

Press release, 1 October 2025

Beverly Buchanan
Weathering
with Ima-Abasi Okon
2 October 2025 – 1 February 2026

The breadth of Beverly Buchanan's (b. 1940, Fuquay, North Carolina, d. 2015, Ann Arbor, Michigan) work opens a charged space between presence and absence, a gesture that marks even as it relinquishes lasting transformations. Her practice embraces impermanence, resisting the drive towards legacy, control, and the monumental. Instead, Buchanan's acts of ruination constitute a quiet defiance, a deep confidence in the poetics of lived experience, deeply rooted in the history of the land.

While her work is in dialogue with the agendas of the dominant artistic movements of her time, it simultaneously carves out its own terrain; one shaped by self-determination and grounded in the realities of African American life. By honoring sites such as shacks, ruins, and landscapes marked by history as symbols of injustice as well as expressions of persistence, loss, resilience, and ingenuity, Buchanan creates a new understanding of what it means to remember. Her work is not a monument, but a sensitive attunement to histories that remain excluded from official narratives but that are contained and conveyed by nature, buildings, and landscapes.

The title *Weathering* draws on a central impulse in Buchanan's practice: her commitment to placing her work in direct conversation with the elements. Exposed to weather, tides, and the shifting seasons, her sculptures were made to change, to erode, and eventually to disintegrate. This openness to environmental transformation mirrors a deeper conceptual concern: the slow, cumulative impact of chronic exposure to social and economic adversity on the human body. Just as Buchanan's materials yield to natural forces, her work gestures toward the embodied consequences of long-term structural violence, where physical decline is understood not just biologically, but socially and historically.

Marking the artist's first survey show in Germany, Haus am Waldsee presents works from across the scope of Buchanan's career: from early drawings and concrete sculptures addressing the accelerating gentrification of New York City in the 1970s, to miniature architectural constructions and site-specific interventions that interrogate the layered and violent histories of the rural American South, and extending to her critically inflected, often wry texts and artist books.

The exhibition is accompanied by a new commission by British artist Ima-Abasi Okon (b. 1981 in London, lives between London and Amsterdam), who traces threads of desire woven through Buchanan's practice. By attuning herself to the artist's deep relationship with the environment, Okon will symbolically allow the outside in.

Beverly Buchanan. Weathering is developed with support from gta exhibitions (ETH Zurich, CH), Fisk University (Nashville, Tennessee, USA), the Mildred Thompson Estate (Atlanta, Georgia, USA), and in collaboration with 49 Nord 6 Est – Frac Lorraine (Metz, FR), and Spike Island (Bristol, UK). The exhibition will be presented at 49 Nord 6 Est – Frac Lorraine from February 27 to August 26, 2026, and at Spike Island from September 26, 2026 to January 10, 2027.

A seminar, held alongside the preparation and presentation of the exhibition, is jointly organised by Menzel-Dach (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) and Institute for Art in Context (Berlin University of the Arts), led by Jakob Schillinger and Karina Griffith, respectively. It focuses on exploring Buchanan's work in relation to the history and present of art from the Black diaspora in Germany. Conceived as a practice-based course, it serves as a platform for students to develop ideas around a public programme to accompany the exhibition at Haus am Waldsee.

Curated by
Anna Gritz, Beatrice Hilke, Pia-Marie Remmers

As part of the exhibition a selection of Beverly Buchanan's artist zines will be published in collaboration with Bierke.

On Thursday, Oct 2, 6 pm, we are hosting a talk on Beverly Buchanan's work between Ima-Abasi Okon, artist, and Patricia Ekpo, art historian.

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