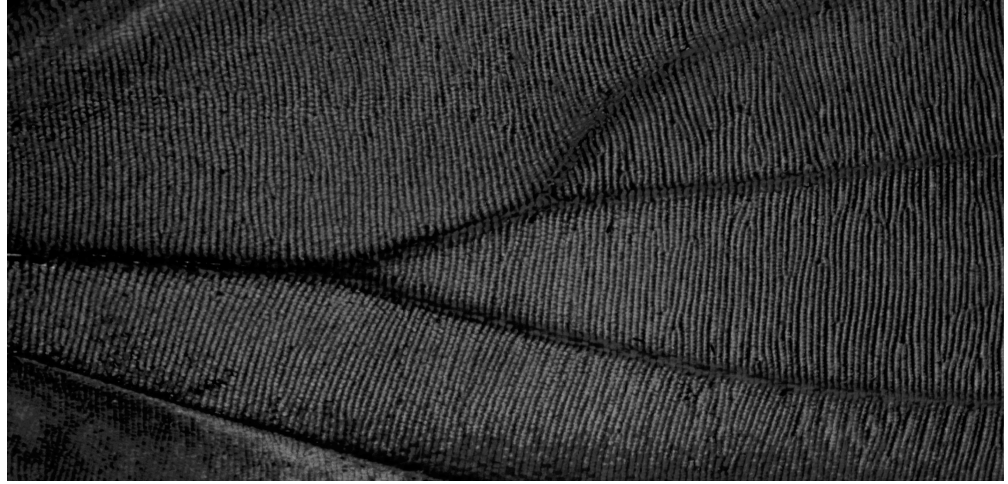


Press Release

ZOLLAMT<sup>MMK</sup> 22 August–01 November 2020

## Precious Okoyomon: Earthseed



In 1876, the United States government introduced the Japanese vine kudzu to Mississippi. The state was in danger of being lost entirely to widespread soil erosion brought about by the extensive cultivation of cotton by chattel slaves, and the vine—already notorious for the speed at which it grew—was deployed as a weapon intended to fortify the ground soil.

Instead, kudzu—now thousands of miles away from its home in Japan—became monstrous, consuming every- thing in its vicinity and earning the epithet “the vine that ate the south.” The word kudzu has meanwhile become a metonymy for the threat of invasive species everywhere. Its specific history as a failed remedy for the monumental toll slavery took on the ecological system of the American South has been largely forgotten. The story of kudzu is written in the same language that objectifies both human beings and nature and produces violence, oppression and individuation. To this day, kudzu remains a foundational substructure of the American South, which—if the plant were removed—would return to a state of erosion. In fact, its cultivation has been declared a crime. Like *Blackness* itself, Kudzu is both indispensable to and irreconcilable with Western civilization.

In the work entitled *Resistance is an atmospheric condition*, consisting of a massive planting of the vine in the gallery, Precious Okoyomon allows this transhistorical realm into the museum. The exhibition space becomes a habitat of constant change—of adaptation, growth, death, difference, inseparability, and emergence—that finds new form in being-like subjects.

Six figures built up out of raw wool and dirt preside over the space. Collectively, they are entitled *Open circle Lived Relation* and embody processes of material decay and rebirth, rot and collapse. The exhibition title is taken from a fictional religion in Octavia Butler’s books *Parable of the Sower* and *Parable of the Talents* whose central contention is that the Earth’s seed can be transplanted anywhere and will survive through adaptation. It asks us to consider a theology of mutation, flux, and motion.

It is not necessary for you to book your visit in advance.

Das ZOLLAMT<sup>MMK</sup> is supported by:

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Image

*Precious Okoyomon: Earthseed*, photo: Robert Pickett

Press photos

Press photos can be downloaded here

[www.mmk.art/de/about/press](http://www.mmk.art/de/about/press)

Press contact

Christina Henneke

Phone +49 69 212 37761

[presse.mmk@stadt-frankfurt.de](mailto:presse.mmk@stadt-frankfurt.de)