

In her work, Simone Leigh (b. 1968, Chicago, IL) demands that the concerns, roles, and rights of women of color be recognized as central, rather than pushed to the margins. Taking into account a history of social inequality that has necessitated community organized care, traditionally provided by women, "*Simone Leigh: The Waiting Room*" considers the possibilities of disobedience, desire, and self-determination as they manifest in resistance to an imposed state of deferral and debasement. Whereas patience, pragmatism, and austerity often underscore political debates surrounding the failures of public health care, Leigh finds inspiration in parallel histories of urgency, agency, and intervention embraced by social movements, black communities, and women. Focusing specifically on an expanded notion of medicine, Leigh's residency and exhibition at the New Museum reference a wide range of care environments and opportunities—from herbalist apothecaries, to muthi [medicine] markets in Durban, South Africa, to meditation rooms, to movement studios—and involve a variety of workshops and healing treatments that she refers to as "care sessions."

Continuing Leigh's involvement with professionals in the field of holistic health that began with her 2014 Creative Time project "*Free People's Medical Clinic*," "*The Waiting Room*" features a new installation and a private, "underground" series of classes for community partners. Additionally, a series of talks, performances, and events conceptualized as medicinal dialogues on aging, disobedience, abortion, healing, and toxicity will be offered over the course of the exhibition. "*The Waiting Room*" suggests that creating a space for wellness may require both the making of a sanctuary and an act of disobedience against the systemic enactment and repudiation of black pain.

"*The Waiting Room*" inaugurates the Department of Education and Public Engagement's annual R&D Summers, a residency and exhibition program that will foreground the Museum's year-round commitment to community partnerships and to public dialogue at the intersection of art and social justice.

The exhibition is curated by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement; Shaun Leonardo, Manager of School, Youth, and Community Programs; and Emily Mello, Associate Director of Education; and is accompanied by a broadsheet designed by Nontsikelelo Mutiti.

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