

THE AFRICA CENTER

The Africa Center Announces Samiya Bashir's *I Hope This Helps*, a Multi-Sensory Exhibition Exploring Critical Issues Impacting and Reflecting the Human Condition



Opening: May 17 - July 31, 2024

NEW YORK, NY - On May 17, 2024, The Africa Center will present *I Hope This Helps*, a solo multimedia exhibition featuring multi-sensory poetic installations by Harlem-based artist, Samiya Bashir. Featuring 20 works developed in 20 Standards, *I Hope This Helps* explores the complexities of human interaction and engages with critical issues impacting our society. As the world grapples with profound change, *I Hope This Helps* evokes shared experiences of upheaval, displacement, and the relentless pursuit of hope amidst uncertainty.

Through the intersection of text, sound, and video, *I Hope This Helps* offers a non-linear approach that encourages viewers to engage with each Standard independently. Fabrics will be suspended throughout the exhibition in varying heights, creating a flowing pathway that guides the audience through the works. Rather than building meaning sequentially, each piece challenges conventional notions of accessibility and confronts hierarchies, creating a safe space for controversial conversations that are often relegated to therapy or theory. Bashir's works will invite visitors into an internal dialogue to provoke erosive emotions outside of more

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limiting “standard” frameworks.

Standard

- *[heraldry] a long, tapering flag or ensign, as of a monarch or a nation*
- *a form of language widely accepted as the usual form*
- *a rule or principle used as a basis for judgment*
- *an upright support or supporting part*
- *a distinct petal, larger than the rest*
- *a vexillum*

Bashir states, “I Hope This Helps has a dynamic arrangement that invites viewers to navigate the space, sometimes encountering each Standard closer for a more intimate experience, and at other times, drawing them forward with a sense of anticipation.”

Uzodinma Iweala, CEO of The Africa Center states, “We’re privileged to have Samiya exhibit her work at The Africa Center. It is timely, relevant, and reflects that the varied ways in which we experience this life as individuals are much more alike at the core than they are different, no matter what part of the world from which we might come.”

Bashir’s practice explores the intersections of culture, change, and identity through the lens of race, gender, the body, and sexuality. Bashir originally conceptualized *I Hope This Helps* between 2019 and 2020, and briefly debuted at the American Academy in Rome before being immediately disrupted by the pandemic. Following her residency at Sculpture Space in Utica NY, and with the generous support of the New York Council on the Arts grant, Bashir has integrated new elements and insights into *I Hope This Helps*, gained through years of experimentation. Bashir has authored three poetry collections, the most recent being the award-winning “Field Theories” (2018 Oregon Book Award). Her accolades include the Rome Prize in Literature, the Pushcart Prize, and residencies across the US.

I Hope This Helps will be open through July 31. For more information, visit theafricacenter.org/exhibitions.

Credits and Related Content

I Hope This Helps is curated by Favour Ritara, Curatorial Projects Consultant. The exhibition is made possible at The Africa Center with support of NYSCA & Sculpture Space.

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Exhibition Dates and Hours:

May 17 - July 31, 2024

Thursday-Friday: 11am - 5pm

Saturday: 12pm- 9pm

Sunday: 12pm- 8pm

Location:

The Africa Center

1280 Fifth Avenue

New York, NY

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About The Africa Center

The Africa Center is a multidisciplinary 501c3 nonprofit institution helping to shape a vision of Africa's future. Serving as a gateway to engagement with contemporary Africa, and as a platform for the exchange of ideas around culture, business, and policy as related to the African continent, The Africa Center advances thought and action around Africa's global influence and impact on our collective futures. Learn more at www.theafricacenter.org. Follow The Africa Center on X.com, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube @TheAfricaCenter.

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