



WAVE HILL SUNROOMPROJECTSPACE

April 20 - June 9, 2024

TAO LEIGH GOFFE

Plot and Provision: Crate-Digging

TAO LEIGH GOFFE

Born in London, United Kingdom
Lives in New York, NY

Detail from *Plot and Provision:
Crate-Digging*, 2024
Mixed media sound installation
Courtesy of the artist

Plot and Provision: Crate-Digging by Tao Leigh Goffe explores intergenerational healing through the sounds and soil of the Bronx. Responding to Wave Hill's garden setting, the artist blends primary research on botanical gardens, botanicas and the historical segmentation and allocation of land.

Central to the exhibition is digging through archives, soil and the essence of music. Goffe draws on the local history of Van Cortlandt House and the surrounding park, a former plantation and burial site of enslaved Africans. Indigenous people were enslaved here as well. "Plot" and "provision" link land ownership and transatlantic slavery through distinct audio components: one focuses on monocropping and soil depletion and the other on polyculture and regenerative agriculture. Provision grounds were small parcels of land deemed unsuitable for profitable cultivation allocated to enslaved Africans, native people and indentured Asians for subsistence gardening, thus eliminating the expense of providing them with food. In Caribbean terms, "provisions" refer to staple vegetables such as sweet potatoes, yams, taro, cassava and dasheen, that originated in the Indigenous Americas and Caribbean.

Referencing these intertwined histories—dirt, farm crates, food cans, root vegetables, colors of the Pan African flag—the Sunroom is transformed into a bunker that safeguards historical memory. Drone footage layered with work songs from 1929, remixes by the artist and rhythms produced by the TR-808 drum machine, deliver a deconstructed soundscape on Bronx history through hip hop technologies. Goffe's project evokes the colonial entanglements of the borough, home to one of the largest Caribbean populations, through the indelible association of the Bronx's musical innovations. Culminating in a visceral critique of the violence of monocrop agriculture linking capitalism, racism and the climate crisis, the exhibition "revels in the materiality of dirt," revolutionizing the Sunroom into a space for liberatory practices across Black and Indigenous cultures.

Goffe's work is included in *Reimagining Nanny: Her Sword – A Seed* at the Institute of Jamaica in Kingston, an exhibition that re-imagines the botanical legacy of 18th century warrior Queen, Nanny of the Maroons. She is an artist-in-residence at Columbia University (2022–24) and a member of NEW INC., the New Museum's incubator for art and technology. Goffe is Associate Professor at Hunter College, CUNY, where she directs Dark Laboratory, a creative technology collective, production company and design studio that researches climate and race through theory and action. Goffe earned a PhD from Yale and a BA from Princeton.

PUBLIC PROGRAM: Sat, May 11, 2 PM, Meet the Artist: A conversation with Tao Leigh Goffe, Maaza Mengiste and Kandis Williams. Co-sponsored by Dark Laboratory.

Organized by Curator of Visual Arts Rachel Raphaela Gugelberger, the Sunroom Project Space provides an opportunity for New York-area emerging artists to develop and exhibit a site-specific project as a solo exhibition. The 2024 season features, consecutively: Tao Leigh Goffe, Katherine Sepúlveda, Roger Ferney-Cortés, Dario Mohr, Soeun Bae, Jordany Genao and Stephanie Beck.

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