To speak of things you have not seen
Wed 20 May, 7pm, £5/£3 Conc, Clore Studio
For this lecture-performance, presented in conjunction with the exhibition Kinjiketile Suite, Kapwani Kiwanga takes us on a journey between fact and fiction whilst revealing forgotten accounts and fantastical stories associated with the legacy of the Maji Maji rebellion.

Exhibition Tours
Daily, 1pm and Last Fridays, 7pm, Free
Join the SLG’s gallery assistants for an informal drop-in tour of the current exhibitions: Kapwani Kiwanga: Kinjiketile Suite and Dorine van Meel: Between the Dog and the Wolf. (No booking required)

Booking for most events is essential, book online or call 020 7703 6120.

Fans pay less for tickets – join from £20 per year: www.southlondongallery.org/fans

This gallery guide is printed on recycled paper. If you do not wish to keep this guide, please consider returning it at the end of your visit so that it can be reused.
The South London Gallery presents the first UK solo exhibition by artist Kapwani Kiwanga. Her practice interweaves a research-based investigation, influenced by earlier training in social sciences, with a more subjective and fictional observation of culture. Through performances, sound installations and video that utilise documentary tropes, Kiwanga’s particular interest in the transmission of culture drives her exploration into the formal potential of oral histories.

For this exhibition, Kiwanga continues her research into the legacy of the 1905-1907 Maji Maji uprising against German colonial rule in what was then Tanganyika, German East Africa. According to oral history, the rebellion was fuelled by the prophecies of the spiritual medium Kinjeketile, who galvanised the Maji Maji fighters against the colonial rulers with his belief in a sacred water, which would make anyone who consumed it invincible to the German bullets. More than a temporary union against the common enemy, the rebellion provided the possibility of creating an alternative and unified social structure in the country. Although the uprising failed to overthrow German rule, the aftermath of the war had long-term effects on the land and its people. Kiwanga uses this event, and its adaptation in folklore and popular culture, as a starting point from which to trace how historical accounts linger in a collective consciousness and weigh on a nation’s identity long after their occurrence.

For Kinjeketile Suite, she translates her research-based practice into the exhibition space, weaving together material from various sources, from eyewitness accounts of the events of the Maji Maji rebellion compiled in a study by the University of Dar es Salaam, through to Ebrahim N. Hussein’s influential play Kinjeketile (1969). Source texts are interpreted by actors in English and Swahili every Saturday between 12–4pm for the duration of the exhibition.

Kiwanga’s research project, 1968
Selection of collected papers from Maji Maji research project, 1968
Dar es Salaam, University College, G.E. Cawas and J. Vile (eds)

Section 1
Extract from archival footage of an African entertainment unit, 1944, digitised 16mm film, 1.35min
Coursey of the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum
Ebrahim N. Hussein, Kinjeketile, English version, 1970
Dar es Salaam, Oxford University Press
Ebrahim N. Hussein, Kinjeketile, Swahili version, 1969
Dar es Salaam, Oxford University Press
Selection of collected papers from Maji Maji research project, 1968
Dar es Salaam: University College, G.E. Cawas and J. Vile (eds)

Section 2
Untitled, audiovisual, 2015
The Cow Shed, short film from Tanzania Year 16 Video Communications Project, 1971, 42min
Director Gerard Balion, producer Pauli Balion and TYS team. Courtesy the Balion Estate
Time Magazine, 13 March 1964

Kapwani Kiwanga (b.1978 Hamilton, Canada. Lives in Paris, France) studied Anthropology and Comparative Religions at McGill University, Canada. She has been artist-in-residence at l’Ecole National Superieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris; Le Fresnoy; National Contemporary Art Studios, Tourcoing; MU Foundation, Eindhoven and Le Manège, Dakar.

Her film and video works have been nominated for two BAFTAs and have received awards at international film festivals. She has exhibited internationally including at Centre Pompidou, Paris; Foundation Ricard, Paris; Glasgow Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow; Paris Photo, Paris; Bienal Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo, Almeria and the Art Catalyst, London.


The collective process inherent in the spirit of the uprising, and allure to Ujamaa, a particular kind of socialism established in Tanzania by Julius Nyerere which promoted the collectivisation of farming.

A parallel narrative is told by Kiwanga herself through a sequence of short audio vignettes which deliver a subjective and personal entry point to the story of the Maji Maji uprising. Audible at different points throughout the exhibition space, her narration functions as a fragmented guide through the show.

www.southlondongallery.org/kapwanikiwanga
#kapwanikiwanga

Photography is not permitted in the main gallery. Please refrain from touching all objects in the exhibition.

Live performances will take place in the main gallery every Saturday between 12-4pm for the duration of the exhibition.

Actors: Brian Chandrabose, Shepherd Manyika, Sam Marberg, Mary Nyambara

With thanks to Luca Lennon, Dana Peters, Hannah Louise Simmons, Catherine Tike, Lucie Wright.

Biography
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