

PRESS RELEASE

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MIROIRS DE L'HOMME, the first solo exhibition to be held at Societe Generale by American artist Fahamu Pecou

The Societe Generale Collection, in partnership with the Backslash gallery, is delighted to present 46 works of the artist, selected from French and international private art collections. This exhibition will be on display from 28 September 2017 at Societe Generale Headquarters in La Défense, Paris.

>>> Press visit and private view in the presence of the artist, Wednesday 28 September 2017 at 6 pm.

>>> The exhibition is open to the public by registration.



In 2014, Societe Generale acquired a painting by the artist, *Negus is as Negus Does* (153 x 132 cm), an imagined press cover inspired by *The Favorite Magazine*, “the first and only weekly magazine by and for colored people” published in the early 1900s. It features the artist striking the same pose as the Statue of Liberty holding up a Yoruba statue (from Nigeria) in one hand and in the other holding what could be *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land* by Aimé Césaire.

The Collection Societe Generale and Backslash gallery are happy to exhibit over 40 works (paintings, drawings, video) by the artist.

The artist

Fahamu Pecou, born in 1975, is an interdisciplinary artist whose works combine observations on hip-hop, fine art and popular culture. He made his mark early in his career with his faux covers of leading magazines such as *George*, *Art Review* and *ArtNews*.

With his provocative attitude and immediately identifiable universe, the artist avails himself of the tools of hip-hop culture to question Black identity in modern-day America and the exploitation of Black people and culture in the media. Tirelessly multiplying representations of African-American identity within our contemporary societies, his paintings, performances and academic projects make a strong statement, levelling criticism, sometimes caustic, often imbued with humor, at certain attitudes currently observed among Black men.



Fahamu Pecou's artistic explorations also encompass a deep-reaching reflection on the splendor of the Black soul and the royal heritage of African cultures, reminding us that BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL. His sources of inspiration include the memory of the struggle for civil rights, and the Yoruba religion which survived in secret amongst enslaved Africans on plantations throughout the Americas. The tribal masks and gold that adorn the figures in a number of his works reflect his

determination to present African-Americans other than as victim or threat, as well as referring to the police violence suffered by the Black community in recent years.

Currently completing his Ph.D at Emory University, Pecou is multi-faceted artist who is highly active in the digital sphere, he uses videos, conferences and public performances to present his work. As well as featuring in the Societe Generale Collection, Fahamu Pecou's work is exhibited in many public collections, including the Smithsonian National Museum of African American Art and Culture in Washington, Nasher Museum in Durham, High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Seattle Art Museum and Museum of Contemporary Art in Atlanta.

The Societe Generale Collection: a pioneering art collection in France and over 20 years of support for artistic creation

Contemporary art and classical music are the two pillars of Societe Generale's cultural patronage policy. Launched in 1995, the Societe Generale Collection features over 500 original works and 750 lithographs, prints and serigraphs, making it one of the largest collections of contemporary art assembled by a bank in France. The idea behind the Collection was to express Societe Generale's strong commitment to its employees as well as mark the move from the historical center of Paris to the new tower blocks in the business district. The Collection, displayed throughout the head office and the Dunes building, aims to create a dialogue between the art world and the business world, using the shared values of innovation and creativity to bring together artists and employees.

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