

Living With Ghosts

July 8 – August 5, 2022
Guest Curated by Kojo Abudu
5 Hanover Square
London

Opening Reception: Thursday 7 July



Bouchra Khalili, *Foreign Office*, 2015, mixed media © courtesy of the artist and Mor Charpentier

London—Pace Gallery is delighted to announce *Living With Ghosts*, a group exhibition guest curated by writer, critic, and curator, Kojo Abudu. On view 8 July to 5 August, Abudu brings together nine pioneering artists whose work explores the ways the unresolved traumas of Africa’s colonial past, and its unfulfilled project of decolonisation, continue to haunt the present global order.

Living With Ghosts is an expanded iteration of Abudu’s ongoing exhibition project, first staged at the Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University in New York. Each of the artists included in the exhibition are united by their formal, historiographic, and poetic interrogations of the enduring power structures birthed by the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, and imperialism, and equally consider the myriad resistances and refusals formed in response to these very structures. *Living With Ghosts* at once evokes the structural continuities of these African colonial histories into the present day, while also offering a transformative space for envisioning alternative and more just decolonial futures.

Spanning a diverse array of media, from video and installation to works on paper and sculpture, *Living With Ghosts* features work by Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc, Dineo Seshee Bopape, Nolan Oswald Dennis, Torkwase Dyson, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Bouchra Khalili, Abraham Oghobase, Cameron Rowland, and Tako Taal. Taking inspiration from Achille Mbembe’s theorising on the African “postcolony,” Jacques Derrida’s notion of “hauntology,” and Sylvia Wynter’s work on the “coloniality of being,” *Living with Ghosts* critically attends to the ghosts, spirits, and phantoms that abound in the modern calamities of Africa’s historical becoming, from the 15th century to the present day.

These “ghosts” are the unseen but deeply felt forces – at once dead and alive, visible and invisible, past and present, future and past – that continually disturb individual and collective relations within the African postcolony and throughout the world, leaving behind melancholic traces in archival materials, architecture, landscapes, and subjectivities. Heeding Derrida’s provocation in *Specters of Marx* (1994), as well as insights from various African indigenous thought systems, this exhibition foregrounds the ethical and political urgency of feeding, communing, and *living with* these ghosts rather than disavowing, burying, or exorcising them.

By centring contemporary art practice in spectral considerations of violent pasts that continue to linger and of liberatory futures that continue to haunt, Abudu frames the exhibition's concepts along several axes, from the spatial and the temporal, to the psychological and the spiritual.

Living With Ghosts also includes a lecture series and a reader publication, both of which provide complementary critical perspectives on the exhibition's overarching concerns with coloniality, decoloniality, and hauntology. For more information, please visit the Pace website here.

Kojo Abudu is a critic and curator based between London, Lagos, and New York. Informed by decolonial theory, queer theory, African philosophy and Black radical thought, his writings and exhibitions focus on critical art and aesthetic practices from the Global South (particularly Africa and its diasporas) that respond to the world-historical conditions produced by colonial modernity. Kojo holds an MA in Modern & Contemporary Art: Critical and Curatorial Studies from Columbia University, and a BA from Duke University where he studied philosophy and political science. The first iteration of his ongoing curatorial project, *Living With Ghosts*, recently opened at the Wallach Art Gallery, New York, in March, 2022. Kojo is a 2022-23 Helena Rubinstein Curatorial Fellow at the Whitney Independent Study Program and will be curating a pavilion-bound exhibition, *Traces of Ecstasy*, for the fourth edition of the Lagos Biennial in 2023.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon.

The gallery has also spearheaded explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. Pace's presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its Web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has ten locations worldwide including a European foothold in London and Geneva, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months, and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis. In 2022, the gallery opened its West Coast flagship in Los Angeles, and continues to operate its gallery in Palo Alto.

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