
Saturday Soup: A Discussion with Simon Benjamin on his exhibition *sub-marine: jeweler of memory* at Real Art Ways
Saturday, January 13 3PM



Photo: John Groo
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HARTFORD, CONN. Real Art Ways presents an artist talk with Jamaican artist Simon Benjamin on Saturday, January 13 at 3PM. The exhibition is on view through Sunday, January 14 2024. Gallery hours are everyday from 2-9pm. Admission is free. Real Art Ways is located at 56 Arbor Street, Hartford.

Join Simon Benjamin and writer, curator, and scholar Gervais Marsh for *Saturday Soup*, an informal conversation on the occasion of Benjamin's solo exhibition at Real Art Ways—and the culminating event of his 2022 Real Art Award Exhibition. In the spirit of his Jamaican roots, cups of soup will be served.

sub-marine: Jeweler of Memory is an installation that consists of video, photography, and sculpture. The project's title borrows from Barbadian Poet Kamau Brathwaite's assertion that "the unity is sub-marine" – resisting the notion of the Caribbean as a fractured region divided by nation-state borders and language. Through the project's lens, the Caribbean is reframed as expansive, relational, and

interconnected over multiple geographies, transgressing colonial divisions. Within the project's framework, the sea is a unifying body rather than one that divides, reimagining dominant colonial narratives as interconnected futures.

This installation presents new works that engage the photographic archive, paired with Benjamin's own photographs from his travels in the Caribbean and Senegal.

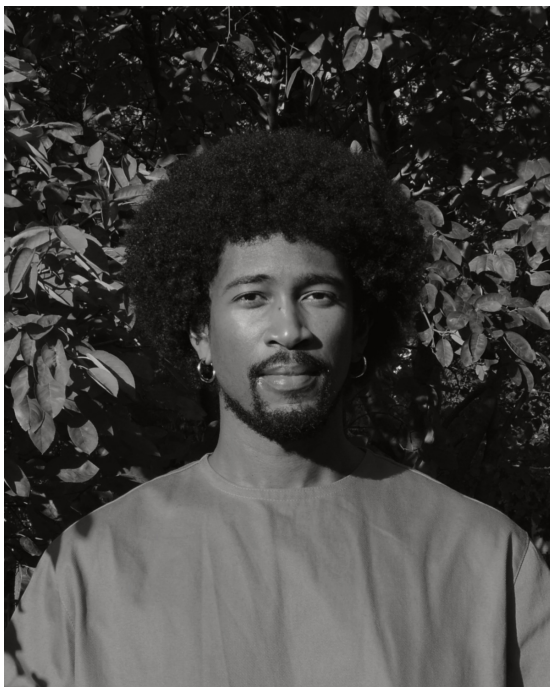


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Simon Benjamin is a Jamaican artist and filmmaker living in New York, whose work includes experiential installations, photography, film, and sculpture. Through research, oral history, and critical fabulation, he calls attention to the contradictions entangled in the enduring myths and images of the Caribbean as tropical paradise—a carefully constructed imaginary that replaced the harsh reality of the exploitative plantation. With the intention of moving beyond critique and pointing to systems and power — he creates open-ended poetic and lyrical moving images and objects, which bring together the immaterial and the tactile. Rethinking the relationship of margin to center in archival representation, vernacular materials, such as cornmeal and fish traps, become sculptural elements, embedding multiple temporalities and narratives.

Simon Benjamin is a recipient of a 2022 **Real Art Award**. The Real Art Awards are a juried competition open at no cost to emerging artists from the six New England states, New York, and New Jersey. The 2022 Real Art Awards were juried by multidisciplinary artist Carlos Motta, curator and creative strategist Yona Backer, and Real Art Ways Executive Director Will K. Wilkins. In addition to a cash prize and a solo exhibition, each artist receives a logistical and curatorial support throughout the exhibition process. This project is supported in part by awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation.

For more information on Simon Benjamin, please click [here](#).



Gervais Marsh is a writer, curator and scholar whose work is deeply invested in Black life, concepts of relationality and care. They received a PhD in Performance Studies from Northwestern University and are currently a Helena Rubinstein Curatorial Fellow with the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program.

Their writing has been published in several books and exhibition catalogs including Denzil Hurley (monograph), Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art, Forgotten Lands Vol. 5, KMAC Museum Triennial (2022), as well as online art publications such as Hyperallergic, C Magazine, Brooklyn Rail, ARTS.BLACK, Musée Magazine, and PREE: Caribbean Writing, among others.

For more information on Marsh, click [here](#). Photo: Eva Pensis.

About Real Art Ways

Real Art Ways is a 48-year old multidisciplinary arts organization with programs in visual art, live arts, cinema, and education. It began in the fall of 1975 when a group of artists set up a live-work space in downtown Hartford. The organization has grown into one of the country's best-respected contemporary art spaces, with support for artists and connections with community as core values. Real Art Ways is notable for the excellence of its presentations – for example, Real Art Ways has presented 44 MacArthur “Genius” grantees, more than any other arts organization in the United States. Real Art Ways recently embarked on a new chapter, purchasing 56 Arbor Street and planning an expansion.

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