

Grada Kilomba



Biography

Grada Kilomba (b. 1968, Lisbon, Portugal) is an interdisciplinary artist, whose work draws on memory, trauma, gender and post-colonialism, interrogating concepts of knowledge, power and violence. "What stories are told? How are they told? And told by whom?" are constant questions in Kilomba's body of work, to revise post-colonial narratives.

Kilomba subversively translates text into image, movement and installation, by giving body, voice and form to her own critical writing. Performance, staged reading, video, photography, publications and installation are a platform for Kilomba's unique practice of storytelling, which intentionally disrupts the proverbial 'white cube' through a new and urgent decolonial language and imagery.

Her work has been presented in major international events such as: La Biennale de Lubumbashi VI; 10. Berlin Biennale; Documenta 14, Kassel; 32. Bienal de São Paulo. Selected solo and group exhibitions include the Pinacoteca de São Paulo; Bildmuseet, Umeå; Kadist Art Foundation, Paris; The Power Plant, Toronto; Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin; MAAT-Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon; Secession Museum, Vienna; Bozar Museum, Brussels; PAC-Pavillion Art Contemporanea, Milan, among others. Kilomba's work features in public and private collections worldwide.

Strongly influenced by the work of Frantz Fanon, Kilomba studied Freudian Psychoanalysis in Lisbon – at ISPA, and there she worked with war survivors from Angola and Mozambique. Early on she started writing and publishing stories, before extending her interests into staging, image, sound and movement.

Kilomba holds a Doctorate in Philosophy from the Freie Universität Berlin. She has lectured at several international universities, such as the University of Ghana and the Vienna University of Arts, and was a Guest Professor at the Humboldt Universität Berlin, Department of Gender Studies. For several years, she was a guest artist at the Maxim Gorki Theatre, in Berlin, developing *Kosmos 2*, a political intervention with refugee artists. She is the author of the acclaimed "Plantation Memories" (Unrast, 2008) a compilation of episodes of everyday racism written in the form of short psychoanalytical stories. Her book has been translated into several languages, and was listed as the most important nonfiction literature in Brazil, 2019. In 2021 she unveiled *O Barco / The Boat*, a large-scale installation with an accompanying performance at MAAT – Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology in Lisbon, Portugal.

The artist lives and works in Berlin.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2023** *One soul, one memory*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2022** *A World of Illusions: Grada Kilomba*, NORVAL Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2022** *O Barco / The Boat*, Somerset House, London, UK
- 2022** *Espressioni* Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy
- 2021** *O Barco / The Boat*, MAAT – Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2021** *The Words That Were Missing*, MCLAUGHLIN Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- 2021** *Heroines, Birds & Monsters*, Amant Foundation, New York, USA
- 2021** *The Words That Were Missing*, McLaughlin Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- 2019** *Grada Kilomba: A World of Illusions*, Bildmuseet, Umeå University, Sweden
- 2019** *Grada Kilomba: Poetic Disobediencies*, Pinacoteca, São Paulo
- 2018** *Secrets to Tell*, The Power Plant, Toronto
- 2018** *Speaking the Unspeakable*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2017** *The Most Beautiful Language*, Avenida da Índia Gallery at the Municipal Galleries of Lisbon, Portugal
- 2018** *Secrets to Tell*, The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada
- 2017** *Secrets to Tell*, MAAT – Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2017** *The Most Beautiful Language*, Gallery Avenida da Índia, EGEAC, Lisbon

Group Exhibitions

- 2023** *The Temptation to Exist*, Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, Germany
- 2022** *ARS22: Living Encounters*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Finnish National Gallery, Helsinki, Finland
- 2021** *Ubuntu, a Lucid Dream*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
- 2021** *Tudo o que eu quero – Artistas portuguesas 1900-2020 (Travelling)*, Bozar in February 2021, Tours in September 2021, and Gulbenkian (Lisbon) in May 2022
- 2021** *Farsa*, Sesc Pompéia, São Paulo, Brazil

2021 *Rhizomes*, La Base Sus Marine, Bordeaux, France
2020 *Resist! Die Kunst des Widerstands | The Art of Resistance*, Rautenstrauch Joest Museum, Cologne, Germany
2020 *Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions*, Yebisu, Tokyo
2019 *Affective Utopia*, Kadist, Paris, France
2019 *Bienalsur*, Museu Nacional de Arte, La Paz, Bolivia
2019 *Bienalsur*, Centro Cultural de la Universidad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2019 *Tandem*, Alexander and Bonin, New York, USA
2019 *4. Berliner Herbstsalon DE-HEIMATIZE IT!*, Gorki Theatre, Berlin
2018 *The Black City, Glosses*, E-Flux Gallery and Participant Inc., New York, USA
2018 *Do Silencio a Memoria*, Paco das Artes, Sao Paulo, Brazil
2018 *Frieze Art Fair*, London, UK
2018 *In Context: I was waiting for this Past*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2018 *Art Basel*, Switzerland
2018 *We don't need another hero*, 10. Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany
2018 *Frameworks*, International Film festival Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands
2017 *Incerteza Viva – Live Uncertainty*, Bienal de São Paulo, Centro Dragão do Mar de Arte e Cultura, Fortaleza, Brazil
2017 *3. Berliner Herbstsalon*, Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany
2017 *The Silences Between*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2017 *SouthSouth – Let Me Begin Again*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2016 *O futuro será uma réplica – The future will be a replica*, Consul of Portugal in São Paulo, Brazil
2016 *Incerteza Viva – Live Uncertainty*, 32. Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
2016 *Vulnerability*, Rauma Biennial Balticum, Rauma, Finland
2016 *Knowledge Unbounded*, Department of Arts and Aesthetics Exhibition, University of Stockholm, Stockholm, Sweden
2016 *Banquete Antropofágico – Anthropophagic Banquet*, Department of Contemporary Arts Exhibition, University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Curated Exhibitions

2023 *35th Bienal De São Paulo: Choreographies Of The Impossible*, São Paulo, Brazil

Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

2017 Academy of Arts Berlin, Berlin, Germany
2017 Transmediale, House of the World Cultures, Berlin, Germany
2017 Art Fair Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa
2017 Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany
2016 AfroTranscendente, São Paulo, Brazil
2016 Goethe Institut Salvador da Bahia, Bahia, Brazil
2016 Berlin University of Arts – UdK, Berlin, Germany
2016 Art Basel, Basel, Switzerland
2016 Mousonturm House of Arts, Frankfurt, Germany
2016 University of Accra, Accra, Ghana
2016 Goethe Institut São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
2016 Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany
2015 Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna, Austria
2015 Theatre Ballhaus Naunynstrasse, Berlin, Germany
2015 University of Linköping, Linköping, Sweden
2015 Free University Berlin, Berlin, Germany
2015 University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Holland
2015 University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
2015 Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany

Awards and Merits

2018 Awarded by Frameworks at the international film Festival Rotterdam, The Netherlands
2016 Artist-in-Residence, Vila Sul, at the Goethe Institut Salvador da Bahia, Brazil
2016 Artist-in-Residence, Revolting Mass/Massa Revoltante, at the Goethe Institut São Paulo, Brazil
2015 Named a "Woman of Excellence" by the Sonne Magazine, Berlin, Germany
2011 Awarded as one of "The Most Inspirational Black Women in Europe" by the BWIE, Vienna, Austria

Academic Record and Residencies

1998 Degree on Clinical Psychology and Psychoanalysis, Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, Lisbon, Portugal
2008 Ph.D., Doctorate on Philosophy, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany
2023 Honoris Causa Doctorate, ISPA, Lisbon

Collections

TATE Modern
 Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, PRT
 Royal Dutch Collection MAAT — Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, PRT

Publications

2008 *Plantation Memories. Episodes of Everyday Racism* (5th Edition), Münster: Unrast Verlag
2005 *Mythen, Subjekt, Masken* (3rd Edition), Münster: Unrast Verlag (co-editor)

Performances

2021 MAAT – Museum of Art, Technology, Lisbon, Portugal
2017 Documenta 14, Kassel, Germany
2017 SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, Germany
2017 Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2016 Teatro Vila Velha, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil
2016 32. Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil
2016 Wits Theatre, Johannesburg, South Africa
2016 Theatre Münchner Kammerspiel, Munich, Germany
2016 Goethe Institut Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
2016 TheaterTreffen, Haus der Berliner Festspiele, Berlin, Germany
2016 Secession Museum Vienna, Vienna, Austria
2016 University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria
2016 University of Accra, Accra, Ghana
2016 Mostra Internacional de Teatro em São Paulo
2016 Bozar Museum for Contemporary Arts, Brussels, Belgium
2016 SOAS University of London, London, UK
2015 Theatre Münchner Kammerspiel, Munich, Germany
2015 Antwerpen Museum, Antwerpen, Belgium
2015 Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna, Austria
2015 Theatre Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany
2015 International Arts Center José Guimarães, Guimarães, Portugal
2015 Theatre Ballhaus Naunynstrass, Berlin, Germany
2015 Oslo House of Literature, Oslo, Norway

Films

2011 White Charity by Carolin Philipp and Timo Kiesel
2013 Conakry with Diana McCarty, Grada Kilomba and Filipa César