

ADJI DIEYE

Culture Lost and Learned by Heart

C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021

Dec 11, 2021 – Apr 21, 2022

C/O Berlin

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, Dec 2, 2021

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C/O Berlin presents the **C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021** exhibition **Adji Dieye . Culture Lost and Learned by Heart** from **December 11, 2021 to April 21, 2022**. The **opening** is on **Friday, December 10, 2021**, at **20:00**, at C/O Berlin in Amerika Haus at Hardenbergstraße 22–24, 10623 Berlin. Attendees must be fully vaccinated or show proof of recovery from Covid, wear a face mask and keep 1.5m distance.

“In other words, as previously colonized peoples, what makes us a community is that we share a desire for self-conception. But in what ways can we conceive of self-conception? What are its paradigmatic demands?”

—Emmanuel Iduma, winner of the
C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021 – *Theorist*

What is to be done when the past is merely a creation of colonial archives? This question is at the heart of Italian-Senegalese artist Adji Dieye's work *Culture Lost and Learned by Heart*. To answer it, Dieye conducted visual research into the iconographic collection of the the National Archives of Senegal (*Archives Nationales du Sénégal*). The project questions archival contents and narrative constructions of the past as a way to unveil the embedded violence present within the archival institution and its seemingly neutral content.

For her exhibition at C/O Berlin, the artist has developed a video projection, wall-mounted works, and installations as a visual proposal for a non-linear reading of the history of Senegal. These room-sized sculptures were made by translating photographs into dotted bitmap grids used as templates for screen prints. The artist printed images from her own archive as well as from the National Archives onto multi-meter lengths of silk fabric, and mounted them on forged iron frames. In one of these works, the artist creates a visual dialogue between two periods in Senegalese history. A number of the images date back to the French colonial era and show the establishment of the nation-state of Senegal, while others document the current situation in Senegal today. By inscribing past and present within the shared space of the installation, Dieye calls into question the idea of history as a linear progression in which one event clearly proceeds the next. Her choice of installation materials evokes the motions of a newspaper printing press and brings the histories they present to life.

In selecting *Culture Lost and Learned by Heart*, the *C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021* showcases the recent strategy of an expanded documentary practice that creates editions of existing images. The jury unanimously and unhesitatingly selected Adji Dieye out of almost one hundred selected submissions from around the world. Her noteworthy and provocative project continues the critical work begun by the 2020

winner Anna Ehrenstein, exploring the topics of post-colonialism and the nation-state more closely within Senegal and making use of a wholly different material approach. In her critical dialogue with the colonial institution of the visual archive, Dieye questions its function as a defender of historic truth. The jury was convinced by the exemplary way her artistic approach interprets the idea of *New Documentary Strategies* which the *C/O Berlin Talent Award* recognizes. The artist receives a cash prize, and her work will be presented in the solo exhibition *Adji Dieye . Culture Lost and Learned by Heart* at C/O Berlin. An exhibition catalog published by Spector Books, Leipzig, and edited by Dr. Kathrin Schöneegg for the C/O Berlin Foundation contains critical reflections by prize-winner and Nigerian theorist, Emmanuel Iduma.

Adji Dieye (b. 1991, IT/SEN) studied New Technologies for Art at Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan and received an MFA from the Zurich University of the Arts. Her work has been included in international group exhibitions at FOAM Amsterdam (2020), Kunsthalle Wien (2020), at Bamako Encounters – African Biennale of Photography (2019), and the Lagos Photo Festival (2018). C/O Berlin is presenting her first institutional solo exhibition. Adji Dieye divides her time between Milan, Zurich, and Dakar.

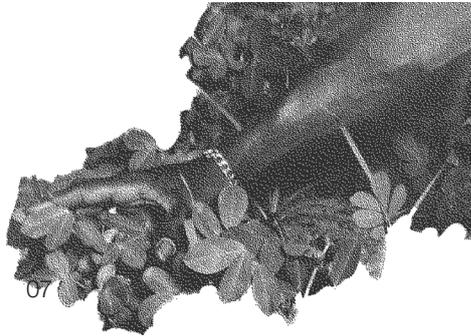
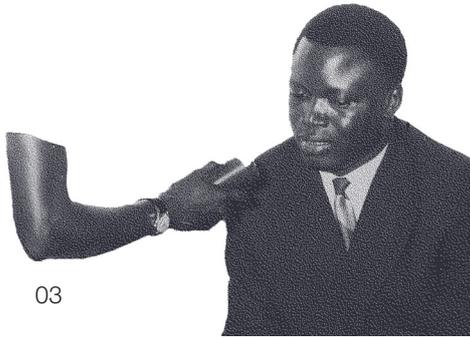
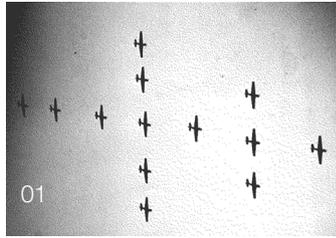
Emmanuel Iduma (b. 1989, NG) completed an MFA in Art Criticism and Writing at the School of Visual Arts in New York after earning his law degree in Nigeria. In addition to his own writing, such as his travelogue *A Stranger's Pose*, and editing, he devotes his time to art criticism and has published in *ARTNews*, *Art in America*, *British Journal of Photography*, *Aperture*, *Artforum*, *The New York Review of Books*, and *Walther Collection*. Iduma was included in *Apollo International Art Magazine's 40 under 40 Africa* in 2020 for the broad social impact of his work. He lives in New York and Lagos.

The **C/O Berlin Talent Award** is awarded each year in the categories of art and theory to two individuals under thirty-five years of age. The award carries a cash prize for both winners as well as a solo exhibition and an individually designed publication. A joint artist talk rounds off this union of theory and practice. Artists are nominated for the award by a committee of international experts. Theorists may apply during the open call. Our curator Dr. Kathrin Schöneegg heads the *C/O Berlin Talent Award*.

Since 2020, the C/O Berlin Talent Award is made possible by the Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung.

PRESS IMAGES

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All images © Adji Dieye

01 *Untitled (Culture Lost and Learned by Heart)*, 2020-2021 © Adji Dieye, Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Iconographie **02** *Memory (Culture Lost and Learned by Heart)*, 2020-2021 **03–11** *Untitled (Culture Lost and Learned by Heart)*, 2020-2021 © Adji Dieye, Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Iconographie

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Editorial note when referring to C/O Berlin:

C/O Berlin is an exhibition space for photography and visual media. We are a non-profit foundation unconstrained by commercial concerns. As such, we would appreciate if the word “gallery” was avoided when reporting on C/O Berlin. Many thanks!

Contact Magnus Pölcher . press@co-berlin.org . +49.30.284 44 16 41

WALL TEXTS

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C/O BERLIN TALENT AWARD

Supporting emerging talents is a vital part of C/O Berlin's mission. Since 2006, the Talents program has recognized over 80 award winners, including the artists Stefanie Moshhammer, Sebastian Stumpf, and Tobias Zielony as well as the theorists Florian Ebner, Dr. Katja Müller-Helle, and Dr. Steffen Siegel. C/O Berlin is the only institution in Europe to offer a funding program aimed at the next generation of artists and theorists.

The *C/O Berlin Talent Award* is awarded each year in the categories of *Artist* and *Theorist* to individuals under thirty-five years of age. The award carries a cash prize for both winners as well as a solo exhibition and an individually designed publication. A joint *Artist Talk* rounds off this union of theory and practice. Artists are nominated for the award by a committee of international experts. Theorists may apply during the open call.

Since 2018, the overarching theme of the program has been *New Documentary Strategies*. Our goal is to encourage a critical analysis of traditional documentary narratives and to share such analyses in exhibitions and publications. Photography has been a means of documentation since the advent of the medium, yet one at once dependent on the photographing subject, whose perspective of the world is shown in photographs. What sort of a documentary role does photography occupy today? Which new narrative strategies are currently being developed in order to show and understand the world? And how is our trust in photography changing in an era of networked images? The *C/O Berlin Talent Award's* current focus on *New Documentary Strategies* seeks to offer answers to these questions in the prizewinning works.

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INTRODUCTION

In *Culture Lost and Learned by Heart*, Italian-Senegalese artist Adji Dieye conducted visual research into the iconographic collection of the National Archives of Senegal (*Archives Nationales du Sénégal*). The project questions archival contents and narrative constructions of the past as a way to unveil the embedded violence present within the archival institution and its seemingly neutral content.

For her exhibition at C/O Berlin, the artist has developed a video projection, wall-mounted works, and installations as a visual proposal for a non-linear reading of colonial practices. These room-sized sculptures were made by translating photographs into dotted bitmap grids used as templates for screen prints. The artist printed images from her own archive as well as from the National Archives onto multi-meter lengths of silk fabric, and mounted them on forged iron frames. In her work, the artist creates a visual dialogue between two periods in Senegalese history. A number of the images date back to the 1960s' onward and show the first moments of the newly-established nationstate of Senegal, while others document the actuality of the country today. By inscribing past and present within the shared space of the installation, Dieye calls into question the idea of history as a linear progression in which one event clearly proceeds the next. In her critical dialogue with the institution of the visual archive, the artist offers a challenging approach on how established regimen of representation can be considered as a way to question the making of the epistemologies of a newly independent state.

In selecting *Culture Lost and Learned by Heart*, the *C/O Berlin Talent Award 2021* showcases the recent strategy of an expanded documentary practice that creates editions of existing images. The jury was convinced by the exemplary way this artistic approach interprets the idea of *New Documentary Strategies* which the *C/O Berlin Talent Award* recognizes. An artist book published by Spector Books, Leipzig, and edited by Dr. Kathrin Schöneegg for the C/O Berlin Foundation accompanies the exhibition and contains critical reflections by prize-winner and Nigerian theorist, Emmanuel Iduma.

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Berlin, Dec 2, 2021

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Exhibition 11 Dec 2021 – 21 Apr 2021

Press Tour 10 Dec . 11:00

Opening 10 Dec . 20:00

Opening Hours Daily . 11:00 – 20:00

Admission 10 euros . reduced 6 euros

Organizer C/O Berlin Foundation

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