jason McCaw, Barbara Weston Sasser and Carol Weston Roberts, Ronnie and John Shore, Helen and Brian Heekin, Barbara Myers, and the generous contributors to the CAC Exhibition Fund. General operating support for the CAC is provided by ArtsWave, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, the P&G Fund, and the Johnson Foundation. and the generous contributors to the CAC Exhibition Fund.

Image Credit: Courtesy of Tai Shani, 2023.

