

GALERIE

HUBERT

WINTER

THE ALLEGORY OF DECOY
Art as Decoy for Social and Political Change

curated by blaxTARLINES

Akosua Odeibea Amoah-Yeboah
Kelvin Haizel
Gideon Hanyame
Ibrahim Mahama
Afrane Makof
Daniel Arnan Quarshie
Tracy Naa Koshie Thompson

September 17 – October 19, 2024
Opening Days: September 13–14, 2024, 12–7 pm

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1070 VIENNA, AUSTRIA

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THE ALLEGORY OF DECOY
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Installation view.
Galerie Hubert Winter, Vienna 2024.

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The epoch that shaped diverse art practices and discourses within the Painting and Sculpture department at KNUST (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology) has had a profound and far-reaching impact on artists in Ghana and beyond. This influence can be traced back to the silent revolution sparked by kaŕi'kachä seid'ou's Emancipatory Art Teaching project, which was already gaining momentum by the 2000s. This revolution was not merely about transforming artistic techniques; it was deeply intertwined with broader theories of political movements, parts of which echoed the revolutionary ethos of Kwame Nkrumah. In Kwesi Ohene Ayeh's "Notes on Contemporary Ghanaian Art: Histories and Emergences" he critically traces the history of the inherited colonial academic curriculum through pre-independence till date.

Nkrumah's vision of decolonization extended beyond political independence, emphasizing the importance of cultural and intellectual emancipation. In this exhibition, the context of contemporary Ghanaian art, manifests as a form of „decoy,“ where art serves as a strategic tool to challenge and disrupt entrenched systems of power. The excesses of the global art world—often characterized by its commercial and institutional entanglements—are confronted through practices that prioritize experimentation and subversion, revealing the potential of art to serve as a vehicle for social and political change.

The notion of „decoy“ in this context argues whether art has the power to disrupt the „distribution of the sensible“—the way in which social and political realities are perceived and understood. By engaging in practices that appear to conform to traditional artistic norms, yet subtly subvert them, artists can use art as a decoy to challenge dominant ideologies and offer alternative narratives. This approach is reflected in the work of blaxTARLINES, which, through its radical pedagogical practices, seeks to deconstruct historical narratives and reconstruct them in ways that address contemporary socio-political realities.

In the same vein, the work of theorists like Homi Bhabha, who explores the concept of hybridity, offers insights into how art can serve as a site of resistance and negotiation. By embracing hybridity, artists can create works that challenge the binary oppositions of colonizer and colonized, center and periphery, and instead, present a more nuanced and complex understanding of identity and power. This hybridity can itself function as a decoy, drawing viewers into familiar tropes only to disrupt and reconfigure them in ways that provoke critical reflection and inspire change.

The concept of beginning from the void, a principle central to blaxTARLINES, echoes Nkrumah's vision of forging a new identity unbound by colonial constraints. This approach does not align with or privilege any particular medium or format of production but instead encourages attitudes of curiosity and experimentation. By embracing the chaos and remnants of history, artists here confront colonial legacies while creating an open space for the emergence of inventive forms of technological, cultural and political expressions.

This process of reconstruction is not just a means of looking back but also a strategic act of deflection—a decoy that reorients attention toward future possibilities of liberation.

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GIDEON HANYAME

Elisha has become Elijah's Successor via his cloak, 2023

Yarns (dyed and undyed) of water filters, flour sack

230 x 210 cm

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GIDEON HANYAME

Elisha has become Elijah's Successor via his cloak, 2023

(Detail)

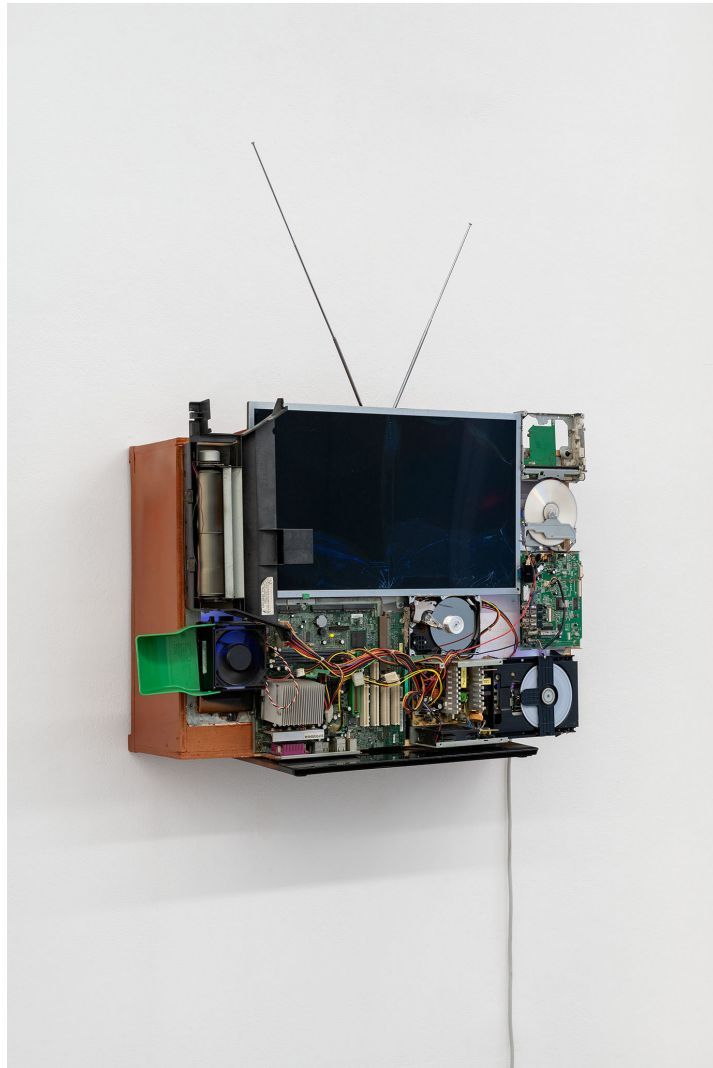
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AFRANE MAKOF

PTCD-T, 2024

Sculptural installation using electronic devices

86 x 81 x 30 cm

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AFRANE MAKOF
PTCD-T, 2024

(Detail)

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IBRAHIM MAHAMA
Installation view.
Galerie Hubert Winter, Vienna 2024.

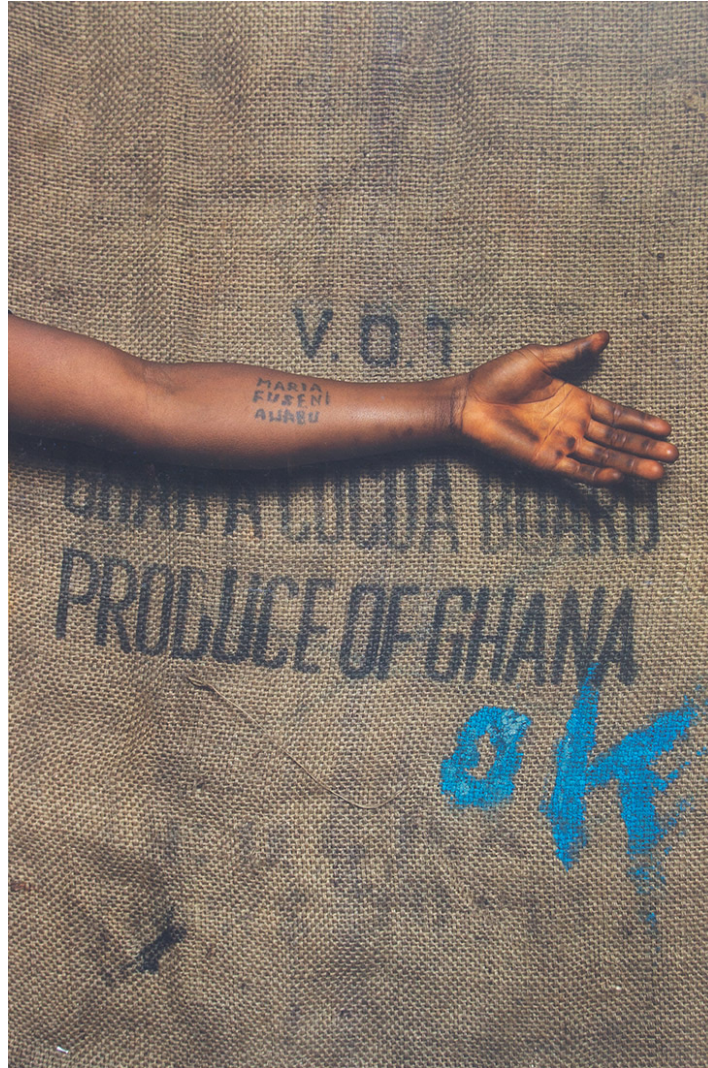
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IBRAHIM MAHAMA

Maria, 2014

C-print on dibond

97.5 x 65 cm

Ed. 3 + 2AP

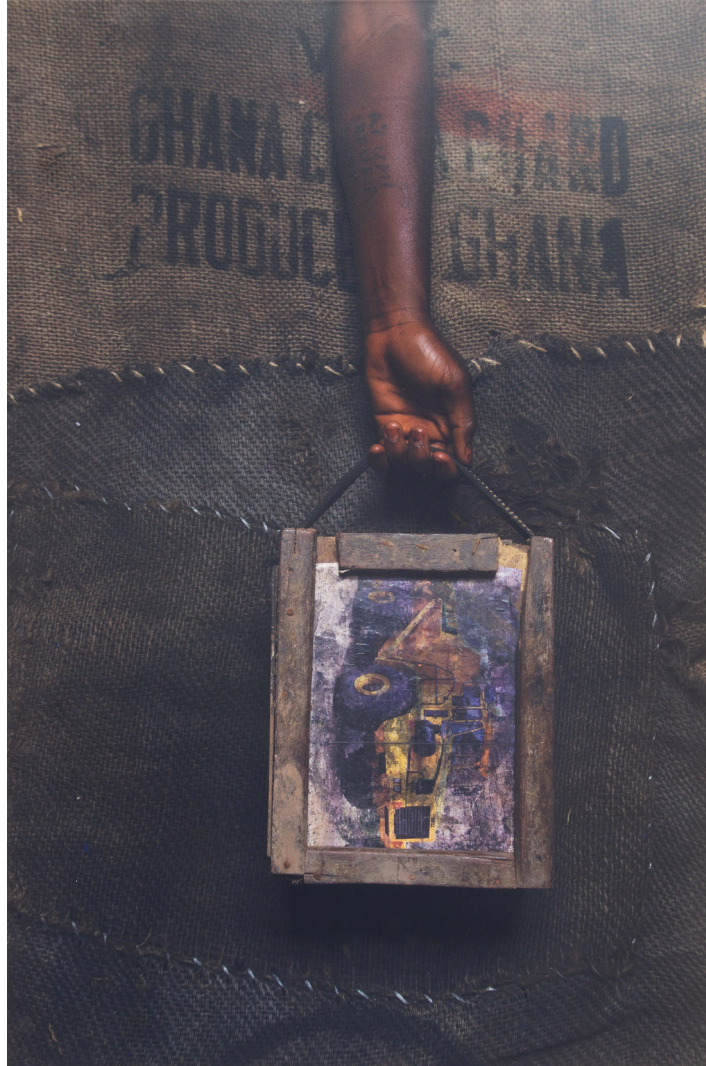
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IBRAHIM MAHAMA

Safura, 2014

C-print on dibond

97.5 x 65 cm

Ed. 3 + 2AP

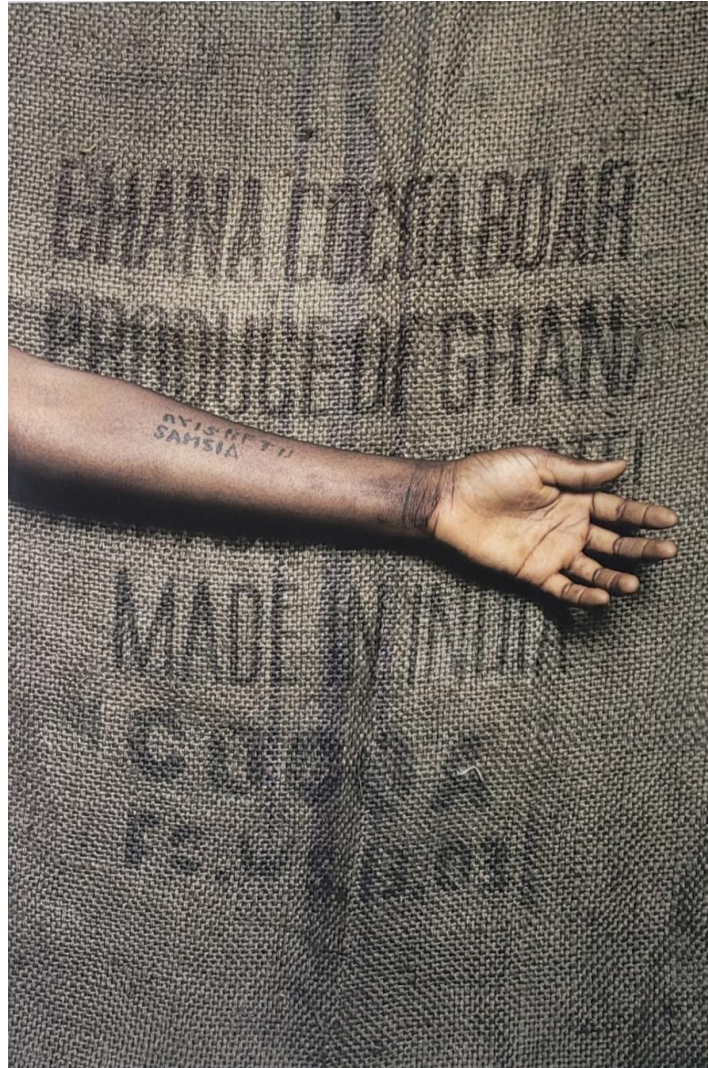
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IBRAHIM MAHAMA

Samsia, 2014

C-print on dibond

97.5 x 65 cm

Ed. 3 + 2AP

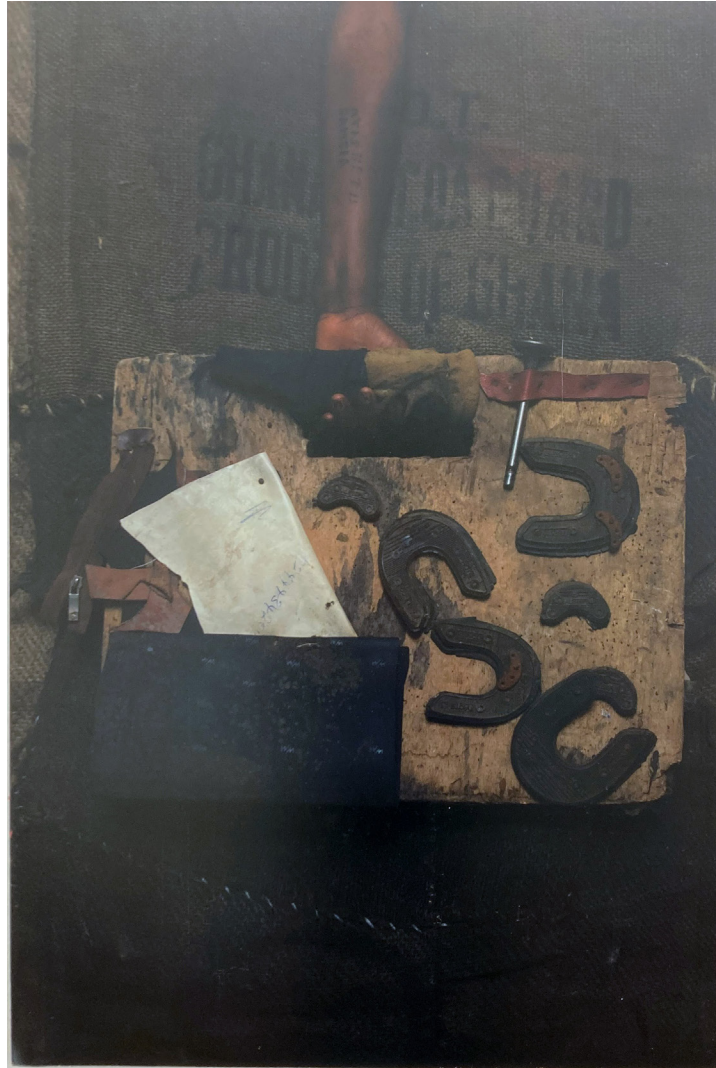
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IBRAHIM MAHAMA

Ayishetu, 2014

C-print on dibond

97.5 x 65 cm

Ed. 3 + 2AP

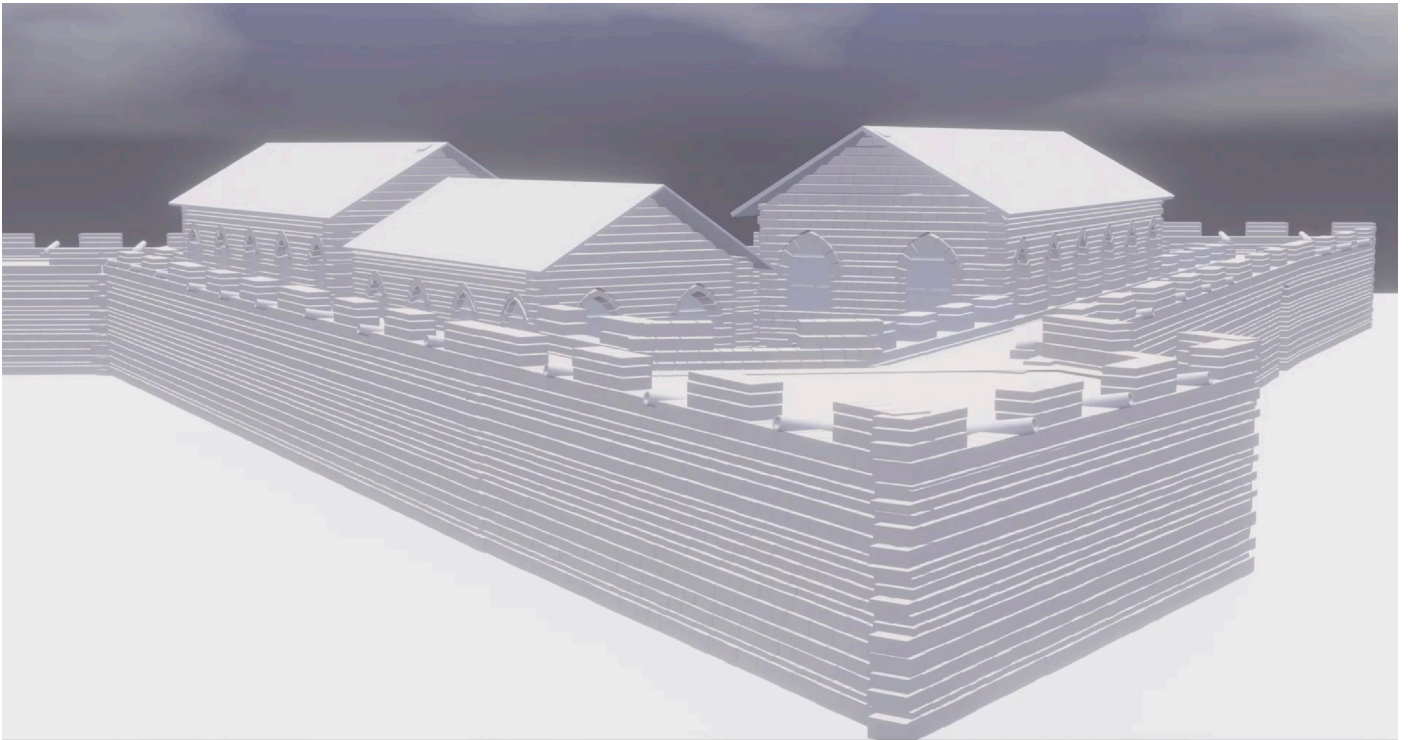
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AKOSUA ODEIBEA AMOAH-YEBOAH

Fort Dorothea, 2024

MP4 Video on TV screen

13:33 Min.

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TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON
Installation view.
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TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON

Kanzo Larva I, 2023

3-D print mounted onto printed foamboard

205 x 48 cm

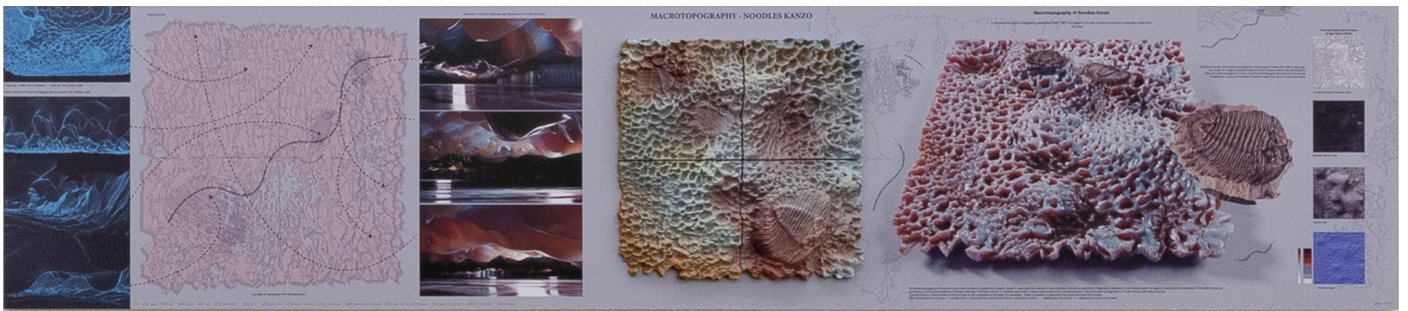
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TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON

Kanzo Noodles I, 2023

3-D print mounted onto printed foamboard

220 x 48 cm

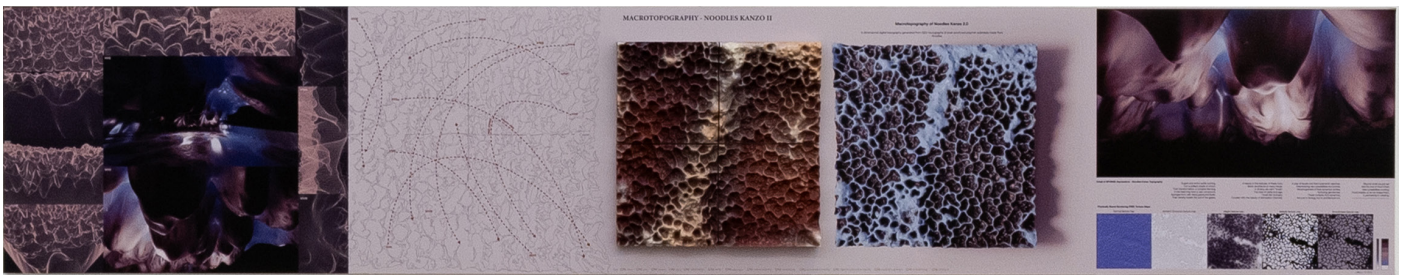
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TRACY NAA KOSHIE THOMPSON

Kanzo Noodles II, 2023

3-D print mounted onto printed foamboard

250 x 48 cm

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KELVIN HAIZEL
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KELVIN HAIZEL

Grey Winds Descending, 2024

Acrylic and edible clay on canvas

135.5 x 122.5 cm

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KELVIN HAIZEL

The Smell of Earth When Grey Winds Blow, 2024

Acrylic and edible clay on canvas

135.5 x 122.5 cm

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DANIEL ARNAN QUARSHIE

Into the Badlands, 2024

Charcoal on canvas

240 x 360cm

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DANIEL ARNAN QUARSHIE

Kwatserekwa Mpaboa, 2024

Discarded clothes, shoes, and bags, analogue television, discarded glass
bottles, synthetic flowers, charcoal drawings on canvas

Dimensions variable

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