



Kambui Olujimi, *REDSHIFT*

Curated by Melinda Wang
March 6-12, 2018

Part of SPRING/BREAK Art Show
Four Times Square, New York, NY
Vernissage: Tuesday, March 6, 5pm-9pm
Hours: Wednesday-Monday, March 7-12, 11am-6pm
Tickets: www.springbreakartshow.com
Artwork for sale: www.springbreakartfair.com

REDSHIFT is an immersive installation by **Kambui Olujimi** that explores cultural amnesia and the construction of myth versus history. He presents a new series of portraits of the American men and women who have attempted (successfully or not) to assassinate Presidents of the United States. These monochromatic ink drawings are set against a fragmented and mediated image of the white nationalist rally in Charlottesville in August 2017.

Olujimi examines how our culture of denying facts and rewriting history is the “redshift” that confirms the mythology of whiteness and distorts the patterns of violence throughout our country’s history. Shootings by white assailants are seen as anomalous acts, but they follow an undeniable pattern. Inherent in this mythology are the lack of coverage and the denial of justice for fatal shootings of innocent black citizens. Redshift allows violent acts by white assailants to remain

understated (or even forgotten). We deny our own tradition of violence; we look outward for a cause and culprit instead of interrogating our culture. Olujimi believes that by not acknowledging this history and culture, we in fact perpetuate it. And with each violent act, the shift continues.

Reminiscent of Gerhard Richter's cycle of paintings of members of the Red Army Faction, Olujimi bases his portraits on newspaper and police photographs of the assassins. However, with a painterly hand, these criminals are infused with a melancholic beauty. A veil of mystery both distorts and intensifies reality. The portraits themselves become an investigation of reporting, mediation and myth-making. Placed against an image of what was intended to be a myth-perpetuating rally, Olujimi's rogues' gallery becomes an indictment of our past and present patterns, and a call to confront redshift today to break these patterns in the future. *REDSHIFT* maintains the current of themes that Olujimi has explored in his other bodies of work: the invisible structures of inevitability, the overwriting of Otherness and the process of defiance and persistence.

Kambui Olujimi was born and raised in Bedford-Stuyvesant Brooklyn and received his MFA from Columbia University in New York City. His work challenges established modes of thinking that commonly function as "inevitabilities." This pursuit takes shape through interdisciplinary bodies of work spanning sculpture, installation, photography, writing, video and performance. His solo exhibitions include *Zulu Time* at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art and The Blanton Art Museum; *A Life in Pictures* at MIT List Visual Arts Center; *Solastalgia* at CUE Arts Foundation; and *Wayward North* at Art in General. His works have premiered nationally at The Sundance Film Festival, The Studio Museum in Harlem, the Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; Lincoln Center for Performing Arts; and Mass MoCA. Internationally, his work has been featured at The Jim Thompson Art Center in Bangkok; Museo Nacional Reina Sofia in Madrid; Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Finland; and Para Site in Hong Kong, among others. Olujimi has been awarded residencies from Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation and Civitella Ranieri. He was most recently awarded a residency with Headlands Center for the Arts for Summer 2018. Olujimi has received grants and commissions from numerous institutions including New York Foundation for the Arts, The Jerome Foundation and MTA Arts & Design for the City of New York. Newspapers and journals such as *The New Yorker*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Brooklyn Rail*, *The New York Times* and *Modern Painters* have written about his artwork. Monographs on his past project include *Walk the Plank* (2006), *Winter in America* (in collaboration with Hank Willis Thomas, 2006), *The Lost Rivers Index* (2007), *Wayward North* (2012) and *Zulu Time* (2017). Olujimi's upcoming projects include a solo exhibition in April 2018 with Aspect Ratio and Anastasia Tinari Project in Chicago, and an animated film for the Dreyfuss Planetarium of the Newark Museum.

