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Myrto Katsikopoulou, precious okoyomon's dreamlike exhibition fills kunsthaus bregenz with plush companions,
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ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF by Precious Okoyomon

From January 31 to May 25, 2025, visual artist and poet Precious Okoyomon presents ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF at Kunsthaus Bregenz in Austria. Having previously exhibited at the institution as its youngest ever artist at just 21, Okoyomon returns with new works and installations that explore themes of self-perception, transformation, and the subconscious. The exhibition reimagines the gallery as a series of psychoanalytic consulting rooms, dreamlike landscapes populated with plush companions, and lush enclosed gardens. Accompanying the installations, Okoyomon's poetry—tender, unembellished, and disarmingly naive—invites an experience that is as intimate as it is unsettling.



Precious Okoyomon, ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF, Exhibition view second floor Kunsthau Bregenz, 2025, in the belly of the sun endless, 2025 | photo: Markus Tretter © Precious Okoyomon, Kunsthau Bregenz courtesy of the artist and Kunsthau Bregenz

EXPLORING MEMORY AND IDENTITY AT KUNSTHAUS BREGENZ

Precious Okoyomon's work moves fluidly between art, poetry, and performance, investigating identity, colonial history, spirituality, and humanity's relationship with the living environment. Their installations often incorporate organic materials—soil, plants, and animals—blurring the boundary between the natural and the constructed. This sensibility carries into the current exhibition at [Kunsthau Bregenz](#), where the [Nigerian-American](#) artist has developed a series of new works that explore themes of memory, introspection, and cultural exchange. On the ground floor, two offices evoke the consulting rooms of psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung, their early 20th-century furnishings creating a space that feels both familiar and strangely impersonal. Here, 'existential detectives' in elaborately adorned lab coats engage visitors in conversations about dreams, hidden emotions, and recollected fragments of the past.

Visitors are invited to contribute their silent confessions through questionnaires and watercolor responses, weaving their experiences into the fabric of the artwork. A nearby bookshelf holds an eclectic selection of texts—philosophy, poetry, cookbooks, and the writings of Édouard Glissant, whose work explores the creative entanglement of cultures. Okoyomon's own drawings form the exhibition's wallpaper, where hybrid figures with oversized heads, doll-like bodies, and burning eyes hover between innocence and the uncanny, luring viewers into the depths of their own subconscious.



Precious Okoyomon, ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF, exhibition view ground floor Kunsthau Bregenz, 2025, the existential detective agency, 2025 | photo: Markus Tretter © Precious Okoyomon, Kunsthau Bregenz courtesy of the artist

TOYS, TRAUMA, AND TRANSFORMATION

For Okoyomon's exhibition, the stairwells of Kunsthau Bregenz have been darkened, with a lowered ceiling constricting the ascent and creating an unsettling sense of suffocation.

On the first floor, stuffed animals dangle from nooses, suspended midair. Handcrafted from discarded toys and adorned with real feathers, they appear as both angelic and tragic—playful, childlike beings caught in a cycle of tenderness and destruction. As in much of Okoyomon's work, themes of dreams, hybridity, vulnerability, and care intertwine with undertones of loss and harm. Stuffed animals, often symbols of comfort and companionship, become vessels for both affection and unsettling projections of childhood innocence.

On the second floor, a giant teddy bear lies abandoned at the edge of a plush pink carpet, its teardrop-shaped eyes and heart-marked paws exuding quiet melancholy. Its anxious gaze invites viewers into a space of daydream and self-forgetfulness. The installation is underscored by the ethereal sounds of Takiya Reed, whose music evokes trance-like states, guiding visitors through the blurred boundaries of waking and dreaming.



Precious Okoyomon, ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF, exhibition view first floor Kunsthau Bregenz, 2025, I wanted to kill but had nothing to kill, 2025 | photo: Markus Tretter © Precious Okoyomon, Kunsthau Bregenz courtesy of the artist

FROM CATERPILLARS TO POETRY: OKOYOMON'S SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

On the third floor of Kunsthau Bregenz, visitors step into an enclosed garden, a living ecosystem where pupated caterpillars undergo metamorphosis and newly hatched butterflies flutter through the air. Just beyond this warm, humid habitat, a film flickers—a flight over the suburbs of Okoyomon's home state, Ohio. Created specifically for the exhibition, the film captures Okoyomon piloting the plane, reading their poetry aloud to the open sky. The imagery evokes a sense of boundlessness and transcendence, where the material world becomes a wellspring of spiritual reflection. Yet, the viewer remains behind the mesh, confined to the butterflies' realm, unable to follow the journey beyond.

Beyond their immersive installations, Okoyomon has gained recognition for poetry often woven into their performances. Their second poetry collection, *But Did You Die?*, published in 2024, confronts the forces of structural violence with a blend of vitality and mischief. Their writing—tender, unembellished, and disarmingly naïve—is both intimate and unsettling, oscillating between raw vulnerability and quiet defiance.



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Precious Okoyomon, ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF, exhibition view third floor Kunsthaus Bregenz, 2025, the world requires something of me and I'm looking for a place to lie down, 2025 | photo: Markus Tretter © Precious Okoyomon, Kunsthaus Bregenz courtesy of the artist



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Precious Okoyomon at KUB, 2025 | photo: Miro Kuzmanovic © Kunsthaus Bregenz



Precious Okoyomon at KUB, 2025 | photo: Miro Kuzmanovic © Kunsthaus Bregenz



project info:

name: ONE EITHER LOVES ONESELF OR KNOWS ONESELF

artist: Precious Okoyomon | @devilintraining_

location: Kunsthau Bregen | @kunsthauBregen

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myrto katsikopoulou | designboom feb 03, 2025