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Contemporary Art Daily

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Sanford Biggers at MOCAD

January 1st, 2017



Artist: Sanford Biggers

Venue: MOCAD, Detroit

Exhibition Title: Subjective Cosmology

Date: September 9, 2016 – January 1, 2017

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Images courtesy of MOCAD, Detroit

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Press Release:

For his solo exhibition *Subjective Cosmology*, Sanford Biggers will create an immersive interactive experience throughout MOCAD, incorporating video installation, visual art objects, and new media. Imagined as an unseen world made visible, the exhibition gives physical form to hidden landscapes where the past, present, and future synergized into an atemporal experience. *Subjective Cosmology* can be seen as the link between his three—part film suite *Shuffle, Shake, Shatter*.

Shuffle, Shake, Shatter is an ambitious three-part film/video suite that explores the formation and dissolution of identity through the journey and actions of an un-named main character. With the completion of his journey, he will have also retraced the North Atlantic Slave Trade route, albeit abstractly, from Europe to the Americas and finally Africa. Throughout his journey he grapples with his identity to the point of crisis, or enlightenment, where he then transcends his notions of male and female, life and death and the corporeal versus the auratic. In *Shatter*, the protagonist transcends his corporeal existence, shape shifting into an auratic entity.

The installation will provide the backdrop for an exclusive new *Moon Medicin* performance. *Moon Medicin* is a multimedia concept band performing original compositions interspersed with re-imagined covers. The collective performs against a backdrop of curated sound effects and images of sci-fi, punk, sacred geometry, coded symbology, film noir, minstrels, world politics, and ceremonial dance. For this iteration of *Moon Medicin*, Biggers, the creative director, will collaborate with a rotating cast of musicians, designers, and performance artists based in Detroit.

Laocoön, is a rendition of a previously exhibited figurative work. For his exhibition at MOCAD, Biggers created a site specific *Laocoön* measuring 30 feet in-length, the largest version the artist has created. Occupying over a quarter of the gallery space, the work is named after a famous Roman sculpture, *Laocoön and His Sons*, depicting a priest struck down by the gods Athena as he warned the Greeks about the Trojan horse. Biggers created the work in reaction to recent events, including the killing of unarmed black civilians by the police and the allegations of sexual assault leveled against Bill Cosby. The piece uses the *Fat Albert* figure to allude to these victims of police violence while also representing the loss of faith in authority and the father figure. Bill Cosby created *Fat Albert* and the *Cosby Kids* in the 1970's as a vehicle to explore the problems affecting primarily African-American and urban youth, and offer advice on how to avoid the pitfalls specific to their environment