

# Grada Kilomba



## Biography

Grada Kilomba (b. 1968, Lisbon, Portugal) is an interdisciplinary artist, whose work draws on memory, trauma, gender and post-colonialism, interrogating concepts of knowledge, power and violence. "What stories are told? How are they told? And told by whom?" are constant questions in Kilomba's body of work, to revise post-colonial narratives.

Kilomba subversively translates text into image, movement and installation, by giving body, voice and form to her own critical writing. Performance, staged reading, video, photography, publications and installation are a platform for Kilomba's unique practice of storytelling, which intentionally disrupts the proverbial 'white cube' through a new and urgent decolonial language and imagery.

Her work has been presented in major international events such as: La Biennale de Lubumbashi VI; 10. Berlin Biennale; Documenta 14, Kassel; 32. Bienal de São Paulo. Selected solo and group exhibitions include the Pinacoteca de São Paulo; Bildmuseet, Umeå; Kadist Art Foundation, Paris; The Power Plant, Toronto; Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin; MAAT-Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon; Secession Museum, Vienna; Bozar Museum, Brussels; PAC-Pavillion Art Contemporanea, Milan, among others. Kilomba's work features in public and private collections worldwide.

Strongly influenced by the work of Frantz Fanon, Kilomba studied Freudian Psychoanalysis in Lisbon – at ISPA, and there she worked with war survivors from Angola and Mozambique. Early on she started writing and publishing stories, before extending her interests into staging, image, sound and movement.

Kilomba holds a Doctorate in Philosophy from the Freie Universität Berlin. She has lectured at several international universities, such as the University of Ghana and the Vienna University of Arts, and was a Guest Professor at the Humboldt Universität Berlin, Department of Gender Studies. For several years, she was a guest artist at the Maxim Gorki Theatre, in Berlin, developing *Kosmos 2*, a political intervention with refugee artists. She is the author of the acclaimed "Plantation Memories" (Unrast, 2008) a compilation of episodes of everyday racism written in the form of short psychoanalytical stories. Her book has been translated into several languages, and was listed as the most important nonfiction literature in Brazil, 2019. In 2021 she unveiled *O Barco / The Boat*, a large-scale installation with an accompanying performance at MAAT – Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology in Lisbon, Portugal.

The artist lives and works in Berlin.

## Solo Exhibitions

- 2023** *One soul, one memory*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2022** *A World of Illusions: Grada Kilomba*, NORVAL Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2022** *O Barco / The Boat*, Somerset House, London, UK
- 2022** *Espressioni* Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy
- 2021** *O Barco / The Boat*, MAAT – Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2021** *The Words That Were Missing*, MCLAUGHLIN Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- 2021** *Heroines, Birds & Monsters*, Amant Foundation, New York, USA
- 2021** *The Words That Were Missing*, McLaughlin Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- 2019** *Grada Kilomba: A World of Illusions*, Bildmuseet, Umeå University, Sweden
- 2019** *Grada Kilomba: Poetic Disobediencies*, Pinacoteca, São Paulo
- 2018** *Secrets to Tell*, The Power Plant, Toronto
- 2018** *Speaking the Unspeakable*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2017** *The Most Beautiful Language*, Avenida da Índia Gallery at the Municipal Galleries of Lisbon, Portugal
- 2018** *Secrets to Tell*, The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada
- 2017** *Secrets to Tell*, MAAT – Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2017** *The Most Beautiful Language*, Gallery Avenida da Índia, EGEAC, Lisbon

## Group Exhibitions

- 2023** *The Temptation to Exist*, Galerie Thomas Schulte, Berlin, Germany
- 2022** *ARS22: Living Encounters*, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Finnish National Gallery, Helsinki, Finland
- 2021** *Ubuntu, a Lucid Dream*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
- 2021** *Tudo o que eu quero – Artistas portuguesas 1900-2020 (Travelling)*, Bozar in February 2021, Tours in September 2021, and Gulbenkian (Lisbon) in May 2022
- 2021** *Farsa*, Sesc Pompéia, São Paulo, Brazil

**2021** *Rhizomes*, La Base Sus Marine, Bordeaux, France  
**2020** *Resist! Die Kunst des Widerstands | The Art of Resistance*, Rautenstrauch Joest Museum, Cologne, Germany  
**2020** *Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions*, Yebisu, Tokyo  
**2019** *Affective Utopia*, Kadist, Paris, France  
**2019** *Bienalsur*, Museu Nacional de Arte, La Paz, Bolivia  
**2019** *Bienalsur*, Centro Cultural de la Universidad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
**2019** *Tandem*, Alexander and Bonin, New York, USA  
**2019** *4. Berliner Herbstsalon DE-HEIMATIZE IT!*, Gorki Theatre, Berlin  
**2018** *The Black City, Glosses*, E-Flux Gallery and Participant Inc., New York, USA  
**2018** *Do Silencio a Memoria*, Paco das Artes, Sao Paulo, Brazil  
**2018** *Frieze Art Fair*, London, UK  
**2018** *In Context: I was waiting for this Past*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2018** *Art Basel*, Switzerland  
**2018** *We don't need another hero*, 10. Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany  
**2018** *Frameworks*, International Film festival Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands  
**2017** *Incerteza Viva – Live Uncertainty*, Bienal de São Paulo, Centro Dragão do Mar de Arte e Cultura, Fortaleza, Brazil  
**2017** *3. Berliner Herbstsalon*, Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany  
**2017** *The Silences Between*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2017** *SouthSouth – Let Me Begin Again*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2016** *O futuro será uma réplica – The future will be a replica*, Consul of Portugal in São Paulo, Brazil  
**2016** *Incerteza Viva – Live Uncertainty*, 32. Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil  
**2016** *Vulnerability*, Rauma Biennial Balticum, Rauma, Finland  
**2016** *Knowledge Unbounded*, Department of Arts and Aesthetics Exhibition, University of Stockholm, Stockholm, Sweden  
**2016** *Banquete Antropofágico – Anthropophagic Banquet*, Department of Contemporary Arts Exhibition, University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

## Curated Exhibitions

**2023** *35th Bienal De São Paulo: Choreographies Of The Impossible*, São Paulo, Brazil

## Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

**2017** Academy of Arts Berlin, Berlin, Germany  
**2017** Transmediale, House of the World Cultures, Berlin, Germany  
**2017** Art Fair Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2017** Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany  
**2016** AfroTranscendente, São Paulo, Brazil  
**2016** Goethe Institut Salvador da Bahia, Bahia, Brazil  
**2016** Berlin University of Arts – UdK, Berlin, Germany  
**2016** Art Basel, Basel, Switzerland  
**2016** Mousonturm House of Arts, Frankfurt, Germany  
**2016** University of Accra, Accra, Ghana  
**2016** Goethe Institut São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil  
**2016** Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany  
**2015** Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna, Austria  
**2015** Theatre Ballhaus Naunynstrasse, Berlin, Germany  
**2015** University of Linköping, Linköping, Sweden  
**2015** Free University Berlin, Berlin, Germany  
**2015** University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Holland  
**2015** University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany  
**2015** Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany

## Awards and Merits

**2018** Awarded by Frameworks at the international film Festival Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
**2016** Artist-in-Residence, Vila Sul, at the Goethe Institut Salvador da Bahia, Brazil  
**2016** Artist-in-Residence, Revolting Mass/Massa Revoltante, at the Goethe Institut São Paulo, Brazil  
**2015** Named a "Woman of Excellence" by the Sonne Magazine, Berlin, Germany  
**2011** Awarded as one of "The Most Inspirational Black Women in Europe" by the BWIE, Vienna, Austria

## Academic Record and Residencies

**1998** Degree on Clinical Psychology and Psychoanalysis, Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, Lisbon, Portugal  
**2008** Ph.D., Doctorate on Philosophy, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany  
**2023** Honoris Causa Doctorate, ISPA, Lisbon

## Collections

TATE Modern  
 Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, PRT  
 Royal Dutch Collection MAAT — Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, PRT

## Publications

**2008** *Plantation Memories. Episodes of Everyday Racism* (5th Edition), Münster: Unrast Verlag  
**2005** *Mythen, Subjekt, Masken* (3rd Edition), Münster: Unrast Verlag (co-editor)

## Performances

**2021** MAAT – Museum of Art, Technology, Lisbon, Portugal  
**2017** Documenta 14, Kassel, Germany  
**2017** SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, Germany  
**2017** Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2016** Teatro Vila Velha, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil  
**2016** 32. Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil  
**2016** Wits Theatre, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2016** Theatre Münchner Kammerspiel, Munich, Germany  
**2016** Goethe Institut Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain  
**2016** TheaterTreffen, Haus der Berliner Festspiele, Berlin, Germany  
**2016** Secession Museum Vienna, Vienna, Austria  
**2016** University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria  
**2016** University of Accra, Accra, Ghana  
**2016** Mostra Internacional de Teatro em São Paulo  
**2016** Bozar Museum for Contemporary Arts, Brussels, Belgium  
**2016** SOAS University of London, London, UK  
**2015** Theatre Münchner Kammerspiel, Munich, Germany  
**2015** Antwerpen Museum, Antwerpen, Belgium  
**2015** Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Vienna, Austria  
**2015** Theatre Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany  
**2015** International Arts Center José Guimarães, Guimarães, Portugal  
**2015** Theatre Ballhaus Naunynstrass, Berlin, Germany  
**2015** Oslo House of Literature, Oslo, Norway

## Films

**2011** White Charity by Carolin Philipp and Timo Kiesel  
**2013** Conakry with Diana McCarty, Grada Kilomba and Filipa César