

**Nnena Kalu***INDEX*

Arcadia Missa hosted by Chapter NY, New York, US

25 April – 30 May 2026

Arcadia Missa is pleased to present *INDEX*, Nnena Kalu's first solo presentation in the US, hosted by Chapter NY. Comprising selected works on paper from 2018, the exhibition highlights Kalu's early *Vortex Drawings* and traces the development of her practice. Here, colour emerges as kinetic and intuitive, amplifying the sense of motion across her works. *INDEX* becomes a catalogue of movement, gesture as language and marks as a record of time, as well as a mapping of Kalu's extensive body of work.

As American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce described, an index, when read as a system of communication, is produced or caused by actual contact with an object¹. This framework emphasises intrinsic or durational processes, where marks record the movement of the body over time, rather than depicting an external subject. The series of *Vortex Drawings* is built from systematic repetition of marks and gestures, capturing experience through Kalu's motion, action, and presence, rather than mere representation or illustration. In this way, Kalu's lines create meaning through emotion and physicality. The drawings contain a polarity, pulling the viewer in whilst also pushing them away. They articulate movement and release, yet hold structure and order.

Much like the gesture-driven paintings typically attributed to Abstract Expressionists, Kalu values embodied mark-making rather than depiction. Her repeated lines accumulate into terrains that can feel rhythmic and sustained, behaving like an indexical script without semantic obligation. Her lines thicken into masses that can take on interest in weight and balance, embracing repetition as generative. Kalu's gestures could be read as an external expression of the internal, free from symbolic citation. The weight near the top of the works, such as *Vortex Drawing 50* and *Vortex Drawing 51*, translates the pressure of Kalu's arm before it yields to gravity. This shift from pressure to lightness makes the body's movements legible.

Across Kalu's practice, drawings and sculptural works, colour becomes a kinetic force moving alongside the line. Although seemingly direct, upon closer inspection, the colours in Kalu's works are layered mosaics. Reds, greens, pinks and blues drift, overlap, and cluster until form emerges. They register as sensory events that are felt before interpreted, giving access to the subconscious.

INDEX is a two-part exhibition at Arcadia Missa, London, from 4 March to 1 May 2026, and Arcadia Missa, hosted by Chapter NY, New York, from 25 April until 30 May 2026.

Nnena Kalu (b. 1966, Glasgow, UK) lives and works in London, UK. Her practice is rooted in two-dimensional works, sculptures and installations.

Recent solo and group exhibitions include *We Contain Multitudes*, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, UK (2026); *Turner Prize 2025*, Cartwright Hall Art Gallery, Bradford, UK (2025); *Creations of Care*, Kunsthall Stavanger, Stavanger, NO (2025); *Nnena Kalu*, Arcadia Missa, London, UK (2024); *Conversations*, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK (2024); *Manifesta 15 Barcelona Metropolitana*, Barcelona, ES (2024); *Infinite Drawing*, Deptford X, London, UK (2022); *Studio Voltaire* elsewhere, London, UK (2020); *Wrapping*, Humber Street Gallery, East Yorkshire, UK (2019). Kalu's works are a part of the Tate Collection (UK), Arts Council Collection (UK) and SMAK (BE).

Kalu is the winner of the Turner Prize 2025.

¹ Charles Sanders Peirce, 'Icon, Index, Symbol', in Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers. Vol. II: Elements of Logic*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960, pp.159ff; Charles Sanders Peirce, 'Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs', in Justus Buchler (ed.) *The Philosophy of Peirce: Selected Writings*, New York, 1940, pp.98–119.