

Alphawood Exhibitions at Wrightwood 659 Presents

John Akomfrah: *Four Nocturnes*

Three-Channel Video Installation by Sir John Akomfrah

widely respected artist and filmmaker

Sept 27, 2024 – Feb 15, 2025



WHAT **John Akomfrah: *Four Nocturnes***

WHEN September 27, 2024 – February 15, 2025

WHERE Wrightwood 659, 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614 (Second Floor)

Wrightwood 659 hosts two installations by distinguished artist and filmmaker John Akomfrah, known for his moving works which investigate memory, post-colonialism, temporality, and the experiences of migrant diasporas globally.

Four Nocturnes is a 52-minute, three-channel, HD color video installation which explores the complex relationship between humanity's destruction of the natural world and the destruction of mankind. Using Africa's declining elephant populations as its narrative spine, *Four Nocturnes* is staged as a set of impressionist meditations. The film questions mortality, loss, fragmented identity, mythology, and memory through poetic visuals that survey the landscape of African cultural heritage. *Four Nocturnes* is the third part of a trilogy of films which included *Vertigo Sea* and *Purple* and was commissioned for the inaugural Ghana Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019.

A second Akomfrah work will be on view at Wrightwood 659, *Toxic Cloud*, an installation comprising hundreds of plastic jugs suspended overhead, capturing the vast scale of the polluted atmosphere.

Akomfrah (b. 1957) lives and works in London. His work has been shown in museums and exhibitions around the world including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the New Museum, New York; the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Serpentine Gallery, London; and Tate Britain, London, among others. He has also been featured in many international film festivals, including Sundance Film Festival, Utah, US (2013 and 2011) and Toronto International Film Festival, Canada (2012). He was awarded the Artes Mundi Prize in 2017 and a Knighthood for services to the Arts in 2023. In 2024 Akomfrah presented a new body of work entitled *Listening All Night to the Rain* in the British Pavilion in Venice, commissioned by the British Council for the 60th Venice Biennale.

John Akomfrah: *Four Nocturnes* is presented by Alphawood Exhibitions at Wrightwood 659.

©John Akomfrah; Courtesy of Smoking Dogs Film and Lisson Gallery.

About Wrightwood 659

Founded in 2018, Wrightwood 659 is a private, non-collecting institution. Located at 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, it is envisioned as a new kind of arts space devoted to presenting exhibitions on architecture and socially engaged art, including issues facing the LGBTQ+ community, and Asian art and architecture. Wrightwood 659 was designed by Pritzker Prize winner Tadao Ando, who transformed a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light. Acclaimed as one of Chicago's "hidden treasures," Wrightwood 659 offers visitors a chance to engage with the pressing issues of our time in an intimate and beautiful space. For additional information, please visit wrightwood659.org.

About Alphawood Exhibitions

Alphawood Exhibitions is an affiliate of Alphawood Foundation, a Chicago-based, grant-making private foundation working for an equitable, just, and humane society.

Wrightwood 659 Hours of Operation

Fridays 12 noon-7 pm; Saturdays 10 am-5 pm.

Tickets

Admission is \$15 and is available online only at <https://tickets.wrightwood659.org/events>. Tickets go on sale September 5, 2024. Please note, admission is by advance ticket only. Walk-ups are not permitted.

National Media Contact | Ennis O'Brien

Betsy Ennis: betsy@ennisobrien.com | +1 917.783.6553

Stephanie Markovic: stephanie@ennisobrien.com | +1 347.628.4688

Chicago Media Contact | The Silverman Group

Beth Silverman: beth@silvermangroupchicago.com | +1 312.560.4783

Louise Yingduo Liu: louise@silvermangroupchicago.com | +1 312.961.9290

Image:

John Akomfrah, *Four Nocturnes*, 2019. Three channel HD colour video installation, 7.1 sound, 50 minutes. Installed in The Unintended Beauty of Disaster, Lisson Gallery, London, 2021. © Smoking Dogs Films; Courtesy Smoking Dogs Films and Lisson Gallery.