Euridice Zaituna Kala. *Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht* (EN) Kunsthalle Münster

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www.kunsthallemuenster.de

An institution of the:

STADT MÜNSTER

A touring exhibition co-produced with La Criée contemporary art centre in Rennes.

la criée
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Opening: October 9, 2026, 6 pm
Maria Winkel, Mayor City of Münster (Greeting)
Merle Radtke, Director Kunsthalle Münster (Introduction)

Accompanying programme:
→ 10/10/2026, 3 pm, Listening Session
→ 10/10/2026, 3:30 pm, Artist talk with Euridice Zaituna Kala, Sophie Kaplan and Merle Radtke
→ 08/11/2026, 3 pm, Guided tour through the exhibition Euridice Zaituna Kala. *Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht* with Heiko Lietz, Kunsthalle Münster
→ 03/12/2026, 6 pm, Guided tour through the exhibition Euridice Zaituna Kala. *Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht* with Heiko Lietz, Kunsthalle Münster
→ 24/01/2027, 3 pm, Curator's tour through the exhibition Euridice Zaituna Kala. *Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht* with Merle Radtke, Kunsthalle Münster

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Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht is the first solo exhibition by the Mozambican artist Euridice Zaituna Kala at a German institution. After initially being shown at La Criée centre d'art contemporain in Rennes in 2025, the exhibition moved to La Loge in Brussels in 2026. It has now reached what is, at least for now, its final location at the Kunsthalle Münster, where it occupies the premises of the former grain warehouse.

Euridice Zaituna Kala's work originates from an in-depth deconstruction, manipulation and reconstruction of cultural and historical metamorphoses. It invites us to engage with the historical and cultural transformations of personal and collective memory. A particular focus lies on the complex relationship between colonialism and post-colonialism, as well as post-colonial memory. In order to address the extensive history of erasure and silence, and trace the remnants of invisible subjectivities and communities, Kala examines the ambivalence of historical narratives and follows up on the constant rewriting of history and probes its gaps.

Kala combines the findings of her research with personal memories. In line with the concept of daylighting—the process of uncovering previously buried watercourses and restoring them to their natural, above-ground state—Kala unearths stories overlaid by other narratives, thus rendering them perceptible. She evokes memories embedded within the land and nature. She raises the question: what is revealed when a surface is cracked open? In her photographs, installations and sound works, she explores inherent connections between water, nature and human experience—with the aim of encouraging a reflection on ancestry, ecology and landscape as a living archive. The process involves both collective and individual experiences. Stories emerge from dialogues with ancestors, decolonial interpretations and the concept of "dérive": an aimless journey through the city as a shaped space. *Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht* poses the question: what kind of world emerges when we reveal the water that flows beneath our feet? This artistic quest opens up a space where one can delve into forgotten stories—whether individually or collectively—while simultaneously consider why these stories were forgotten in the first place, and what consequences this memory loss (whether conscious or unconscious) has entailed. The artist invites visitors to become part of a circle of shared stories.

The moment you step into the Kunsthalle Münster, you find yourself immersed in another world, created by the use of coloured light; an intervention impossible to disregard and through which the real surroundings fade into the background. You literally see everything in a different light, while your view of the outside world changes along with it—for the moment of the visit, at least.

Forming the backdrop to many of Kala's sculptural works on display at the Kunsthalle is the influence of architecture and urban planning on humans and nature. Starting point for the inquiry into this very specific topic was a research residency the artist undertook in New York in 2023, during which she examined the insatiability and violence inherent in the city's architecture. In New York, a metropolitan hegemony arose regardless of individuals or the ecosystem, and it remains to this day a model of socio-political organization. The city thus directly found its way into her works Architectures, Thin, and dreams I + II (both 2024) (4 + 5) and Screens, waterfalling, subway (2024) (6).

To which extent do human-made structures become forms of domination, on the one hand, of nature, and, on the other, of people? This question also underlies the first work in the exhibition Ailes, Serre, Palace (2024–2025) (1), consisting of 52 glass plates suspended freely from a metal framework. With the title of the work, Kala alludes to the Crystal Palace, a structure built for the first World's Fair in London in 1851, made of iron girders and flat glass, whose construction allowed for the complete absence of load-bearing masonry. The building represented an architectural masterpiece and embodied the vision of a "new world". In both the 19th and 20th centuries, London's Crystal Palace served as a widely known venue for "human zoos". Visitors were presented with a supposedly scientific "ethnology", a practice which was, however, based primarily on stereotypes, the demonstration of white supremacy and the romanticization of imperial conquests. On the other hand, the artist's play with photographs taken on the banks of the river Vilaine in Rennes and framed in several of the glass panels, references the architectural qualities of the glass structure. Their materiality is reminiscent of the original function of what is termed "daylighting" in glass structures: natural light penetrates a material that protects the interior whilst imposing a new logic upon it—thereby creating a space in suspension between openness and control. Kala's object is

presented in conjunction with her sound installation Le Trou Noir – Rituel (2), in which voices overlap, occasionally connect with one another and drift apart again. We hear the artist's voice as she remembers Maputo, Mozambique. Her words—resembling accounts of childhood memories—disclose the intergenerational scars Portuguese colonialization has left on human bodies and in nature, along with its enduring effects of subjugation and social humiliation. Her voice blends with those of her grandmother, her mother and her daughter. Here, the stories of women from different generations, including the ways these stories intersect, are brought to life. Simultaneously, possibilities of speaking and listening to one another are explored. In resistance to colonialism—an endeavour inextricably linked to capitalism and the failure of civilization—the voices of these women affirm both their heritage and their connection to the land.

The work Louise Kuling _ Why be born a slave (2024) (3) is based on a negative the artist transferred onto glass. The image features Louise Kuling, a free American woman, whose photograph was taken in Paris in 1864 as part of an ethnographic portrait series for the French Museum of Natural History. Kala's work depicts Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux's sculpture *Pourquoi naître esclave?* [Why Born Enslaved?] (1868), which portrays an anonymous slave woman whose body is bound in chains and whose breasts are exposed. In the course of her research, the artist identified the subject as the abolitionist "Louise Kuling. Born in Norfolk, Virginia (USA), daughter of parents from the Congo. Brought to France by Commander Louvet." The work carries forward Kala's inquiry into absence in archives and the persistent projections that Western perspectives impose upon Black bodies. The work is extended by a performative gesture: In front of the picture, Kala has placed a bowl containing offerings for the ancestors.

Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht echoes the voices of various struggles—ecological, feminist, indigenous and postcolonial—and links them to Kala's own history as well as that of the places where her works were created or are on display. It is a dialogue between inner and the outer worlds, between objective and subjective elements, stories and images; it is a vivid, sensual and radiant homage to the forces of life. Here, the cyclical also plays a significant role as structuring element, and overlapping (knowledge) systems that endure through the ages come into focus. This becomes particularly evident in her new work We didn't

hear it, we couldn't hear it (2026) (7), which is inspired by her on-site research in Münster, in particular the astronomical clock (1540–1542) in St. Paul's Cathedral. What makes this clock unique is that time is displayed anti-clockwise. The clock also indicates the positions of the stars, the phases of the moon and the sun's position in the zodiac. In this sense, it fits in with the artist's approach which sometimes provokes unexpected connections and suggests a kind of pluriversalism. Through this, she reminds us of how important it is to take all perspectives into account. On the panes—made of antique and cathedral glass, whose distinctive texture serves as a reference to Münster's many churches—one can see photographs the artist took of windows and their designs during a stay in the Ruhr region several years ago. As she wandered through various cities, she started to notice an arrangement of plants, memorabilia, drawings, artefacts on display as if to establish a form of communication between those inside and those outside. These displays of sometimes exotic and non-endemic plants spoke of the non-locality, of migration of the living, of uninterrupted cycles, of light, photosensitivity and the stars.

The concept of "dérive" also plays an important role in the artist's exploration of the river in the context of her large-scale installation Eutrophê: la vague (the wave) (2025) (8). It is a form of discovery that goes beyond systematic mapping and surveying; rather, it is a form of listening that transcends the vast urban complexes beneath which rivers and waterways have been buried, thereby radically disrupting the relationships between humans and their original natural environment and obliterating cultural practices. This work consists of industrial and hand-blown glass set in metal frames. The glass panels are placed directly on the floor, much like large windows. These windows—or rather screens revealing as much as they obscure—are one of the characteristic forms found in Kala's artistic practice. In Münster, the wave spreads throughout the entire space, inviting the viewer to immerse themselves in it. The glass is printed with transparent and opaque images: some of the panes are coated with acrylic paint containing grasses, seeds or leaves, while others bear enigmatic inscriptions that seem to whisper stories. Some details can only be discerned upon close inspection, revealing themselves only when viewed from the reverse or underside. Emerging from the wave is a semi-transparent image of a rail—or, more precisely, an American coot—

which is able to fly, dive or dash across the water. The openness of the work in the first room (1) is contrasted here with a sense of opacity, that is reminiscent of the description by Édouard Glissant in his book *Poetics of Relation* (1990). According to him, opacity means that a person, a culture or an identity need not be entirely transparent, measurable nor appropriated by others. Glissant thus challenges the Western conception of universalism and the Enlightenment, which claims to fully understand, define and thereby subjugate the "other". Commissioned for the exhibition in Rennes, Eutrophê: la vague (the wave) deals with the issue of eutrophication—a state of excessive nutrient enrichment—and the river Vilaine, which had been filled in after being classified as unhygienic due to human activities in the surrounding area. The hand-blown glass vessels serve as bowls containing old seeds of native species, collected by Thao Ngo, a nursery owner from Rennes committed to the conservation of wild plants. They symbolize longevity and the continuity of life, the eternal cycle of renewal.

Daylighting: aber es ist Wasser, das spricht: depending on the position of the sun, the water in the Kunsthalle's premises likewise begins to whisper. At certain times of day, sunlight reflected from the water's surface outside penetrates the interior and begins to glisten on the ceiling. Even though, in this case, it is not a filled or forgotten river making itself heard, but an artificially created body of water, it too has a story to tell—about waterways, trade routes, interdependencies and connections.

Merle Radtke; translation: Barbara Lang

it wasn't so much that she could predict the future. it was more that she could breathe into the past. open her body to the forgotten. relive it other ways. she could do it any day as if no one had ever died. or since dead as if no one had been lost. or since lost as if the lessons lasted like love or what would have been love, if someone had been waiting with an impossibly open heart. if someone had been still enough to still sense it anyway. yes. sense. so she made that her work.[1]

With poetry and sense, Euridice Zaituna Kala materially traces uncovered and restored watercourses and their entanglement with future ways of living commons,[2] urban planning, critical spatial practices and pluralities of ecologies. From the submerged and subterranean layers of things, Kala excavates as much as she foretells, moving between organic perceptions and invisible infrastructures. Contrasting the exhausted linearity of capitalist time and its regimes of classification, she proposes another rhythm of ascent: one that does not rise towards the sky like the modern skyscraper, but moves through hidden depths, following the knowledge of the stars, the dormant lives of seeds and the transmigrating trajectories of birds.

While we know more than ever about capitalism, colonial and patriarchal histories, technology-based systems and ecological destruction, this accumulation of knowledge does not necessarily provide us with a way out of the structures that have produced these conditions. Exhaustion and informational pollution distance us from dreams, while the fragmentation of contemporary forms of identity can atrophy our capacity for the oneiric hallucinations "that still allow us to sing in the desert when the throat is almost too dry for speaking".[3] The works by Euridice Zaituna Kala propose to look out for the mysteries of a world whose membrane has been intoxicated and colonized.

1 Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Dub: Finding Ceremony* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020), 176.

2 "Living commons" refers to forms of collective life, care and resource-sharing that resist enclosure and the privatization of common resources, as theorized by Silvia Federici and Denise Ferreira da Silva.

3 Maya Deren, "A Statement of Principles," in *e-flux Notes*, 12 August 2024, https://www.e-flux.com/notes/621433/a-statement-of-principles [23 September 2026].

"If you don't sleep, when do you find the time to dream? Can one be dissociated and love at the same time? Can you be present and absent at the same time?"[4]

These metaphysical and erotic questions surround Kala's practice concerned with both meaning and matter. A sensory approach to art-making and a breathing memory of detriments and dignities are enclosed in a black hole that does not eclipse the light. It is certainly a contradiction. Or perhaps, more aptly, a mystery: the mystery of eternity, of a succession of events beyond eternity that is eternity itself—light. Revelation and obscurity envelop it. A gravity—also in the sense of *gravid*—manifests itself in the oral, affective, embodied, inventive and non-linear ways of being custodians of the past and foretelling the future of the present. Not only to transmit it, but to inhabit it. Through an inheritance to which one belongs and yet one that must be reinvented and re-*creolized*.

With an archaeological impulse that is also ecological, planetary and cosmological, in communion with the body, Kala digs into counter-archives and the under-commons. Through her work, the artist traces how resources and forms of knowledge are embedded in human and more-than-human bodies, places and times, illuminating how they may give rise to relationships that remain partially hidden, obscure and imbued with eros. Her method could be described as a fugitive and opaque form of fabulation: a space between memory and invention that slips across categories, unsettles fixed meanings and leaves us with potentially other forms of relation and other worlds.

This direction has permeated her work since her research initiated in New York City and developed in collaboration with local and grassroots initiatives dedicated to daylighting.[5] Situated between environmental practices and climate-conscious urbanism, daylighting proposes the opening up of previously buried water courses in order to create landscapes that reconcile the relationship between urban and natural environments.

Kala's research on architecture draws attention to the social inequalities inscribed in the vertical city: while luxury skyscrapers rise above Manhattan, predominantly Black and Latin American communities living

4 The first question comes from Alok Vaid-Menon, a non-binary/transfeminine artist, writer, performer, actor, and LGBTQIA+ rights activist based in NYC; the second and third are drawn from the script of Euridice Zaituna Kala's performance-based work *Le Trou Noir – Rituel* (2025).

5 In late 2023, the artist undertook a research residency at Villa Albertine in New York, exploring the relationship between the megacity, its architecture, along with the people and ecosystems that preceded it.

in less affluent areas are increasingly exposed to flooding caused by climate change. A similar spatial and social divide is allegorically depicted in Bong Joon-ho's film *Parasite*, where floodwaters invade the subterranean home of a poor family, leaving them without electricity, while the wealthy family they serve inhabits a luminous glass house surrounded by carefully maintained gardens. But Kala's practice of daylighting goes beyond revealing such inequalities. In a cosmic and ceremonial sense, it also asks what happens after something has been brought back to the surface; what forms of life can return; what memory can circulate again, without being rendered fully transparent.

The body of work in the exhibition delves into water, architecture and ancestral histories, seeking the conditions through which they can surface, circulate and enter into new relations. Sculptures and installations offer surfaces and structures that echo industrial and urban forms: from the transparency of glass, which enables visibility and control, to the modern solidity of metal, which allows for modular and algorithmic reproducibility. At the same time, through delicate gestures of sensing and choreographic acts of liberation, the works encapsulate traces of a living ecosystem: bird feathers inscribed onto iridescent metal and seeds held in pinkish glass vessels.

In Eutrophê: la vague (the wave) (8), Euridice Zaituna Kala creates an undulating installation of glass, metal, photographs, text and vegetation, inspired by the phenomenon of eutrophication, in which bodies of water are suffocated by pollution. Photographs taken along the Vilaine River in Rennes and on Réunion Island are combined with blown-glass vessels containing wild and traditional medicinal seeds. Suspended within the wave-like structure, these seeds evoke both the loss of ecological and ancestral knowledge and the possibility of its regeneration.

By opening spaces containing gaps, fragments and potential connections, the artist moves from the archive towards a counter-archive, suggesting the need to navigate between different registers of knowledge. In seeking not only to tell different stories but to tell them differently, Kala also operates within what artist, curator and scholar Carine Zaayman has described as the "anarchival".[6] The anarchival draws on imagination and inventiveness while attending to knowledge embedded in communities and carried across generations, allowing histories that have been marginalized or overlooked to emerge.

In Münster, the third iteration of the long-lasting research conducted by the artist after exhibitions held in Rennes and Brussels, this translates into a new layer in the process of revelation, a contact with cosmic movements: a breath that brings an ancestral rhythm into the circulation of temporality, through soil, seeds, waterways, bodies and seasonal cycles. If the violent and tortuous evolution of humans has led to modern infrastructures that impose intensive exploitation upon water, other species inhabit rivers, wetlands and landscapes as living carriers of stories and inventiveness in relation to their environments. Birds become one such figure in this constellation, leading the artist to consider the city through the fluctuation of their movements across the territory. Unlike urban plans and infrastructures designed by humans, they do not define borders but neglect and cross them, thus connecting fragments of landscape that urban planning tends to separate. Through works related to these reflections, an interspecies ancestral listening, mediated by intimacy, is proposed.

Kindred beyond taxonomy, this form of listening addresses the material underpinnings of a common world. In the exhibition, birds become a tangible sculptural presence, expanding the exhibition beyond its architectural boundaries. They interrupt the industrial logic embedded in the history of the Kunsthalle Münster, which occupies a former grain silo next to the city's harbour and was originally designed for the storage and circulation of grain as an industrial commodity. Against the *separability* underlying modern and racial logic—also applicable to the human's relation to organic elements such as grain—birds introduce *deep implicancy*: a relation across plural temporalities and entities, a continuous circulation of living matter. *Deep implicancy*, a notion developed by philosopher Denise Ferreira da Silva, is connected to her thoughts on the ancestral and highlights how inseparability exists not at the level of the molecule but in the constitutive, elemental particles that are continuously recycled through transition and transformation. As "wind carries dust, particles, voices, and memories across apparently distant times and places,"[7] Kala's work reminds us, in a semi-translucent way, of how birds participate in the movement and transformation of ecological ecosystems. Here, daylight-

6 See Carine Zaayman, *Anarchival Practices: The Clanwilliam Arts Project as Re-imagining Custodianship of the Past* (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press), 2023.

7 Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman, "Ancestral Clouds and Ancestral Claims: A Conversation," in: *e-flux Notes*, September 22, 2025, https://www.e-flux.com/notes/6783396/ancestral-clouds-and-ancestral-claims-a-conversation [23 September 2026].

ing becomes an interspecies and multi-temporal memory, vibrating as a witness to inevitable transformation while leaving open the possibility of what might yet emerge.

Similar gestures reflect the artist's attention to intergenerational transmission. As in the performance-based piece Le Trou Noir – Rituel (2), where matrilineal memory returns through Creole language, voice and the body, a new work for Münster repositions forms of memory that have persisted alongside institutional histories. In between revelation and recirculation, this new work is inspired by astrology and non-economic forms of temporality. Drawn to the astronomical clock in the *Paulusdom*, Kala turns her attention to the astrological signs and allegories of knowledge embedded within its ecclesiastical architecture. In a city whose history is strongly associated with the Peace of Westphalia and the political order organized around territorial sovereignty, treaties and negotiation, these celestial images introduce another register of time and knowledge, rooted in cycles, recurrence and forms of transmission that exceed the linear temporality of political history. Kala's gesture also echoes political economist Susan Strange's critique of the "Westphalian system," whose territorial organization of political power developed in symbiosis with the capitalist market economy, while struggling to address ecological, financial and social processes that go beyond national borders. Countering the logic of containment that underlies both territorial sovereignty and capitalist organization, the artist excavates forms of knowing that move across bodies, cycles and scales, opening onto relations that cannot be contained within a single territory or historical time.

The astronomical clock brings together celestial movement, bodily cycles, religious time and earthly chronology, while the allegorical female figures surrounding it materialize forms of knowledge historically situated alongside, and often outside, institutional authority. Astrology thus becomes a form of *fractal thinking*: rather than replacing one history with another, it allows different scales of existence—cosmic, historical, organic and quantum—to coexist within the same temporal field. Beyond the duality opposition between religion and secular politics, Kala proposes other ways of organizing time and relations. Even within the most representative spaces and material expressions of hegemonic culture, cosmological, bodily and intergenerational forms of knowing persist as traces of what has been dismissed as superstition, intuition or magic. Instead of approaching the stars in order to interpret and measure them, her works invite us to descend into the depths of breath, to sense the vast distance between us and the stars and, within it, recover the ceremony of life.

Sonia D'Alto

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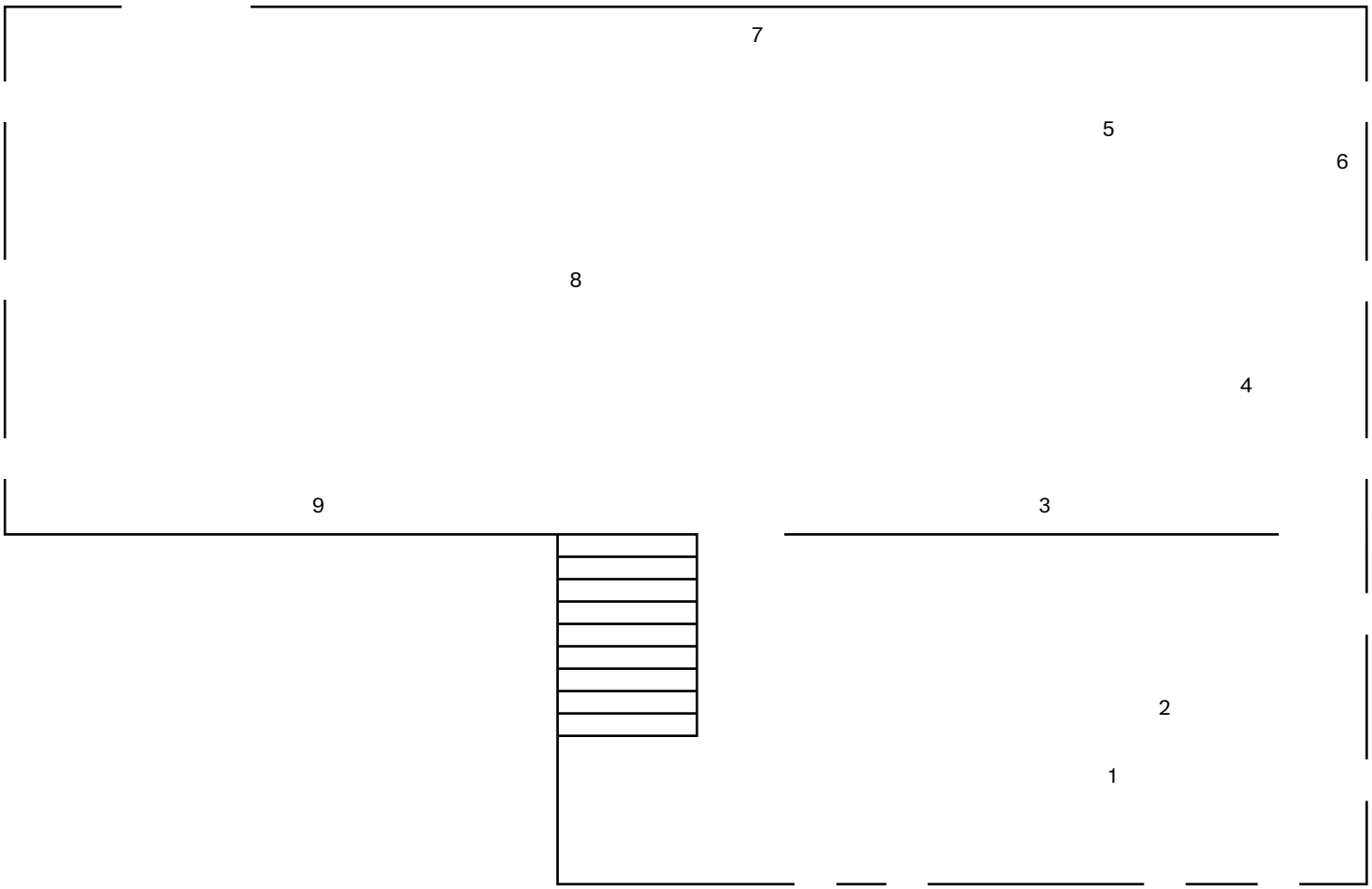
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Euridice Zaituna Kala (born 1987 in Maputo, Mozambique) lives and works in Maison-Alfort, France. Kala trained in photography at the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg from 2010 to 2012 and at the Asiko School in Maputo in 2015. Kala has staged numerous performances including *Ritual as March as Protest*, HKW Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2023); *Sea(E)scapes: Listening Session*, Jeu de Paume, Paris (2022); *Tœtra*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2021); *Stranger, Danger: Wait, it's just a prayer Room*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2019); *Mackandal Turns into a Butterfly: a love portion*, La Galerie-CAC de Noisy-le-Sec (2018). Her recent exhibitions include *En quelques gestes: as if two suns were setting*, galerie anne barrault, Paris (2024); *Echos der Bruderländer*, HKW Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2024); *Prémio Paulo Cunha e Silva*, Galerie Municipal, Porto (2023); *Indigo Waves and Other Stories*, Savvy Contemporary, Berlin (2023); *Sea(E) scapes DNA: Don't (N)ever Ask*, Galerie Salon H, Paris (2022); *Fata Morgana*, Jeu de Paume, Paris (2022); *This Is Not Africa – Unlearn What You Have Learned*, ARoS Museum, Aarhus (2021); *Je suis l'archive, I the archive*, Villa Vas-silieff, Paris (2020). In 2024, she was invited to participate in the exhibition *Passengers in Transit* as part of the 60th edition of the Venice Biennale.



Raum 1 / Room 1

1 *Ailes, Serre, Palace*, 2024–2025, Transferdruck auf 52 Glasfiesen, lackierte Metallstruktur / Transfers on 52 glass tiles, painted metal structure, Maße variabel / Dimensions variable

2 *Le Trou Noir – Rituel*, 2025, Ton / sound, 18:00 min.

Raum 2 / Room 2

3 *Louise Kuling_Why be born a slave*, 2024, Transferdruck auf Glas, Bild basierend auf der Büste „La Négresse“ von Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1867), Metallrahmen / Transfer on glass, image based on the bust „La Négresse“ by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1867), metal frame, 30 × 22 × 2 cm

4 *Architectures, Thin, dreams II*, 2024, Transferdruck auf Glas, blau gefärbtes Glas, Digitalbilder, Metallrahmen / Transfer on glass, blue tinted glass, digital images, metal frame, 121 × 80 × 43 cm

5 *Architectures, Thin, dreams I*, 2024, Transferdruck auf Glas, blau gefärbtes Glas, Digitalbilder, Metallrahmen / Transfer on glass, blue tinted glass, digital images, metal frame, 164,5 × 94 × 42 cm

6 *Screens, waterfalling, subway*, 2024, Transferdruck Glas, gefärbtes Glas, irisierender Metallrahmen, Kaltemaillierung / Transfer on glass, tinted glass, iridescent frame, cold enamelling, 40 × 31,5 × 18 cm

7 *We didn’t hear, we couldn’t hear*, 2026, Transferdruck auf Glas, rosa gefärbtes Kathedral- und Antikglas, Digitalbilder, Metallrahmen / Transfer on glass, pink tinted cathedral and antique glass digital images, metal frame, vier Teile / four parts, je / each 135,5 × 51 cm.

8 *Eutrophê: la vague (the wave)*, 2025, Transferdruck auf Glas und Metall, irisierende Metallrahmen, Schrift, Gravuren, Samen, Farben, Kaltmetallisierung, Motoren / Transfers on glass and metal, iridescent metal frames, writing, engravings, seeds, paints, cold metallisation, motorization, Maße variabel / Dimensions variable

9 *Nuit Américaine*, 2024, Transferdruck auf Glas, Metalltransfer, Digitalbild, Metallrahmen / Transfer on glass, metal transfer, digital image, metal frame, 87 × 77 × 39 cm

Alle Werke / all works courtesy of the artist und / and galerie anne barrault