

NEWS RELEASE

Exhibition: *Li/mb*, Keisha Scarville
Dates: December 4, 2021 – February 12, 2022
Opening: Saturday, December 4, 2021 (3pm – 6pm)

Address: 16 Main Street, Ground Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Higher Pictures Generation presents the first solo gallery exhibition by Keisha Scarville.

Keisha Scarville's photographic installation explores the interwoven connections between her homelands of New York City and Guyana and the legacy of the Caribbean limbo dance, born on the ships crossing the Middle Passage. The exhibition's theme draws conceptual inspiration from M. Jacqui Alexander's *Pedagogies of Crossing*, Guyanese author Wilson Harris' writing on the history of limbo and its role in the Caribbean diasporic imagination, and Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite's poem "Caliban." Scarville focuses on how the limbo dance represents a threshold, both physical and allegorical. Figures and faces are obscured, seemingly melting into fabric or joining with stone, and limbs contorted and multiplied in shadowy echoes, all examining notions of liminality, permeability, adaptation, and evasion. The limbo dance describes a performative space that tests the flexibility of the Black body and its ability to negotiate often impossible spaces, while at the same time opening a gateway for recollection.

drum stick knock
and the darkness is over me

knees spread wide
and the water is hiding me

limbo
limbo like me

— Kamau Brathwaite, from "Caliban"

In the work on view, Scarville counters the idea of the camera as a reliable tool for representation and creates an alternative space where the body can engage with abstraction. She uses patterned textiles that are alternately layered and diaphanous, collapsing and expanding the picture plane, to visualize what she describes as a language of reconfiguration: figures and objects, the textures of skin, cloth, rock, and water, all take on aspects of one another. Interested in how absence can be given a visual form and what it means to emerge amid negation, Scarville gives shape to a state of oscillating in-betweenness.

Keisha Scarville (b. 1975) earned her BS from the Rochester Institute of Technology and studied at Parsons School of Design/The New School. Recent group exhibitions include *SeenUNseen*, LA Louver, Los Angeles (2021, curated by Alison Saar); *I Belong to This*, Huxley-Parlour Gallery, London (2021, curated by Justine Kurland); *We Wear the Mask*, Higher Pictures Generation, New York (2020, curated by D'Angelo Lovell Williams); and *All of Them Witches*, Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles (2020, curated by Dan Nadel and Laurie Simmons). Her work is held in the collections of the FSU Museum of Fine Arts, Tallahassee, FL; the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Washington, DC; and the Center of Photography at Woodstock, NY, among others. She lives and works in Brooklyn.

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