

WOMEN AND MIGRATION(S) II



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Cover image: FIRELEI BÁEZ for Marie-Louise Coidavid, exiled, keeper of order, Anacaona, 2018. Oil on canvas. Installation view: 10th Berlin Biennale, Akademie der Künste (Hanseatenweg), Berlin, 9 June 9-September 2018. Photo: Timo Ohler. Cover design by Anna Gatti

11. Sweet Milk in the Badlands.

Allison Janae Hamilton

Sweet milk in the badlands. looks toward ritual, storytelling, and trance in search of the connections between landscape and selfhood, place and disturbance. It invites an uncanny cast of haints to lead the viewer through the beginnings of an epic tale that animates the land as a guide and witness. Allison Janae Hamilton is a visual artist working in sculpture, installation, photography, and video. She was born in Kentucky, raised in Florida, and her maternal family's farm and homestead lies in the rural flatlands of western Tennessee. Hamilton's relationship with these locations forms the cornerstone of her artwork, particularly her interest in landscape. Using plant matter, layered imagery, complex sounds, and animal remains, Hamilton creates immersive spaces that consider the ways that the American landscape contributes to our ideas of 'Americana' and social relationships to space in the face of a changing climate, particularly within the rural American South.

In Hamilton's treatment of land, the natural environment is the central protagonist, not a backdrop, in the unfolding of historic and contemporary narratives. Through blending land-centered folklore and personal family narratives, she engages haunting yet epic mythologies that address the social and political concerns of today's changing Southern terrain, including land loss, environmental justice, climate change, and sustainability. Each work contains narratives that are pieced together from folktales, hunting and farming rituals, African-American nature writing, and Baptist hymns. Drawing from all of these references, she envisions what an epic myth looks and feels like in rural terrain. In this vein, Hamilton's art practice centers on imagination in order to meditate on disruption and magic within the seemingly mundane rituals of natural and human-made environments.



Fig. 1 Allison Janae Hamilton, *Scratching the wrong side of firmament*, 2015, archival pigment print, 40x60". Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. © Allison Janae Hamilton.



Fig. 2 Allison Janae Hamilton, *Fencing mask on the bank of a flatwoods lake*, 2015, archival pigment print, 40x60". Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. © Allison Janae Hamilton.



Fig. 3 Allison Janae Hamilton, *The Hours*, 2015, archival pigment print, 40x60".
Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen.
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Fig. 4 Allison Janae Hamilton, *Dollbaby standing in the orchard at midday*, 2015, archival pigment print, 40x60".
Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. © Allison Janae Hamilton.



Fig. 5 Allison Janae Hamilton, *Metal tambourines in churchyard covered in snakeskins.*, 2015, archival pigment print, 40x60". Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. © Allison Janae Hamilton.