



PRESS RELEASE

Gozié Ojini
Passages

May 3 - June 8, 2024

Opening Reception: Friday, May 3, 6-8pm

Silke Lindner is excited to announce the first New York solo exhibition with New Haven-based, Los Angeles-born artist Gozié Ojini. Working primarily in sculpture and installation, Ojini employs careful gestures with found objects, exploring their historical significance within shifting cultures and systems of value. In this exhibition, his sculptures are entirely composed of piano parts. Broken down, gutted and disassembled, they contemplate formal qualities, material and modes of accessibility. Accentuating the objects' emotional resonance held throughout their passage, Ojini meditates on memory, inheritance, and Black life in America.

Channeling the language of sampling in music production - the reuse and manipulation of parts of existing sound recordings - Ojini adapts tools and techniques like cutting and chopping to dissect and restructure fragments of the piano. In music, the act of sampling, pulling riffs and bridges, can fill gaps between genres and generations through the memories their fragments hold. Expanding upon this 'preservative gesture', Gozié Ojini's work translates the sonic into the physical. After dismantling the piano by hand, cutting with pull saws, angle grinders, or water-jet, the result is a silent sculptural installation coded with synesthesia and a tactile memory of a cacophonous process.

Traditionally, the piano represents sophistication, virtuosity, high class, discipline and education. Within a family's home, these values can manifest sentiments of success and aspiration. Often passed down through generations in which values and interests have shifted, the piano is commonly stripped of its intended use and reduced to a mere piece of furniture. A shelf for family photos that collects dust, it can read as testament of bygone aspirations and unfulfilled expectations, its weight a burden, too heavy to carry or move all at once. Sourcing the pianos wayside before their imminent disposal, Ojini preserves the objects and redistributes their weight as a sense of loss and nostalgia still echoes in its afterlife.

At the core of Ojini's practice lies an existential worry concerning the stability of the future and the shifting values placed on objects, bodies and memories within a precarious world. Meditating on the objects' essence, their innateness and value beyond its use and function, he aligns object and Black subjecthood, positioning himself in the consciousness of being 'in the wake', as discussed in Christina Sharpe's *In The Wake: On Blackness and Being*. When history informs the present in a constant loop of reverberance, when nothing is certain and hope is depleted, Ojini asks, what can we hold on to when things fall apart?

Gozié Ojini (born 1995 in Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in New Haven, CT, where he is currently enrolled in Yale University's Sculpture Program, expected to graduate in 2025. He holds a B.A. from the School of Art and Architecture at UCLA (2019) and attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Madison, ME (2022). He has had a solo exhibition at In Lieu, Los Angeles, CA, and has recently been included in exhibitions at Et Al, San Francisco, CA, and the Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA, among others.

For more information please contact Silke at silke@silkelindner.com