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Press Release

## Kenny Dunkan – BIDIM BLO!

Opening: February 8, 2024, 7 pm

Exhibition: February 9 – April 14, 2024

basis e.V. presents *BIDIM BLO!*, Kenny Dunkan's first institutional solo exhibition in Germany. Through sculpture, photography, video and large-scale installations, the artist creates a diverse and visually powerful world in which established categories are questioned and objects and rituals are revitalised in new ways. His exhibition features immersive spaces in which materials and mystical elements coalesce into a microcosm. Upon entering the building, there is already a visual disjunction that leads visitors into a blue environment reminiscent of an underwater world, which in the course of the exhibition then transforms into mainland natural landscape and finally vanishes into lava.

The works are driven by a critical and conceptual exploration of social, political, sexual, and ethnic themes. By linking these themes with the visual culture of the Caribbean and the aesthetics of the carnival in particular, Dunkan addresses French colonial heritage and its enduring influence on perceptions and forms of representation. This complexity also characterises the aesthetics of his works, which are defined by dichotomies that move between craftsmanship and design, pop and high culture, fetish and playfulness, detail and entirety, minimalism and overloaded execution. By adapting his works to site-specific conditions, the artist also rewrites histories of violence and oppression. This is particularly significant



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in the context of the history of the basis building at Gutleutstraße 8–12. The building was the seat of the regional NSDAP party headquarters from 1933 to 1940. Through his artistic intervention, Kenny Dunkan literally writes over the ‘brown’ history of the building on the exterior façade and in the foyer with his ‘brown’ skin colour right at the entrance to the exhibition. This therefore enables him to take over the building with his own visual language.

The exhibition title *BIDIM BLO!*, like many of Kenny Dunkan’s work titles, is Guadeloupean creole. The title is a form of onomatopoeia, meaning words that are formed by the sounds they are describing, and relates to a sudden movement, the sound of a fall or a sudden appearance. This linguistic phenomenon is an important constituent of the Creole language and stems from the passage of traditions, values and knowledge through storytelling, since the language was for a long time based solely on oral tradition and is a mixture of the French colonial language with the spoken languages of the people of Guadeloupe.

KENNY DUNKAN (\*1988, Guadeloupe) graduated from the École nationale des Arts Décoratifs de Paris in 2014 with the distinction of the jury and won the ADAGP Prize for Fine Arts at the Salon de Montrouge in 2015. From 2016 to 2017, Kenny Dunkan was a fellow at the Villa Médici, Académie de France in Rome. In 2021, he was selected by Rashid Johnson for the „Mentor and Young Talent“ program of Reiffers Art Initiatives. His works have been featured in national and international group and solo exhibitions, including venues such as Accademia Di Belle Arti, Rome; Art Brussels; Lafayette Anticipations, Paris; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; Palais De Tokyo, Paris; Postmasters Gallery, New York; Studio des Acacias, Reiffers Art Initiatives, Paris; RUARTS Foundation; Villa Medici, Rome.



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## READING ROOM

Additional readings for a deeper understanding of the exhibition themes can be found in the reference collection in our reading room, which is open during exhibition hours.

## PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS:

• Thu, 22.02., 6 pm: curator-led tour

Sat, 02.03., 2 pm

Thu, 21.03., 6 pm

Sat, 13.04., 2 pm: curator-led tour

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## Opening hours:

Tuesday to Friday: 2 - 7 pm

Saturday & Sunday: 12 - 6 pm



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Press images (selection)



Kenny Dunkan, *NÈG MARRON*, 2021  
Metallic pieces, nylon, PVC and shoes of the artist  
(c : Philippe Fragnière)

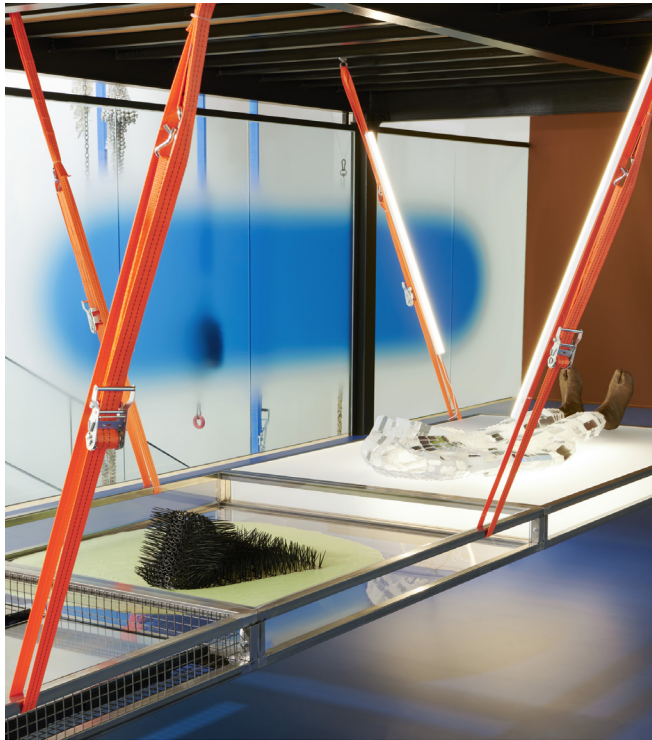


Kenny Dunkan, *VOLKAN*, 2019-2021  
Print on PVC tarpaulins and straw  
(c : Philippe Fragnière)



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Press images (selection)



Kenny Duncan,  
*MODULE*, 2021  
Installation with two  
elongated suits of armor, a  
collection of ritual objects  
and videos  
(c : Philippe Fragnière)



Kenny Duncan,  
*RELIQUE*, 2010-2021  
Embroidery of rhines-  
tones, costume jewelry,  
shells, bolts, metal chains,  
PVC, wood, polyuretha-  
ne foam and crystal on  
canvas  
(c : Philippe Fragnière)