



Baseera Khan, *Core-On (Core Dash On)*

book launch

Sunday, February 27, 5-8pm at HOUSING, 191 Henry Street NYC

Baseera Khan and Patricia Okoumou in dialogue

February 27 - March 5, 2022

Video premiere on participantafterdark.art

As part of the public launch of Baseera Khan, *Core-On (Core Dash On)*, published by PARTICIPANT PRESS and HOUSING, we are pleased to premiere a conversation between Khan and the New York based social activist Patricia Okoumou on PARTICIPANT AFTER DARK. This intimate dialogue took place during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, and now functions as a timestamped moment between Khan and Okoumou to discuss the rigors behind climbing as both a pragmatic and artistically imbued act of corporeal decolonization. Endurance is another generative component for both artists and activists within the psycho-emotional and physical realms. Okoumou's sociopolitical labor centers the constant need for social justice reform, gender equity, and human rights. In 2018, Okoumou climbed the Statue of Liberty as a solidified act of protest against immigration policy enacted by the previous administration. In public appearances including this video, Okoumou and her son Mbemba Makouela Okoumou don handmade army green outfits with texts that talk back to the former first lady's "I really don't care. Do u?" jacket.

For her 2017 solo exhibition at PARTICIPANT, Khan presented and scaled *Braidrage*, a 12x15 rock climbing wall with rocks that were made using resin casts of Khan's body and guiding ropes of braided hair. Her *Psychedelic Prayer Rugs* occupied an area of the exhibition equipped with a shelving unit and book stand functioning as a *Reading Room, On Purpose*, where one could read a variety of books and view personal archives that comprised research related to the exhibition. The *Reading Room, On Purpose* contained one handcrafted book, compiled by the artist, called *Core-On* (pronounced 'core dash on') - Khan's Qur'an, which told the story of her work through images, notes, and mappings. On the occasion of her 2021 solo exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum, *I Am an Archive*, Participant Press and Housing published an edition of 600 copies of this book (ISBN 978-1-7354028-0-2, 134 pages, printing by PUBLICIDE INC).

Video credits

Editor: Isaiah Davis

Cameras: Glen Fogel, Jordan Strafer

Patricia Okoumou and Mbemba Makouela Okoumou's wardrobe: Suze GX Designs and Amy Volchok

Artwork: Jonathan Berger, *Untitled (Emily Anderson and Mark Utter, with Erica Heilman)*, 2019, installation view at Participant Inc, New York. Jonathan Berger: *An Introduction to Nameless Love* was co-organized by Participant Inc, New York, and Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts at Harvard University.

Produced in conjunction with the New Orleans Museum of Art's 2020 Exhibition *Mending the Sky*

Audio: Seth Boonchai

Open captioning: 3play Media

Duration: 23:36

Recorded on: August 7, 2020

Baseera Khan was born in Denton, Texas and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Upcoming soon: Highline (2023) and Moody Center for The Arts, Rice University, Houston, Texas, and Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio (2022, forthcoming), Georgetown University solo show (2023). Selected solo and two-person exhibitions include: Brooklyn Museum, NY (2021); The Kitchen, NY (2020); Simone Subal Gallery, NY (2019); Jenkins Johnson, NY (2019); Colorado Springs Fine Art Centers, Colorado (2018); Texas Christian University College of Fine Arts, Fort Worth, Texas (2017); Participant Inc, NY (2017). Selected group exhibitions include: Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH (2021); NOMA, New Orleans, LA (2020); Gracie Mansion Conservancy, NY (2020); LACE, Los Angeles, CA (2020); Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism, Germany (2019); BRIC, NY (2019); Albany Museum, Albany, (2019); Ford Foundation Gallery, NY, (2019); Helena Anrather, NY, (2019); St. John the Divine Church, NY (2019); MoCA Tucson, Arizona (2018); Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah, NY (2018); 47 Canal, NY, (2018); Paul Kasmin Gallery, NY (2018); Smack Mellon, NY (2018); The Kitchen, NY (2018); Kate Werble Gallery, NY (2018); Sculpture Center, NY (2018); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (2018); Whitney Museum of American Art, NY (2017); Queens Museum, NY (2016); Socrates Sculpture Park, NY (2016); and Abrons Art Center, NY (2016). Baseera Khan has been awarded numerous grants and fellowships including BRIC Colene Brown Art Prize (2019); Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Grant (2019); and Art Matters (2018). Artist residencies include: LUX Art Institute, California (2021); Pioneer Works, NY (2018); AIRspace, Abrons Art Center, NY (2016); and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Program, Maine (2014). Baseera Khan's work is part of the following public collections: Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH; Kadist, Paris, France and San Francisco, CA; New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum NY; and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN.

Patricia Okoumou is a self-described activist and single mother based in Staten Island, New York. In 1994, Okoumou emigrated from her birthplace of the Democratic Republic of Congo, later becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen after two decades. Okoumou's sociopolitical labor centers the constant need for social justice reform, gender equity, and human rights. In 2018, Okoumou climbed the Statue of Liberty as a solidified act of protest against immigration policy enacted by the previous administration. Okoumou has scaled the Eiffel Tower in France, and in 2019 she climbed onto the roof of a school building in El Paso, Texas operated by the CEO of Southwest Key Detention Center.

Image: **Baseera Khan**, *Core-On (Core Dash On)*, 2021. Published by Participant Press and Housing, New York. [Close-up color image of Baseera Khan's book cover: a golden thread mandala embroidered onto a black, textured fabric background. The center of the mandala is cut out and the text "Core-On (Core Dash On)" is printed inside.]

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