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## Brendan Fernandes is Now Co-Represented by Galleries in New York and Chicago, Artist Works at Intersection of Dance and Visual Art

by VICTORIA L. VALENTINE on Jul 3, 2024 - 9:58 am

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WORKING AT THE INTERSECTION of dance and visual art, **Brendan Fernandes** (b. 1979) has developed a singular practice. "For me, dance is political. Dance is a means for protest," Fernandes has said. Over the past year, he has staged an intervention at a Civil War monument in Chicago's Grant Park and developed performances in response to an exhibition of limestone sculptures by William Edmondson (1874-1951) at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. An artist, choreographer, and educator, Fernandes recently started working with a new gallery in New York.

Susan Inglett Gallery announced its representation of Fernandes on June 25. The New York gallery is working with the artist in collaboration with Monique Meloche Gallery in Chicago, Ill., where he has been represented since 2017. The multidisciplinary artist's first solo exhibition with Susan Inglett opened last fall. "Brendan Fernandes: Within Reach" (Nov. 30, 2023-Jan. 27, 2024) featured photography, sculptures inspired by West African headrests, and performance, with dancers activating and engaging the sculptural works with movements choreographed by the artist and informed by voguing.

"We are so pleased to be working with Brendan Fernandes, a truly gifted artist and thinker. I have such admiration for his practice as he works across media to successfully communicate complex ideas in the language of the visual arts and dance," Susan Inglett said by email to Culture Type. "The Gallery looks forward to working with Brendan and with Monique Meloche Gallery towards projects on the near horizon and those not yet dreamed."

BORN IN NAIROBI, KENYA, Fernandes is a Canadian artist who lives and works in Chicago. He earned a BFA from York University in Toronto, Ontario, and holds an MFA The University of Western Ontario in London. For two decades, Fernandes has worked across dance, sculpture, installation, photography, works on paper, and video. The representation announcement described his practice: "From ballet ensembles to communal gatherings, Fernandes draws on collective physicality and explores race, queerness, social and physical autonomy, and cultural migration."

Fernandes has presented exhibitions and performances at institutions around the world, from Canada, Mexico, Italy, and Norway, to the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, Calif., Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Va., and The Glass House by Philip Johnson in New Canaan, Conn.

His work has been featured throughout New York City at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Noguchi Museum, Museum of Arts & Design, Governors Island, The High Line, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, where he participated in the 2019 Whitney Biennial.

He is also the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards. Fernandes completed the Whitney Independent Study Program (2007); was shortlisted for Canada's Sobey Art Award (2010); selected for a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation grant (2019); and received a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship (2020).

At Northwestern University, Fernandes is an associate professor in the Department of Art, Practice, and Theory, and director of the Visiting Art Program. Earlier this year, he received tenure. He also serves on the executive board of the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago and is chair of the Joffrey Academy of Dance.

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IN APRIL, FERNANDES PRESENTED a public intervention at Grant Park's General John Alexander Logan Monument, a durational performance for the Black Cube Nomadic Art Museum's [New Monuments I Chicago](#) project. Logan was a prominent and controversial 19th century figure. Serving in the Illinois Assembly, he sponsored legislation barring free Blacks from settling in Chicago. A Union commander during the Civil War, he later voted to abolish slavery as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Fernandes installed a temporary scaffolding around the monument. Animated with choreography for a cast of dancers, the "structure symbolically marks the statue as 'in transition,' revisiting the complex history of its likeness..." according to a description of the project.

Fernandes also created "Returning to Before," a conceptual performance choreographed in response to "[William Edmondson: A Monumental Vision](#)," a major survey at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, Pa. Edmondson transformed salvaged limestone into modernist sculptures, figurative works that are at once rough-hewn and poetic.

"I've had the opportunity to create a lot of performance in museum spaces and a part of that is conceptual, but a lot of it is about thinking through how do we challenge the spaces and dismantle the structures of hegemony," Fernandes said in a video by Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

In September, "[Brendan Fernandes: In Two](#)," a performance series and installation, opens at Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis, Mo. He is also participating in Prospect 6 in New Orleans, La., presenting a closing performance in February 2025.

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MONIQUE MELOCHE MET FERNANDES in 2016, when he first moved to Chicago, and presented solo exhibitions of the artist in 2017 and 2020. His next solo show with Monique Meloche Gallery is expected in the 2025/26.

"Being a former ballet turned modern dancer and trained sculptor and print maker, Brendan is an empathic artist who thrives by responding to current events, the history of dance, and the problematics of museum collecting strategies as just a few jumping off points for his interventions, performances, sculpture, photography, video and now film," Meloche said in an email to Culture Type.

"It is a wonderful challenge to support such a multi-hyphenate artist—which explains the lag time between his solo shows at the gallery, as there are always museum and biennial projects around that globe that need his attention."

Meloche added: "After 8 years of being his primary gallery, we collaborated with Susan Inglett for Brendan to make a solo show and a series of performances in late 2023 at her NY gallery, and that has now grown into a partnership between two like-minded women who will continue to collaborate in support of this unique artist's voice. We very deliberately and strategically sent our co-representation announcements on the same day to signify this new very collegial partnership." **CT**