



# PERMANENT:

AN EXPERIENTIAL ART MOVEMENT



African Diaspora Art  
Museum of Atlanta



KOMANSÉ  
DANCE THEATER

# ABOUT

Throughout history, in times of social unrest, the arts have always served as a beacon of hope and an outlet for the expression of those things that are not so easily conveyed in words. The legacy of Black American art especially, functions as a breathing archive of themes of strength, resistance, and resilience. These themes are evidenced in works created by Black artists which live in museum permanent collections. Unfortunately, conventional presentations of the work often fail to reach their intended audience. Issues of accessibility, cultural differences, and social stigmas about “art” continue to create barriers between Black artists and Black audiences.

Today many museums are struggling to undo decades-long practices that have excluded or failed to consider the diverse needs and experiences of non-white audiences. The lingering affects of white supremacy continue to haunt the purported values of institutions as well as the communities they serve. While efforts are being made, simply adding more Black staff or programs is not enough to create substantial engagement. Institutions must learn to relanguage themselves and their offerings to ensure robust and diverse cultural engagements.

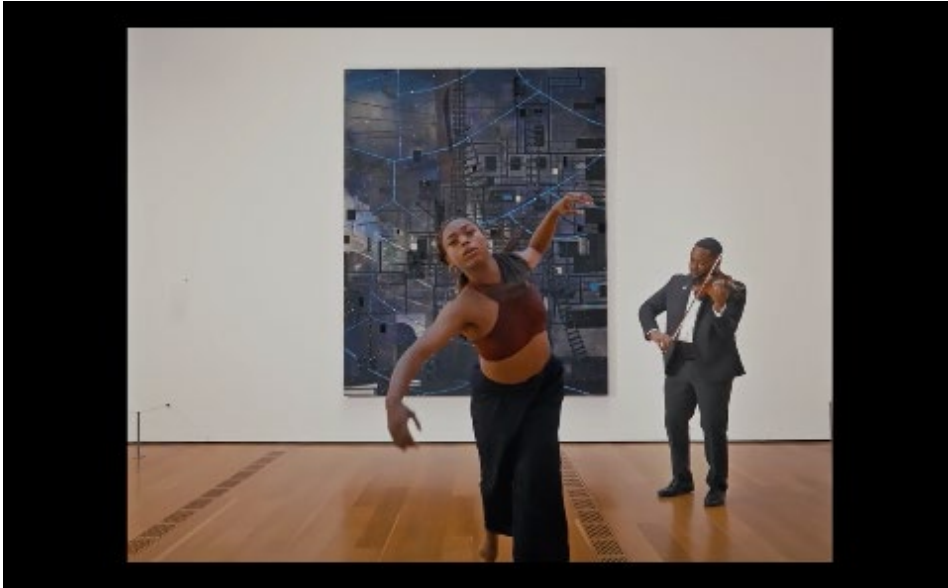
Introducing PERMANENT™; a unique collaboration between **The African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta (ADAMA)** and **Komansé Dance Theater**.

PERMANENT™ is an interdisciplinary art experience that *activates* works through the creation of original and dynamic responses to signature artworks created by Black artists in museum permanent collections. After deep readings of a selected work, the PERMANENT™ team expresses its themes and ideas in live performances that include dance, music, spoken word, and more. Additionally, we engage audiences through the development of educational curriculums around the art. PERMANENT™ takes the art ‘off the wall’ and into the hearts and minds of communities long underserved by the arts. Each project culminates in a short-film and documentary that unpacks themes and concepts in the referenced work.

Through PERMANENT™, we aim to mitigate the disconnect between museums and the Black community by revealing the ways Black art not only reflects the Black experience, but is born from it.



# PERMANENT: EW,SN



“PERMANENT: EW, SN”  
2021  
Runtime: 24 mins

PERMANENT’s debut engagement references Radcliffe Bailey’s “EW, SN” 2011 from the permanent collection of Atlanta’s High Museum of Art.

The PERMANENT™ team created an original score and choreography inspired by themes in the work which was performed and filmed at the High Museum of Art in Spring of 2021. The resulting film reveals the way the dancers and musicians embody Bailey’s ideas about community, migration, and movement, as well as the passage of time.

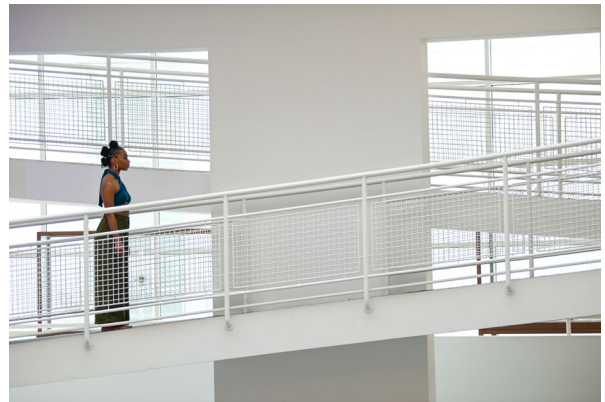
The project is dedicated to Atlanta’s English Avenue/Vine City community. Located west of downtown Atlanta, the neighborhood has a history as a middle-class Black enclave in the mid-20th century. By the 1980s however, the neighborhood wrestled with an influx of crime and drugs. Over the last decade, long-standing Black residents of the community have fought to maintain its legacy as hub for Civil Rights activity in the face of gentrification. The themes of resistance and resilience as well as migration and mobility found in Bailey’s work are echoed in the experiences of the English Ave/Vine City community.

**“Permanent EW, SN” is currently available for screenings.**



[www.permanentproject.org](http://www.permanentproject.org)

# PERMANENT: EW,SN



"EW, SN", 2011  
Radcliffe Bailey  
American, born 1968  
Acrylic, glitter, and velvet on canvas  
120 1/8 × 96 1/8 × 4 1/4 inches

Radcliffe Bailey's work combines a deep historical consciousness with the histories of his own family and community. EW, SN reveals Bailey's signature layering of evocative and culturally resonant images – here, railroad tracks suggest the Underground Railroad while simultaneously referring to Bailey's father, who was a railroad engineer.



Photos: Natrice Miller

Image courtesy of Radcliffe Bailey  
and High Museum of Art, Atlanta.



# PERMANENT: A Couple in Prospect Park (being together)



“PERMANENT: A Couple in Prospect Park (being together)” 2022  
Runtime: 28 mins

PERMANENT’s second iteration references Dawoud Bey’s “A Couple in Prospect Park,, Brooklyn, NY” 1990 from the permanent collection of Atlanta’s High Museum of Art.

In contrast to pervasive images of young Black bodies in trauma, the PERMANENT team taps in to the often unremarked power of love and intimacy featuring original choreography by Komanse Dance Theater and with original music by Okorie Johnson and Asha Tune.

“The image demonstrates the enduring quality of love, something not often depicted for Black folks. In contrast to pervasive images of Black trauma and struggle, Bey’s photograph reminds us that Black lives matter outside of Black Lives Matter. It reminds us that love itself is a revolutionary act in a world built on systems of Black oppression. And perhaps that love and revolution do not merely coexist--but are in fact the same act.” - Dr. Fahamu Pecou

**“Permanent A Couple in Prospect Park (being together)” is currently available for screenings.**



# PERMANENT: A Couple in Prospect Park (being together)



“A Couple in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY”,  
1990

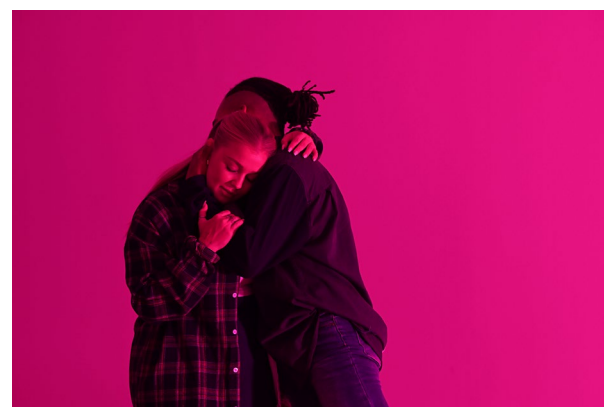
Dawoud Bey  
American, born 1953  
Gelatin Silver print  
Printed 2019

Dawoud Bey made this work in 1990 as part of a series rethinking the often predatory traditions of street photography. Seeking an equitable, reciprocal relationship with his subjects, Bey approached strangers directly and asked them to pose for his camera.

Image courtesy of Dawoud Bey  
and High Museum of Art, Atlanta.



Photos: Sierra King



Photos: Natrice Miller



# MEET THE TEAM



**DR. FAHAMU PECOU**, Founding Director of the African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta (ADAMA).

Dr. Fahamu Pecou is an interdisciplinary artist and scholar whose works combine observations on hip-hop, fine art and popular culture. Pecou's paintings, performance art, and academic work addresses concerns with the visual culture of Black masculinity, considering how historic and contemporary depictions of Black men impact both the reading and performance of Black manhood.

Dr. Pecou was the Georgia Awardee for the South Arts Prize in 2020. Later that year, he was one of 6 artists selected for the inaugural "Arts and Social Justice Fellowship" at Emory University. He is a recipient of the 2016 Joan Mitchell Foundation "Painters and Sculptors" Award. His work is featured in several noted private and public national and international collections. His work is also featured in several films and television series including Black-ish, Empire, and The Chi among others.



**RAIANNA C. BROWN**, Founder and Artistic Director of Komansé Dance Theater (KDT).

Raianna Brown, 2018 Georgia Tech alumna, exhibits the dynamism of the modern young professional through her multidisciplinary work. While at GT, Raianna studied dance through dual enrollment at Emory University.

While still in undergrad, she founded Komansé Dance Theater. Komansé's sold-out shows integrated technology and the arts in partnership with the GT Industrial Design School (projection mapping) and GT Invention Studio (3D printed costumes). The shows centered on the narratives of marginalized people, with the most recent production created in partnership with Covenant House, a homeless shelter servicing at-risk youth.

Raianna has worked with the NAACP, the Atlanta Mayor's Office, and Grammy-nominated artists, including dancing alongside Shakira and Jennifer Lopez in Super Bowl LIV.



**STEPHANIE BROWN**, Project Manager, ADAMA, PERMANENT™.

A daughter of Jamaican immigrants, Stephanie Brown grew up in South Florida at the intersection of her Jamaican and Black American identities.

Broadly her work is a reflection of her internal self/ancestral exploration. The work is a historical yet critical investigation of identity construction and implicit and explicit bias. Stephanie identifies as an interdisciplinary artist interweaving mediums to narrate a greater contextual story rooted in historical research and familial narratives that aim to empower people of color to discover themselves and take control of who they choose to be and become.

Stephanie holds a BFA in Photography from Savannah College of Art and Design and an MFA degree in Interdisciplinary Art and Museum Studies Certificate from the University of Michigan.



# PERMANENT: A Couple in Prospect Park (being together)



**PERMANENT™ Project is excited to collaborate with museums and institutions.  
Now accepting commissions and/or screening opportunities.**

**For information on screening opportunities or to commission PERMANENT™  
please contact**

STEPHANIE BROWN  
admin@adamatl.org  
+1 561 376 5536



[www.permanentproject.org](http://www.permanentproject.org)