



WAVE HILL SUNROOMPROJECTSPACE

July 19 – September 1, 2025 **MONICA DUNCAN** *Breathing as a stone*

MONICA DUNCAN

Born in Rochester, NY
Lives in the Bronx, NY

Rock Telling, video still as part of the exhibition
Breathing as a stone, 2025, video, rotating
light projection, collected plant matter, sound,
custom-printed and collected fabric, crushed
granite and quartzite, clay, pine bark, borrowed
rocks, foam, digital prints, notecards, vinyl.
Photo courtesy of the artist.

Monica Duncan is a Bronx-based video and performance artist whose work explores sensory perception, queer potentiality, and our interconnectedness with living and non-living entities. Presented in the Sunroom, *Breathing as a stone* is a video and performance installation that draws inspiration from two local sources: the unique plants in Wave Hill's Alpine House and the history of camouflage studies based on the rock outcroppings in Van Cortlandt Park. Alpine plants are small but resilient, adapted to survive the harsh conditions of high mountain environments. Duncan's camouflage studies focus on the strategies plants and animals use to blend into their surroundings—techniques that reduce their visibility to predators and other organisms. By incorporating geological materials like granite and quartzite—known for their strength and resistance to weathering—Duncan's installation becomes a framework for adaptive strategies that oscillate between visibility, support, and concealment. This transformative act is central not only to the natural world but also to broader ideas of identity, originality, becoming, and social change.

Using choreography, video projection, soft sculpture, natural materials, and sound, Duncan invites visitors to become plant, rock, lichen, and more. She explores camouflage as a form of empathy, to be in companionship with the other through embracing their shape, pattern, and pose. Through her physical embodiment, Duncan also explores what it is like to be "someone or something's rock," or a system of support. Performative text scores invite viewers into this exploration of how non-human embodiment can guide us toward strategies of resilience, mutualism, and community support.

Duncan's work has been presented at Hebbel am Ufer HAU1, Berlin; Frankfurt Lab; zeitraumexit, Mannheim; and ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe—all in Germany; Komuna//Warszawa, Warsaw, Poland; La Casa Encendida, Madrid, Spain; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, California; the Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, Michigan; and in New York at The Kitchen, Anthology Film Archives and Harvestworks. She earned a BFA from Alfred University, New York; an MFA from the University of California, San Diego; and an MA in choreography and performance from Justus Liebig University Gießen, Germany.

PUBLIC PROGRAM: Sat, Aug 2, 2:30 PM, *Meet the Artist: Conversation and Plant Contouring Workshop*

Organized by Curator of Visual Arts Rachel Raphaela Gugelberger, the Sunroom Project Space provides an opportunity for emerging artists in the New York City area to develop and present a site-specific project as a solo exhibition. The 2025 season features Sonja John, Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya, SuRan Song & William M. Weis III, Monica Duncan, Jennifer Tobias, Caroline Garcia, and Magdalena Dukiewicz, consecutively.

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