Octavial Scape

Maïté Chénière

14.8.-12.9.20

Octavial Scape is the first solo exhibition by the Geneva-based artist Maïté Chénière. This exhibition takes form in an immersive installation and is a tribute to the late Octavia E. Butler and her *Xeneogenesis* trilogy, which imagined a different world after the apocalypse.

The exhibition brings together many forms of cultural productions as well as the academic, embodied and communal knowledges produced by a global community of People of Colour through video and sound. Although they might seem disparate, these productions are intertwined through the shared history among Africans on the continent and those who are part of the global diaspora.

Maïté Chénière maps different modes of refusal and resistance in the forms of music, popular culture, academia and story-telling against the backdrop of the Atlantic: A central site of subjugation in the Transatlantic slave trade and node among a global community. Subverting this history of subjugation and oppression, the exhibition takes its point of departure in the legend of Drexciya: Drexciya tells the story of those enslaved women who were found out to be pregnant while in the belly of a slave ship and consequently thrown off board. The legend imagines the lives of their children, who - born under water - adapted to undermarine life and founded a Black civilisation at the bottom of the Atlantic and in doing so, injects this site with new potential and reclaims the agency of enslaved Black people, whose lives and legacies have been widely erased.

Maïté Chénière manipulates spaces, such as night clubs, exhibition spaces and performance venues, through immersive installations in order to shift the perception of time. Through this, they facilitate communal experiences that challenge the hierarchies in the status quo and that center queer Black people.

Maïté Chénière holds a MA in Visual Arts (CCC–Études critiques curatoriales cybermédias) from HEAD – Geneva. Their work has been presented at Théâtre de l'Usine, Geneva (2020); Un lieu pour respirer, Paris (2019); Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2019); Festival Les Urbaines, Lausanne (2018), Cinéma Spoutnik, Geneva (2018); D.A.F. Festival at the reliure, Geneva (2018); Ateliers Claus, Brussels (2016); Magical Solutions Congress, Leipzig (2017); Focale, Nyon (2017); Spreechsaal Gallery, Berlin (2016); Circuits and Curents, Athens (2016); Lac, Brussels (2015), Mains d'œuvres, Paris (2014), among others.

Under their alias Mighty, they work as an afrofuturist DJ and founding member of the *Archipelagogo Club Events* that promote the works of queer People of Colour in Geneva. They've been playing in Paris, Berlin, Leipzig, Johannesburg and throughout Switzerland, eclectic sets revolving around House and Ballroom.