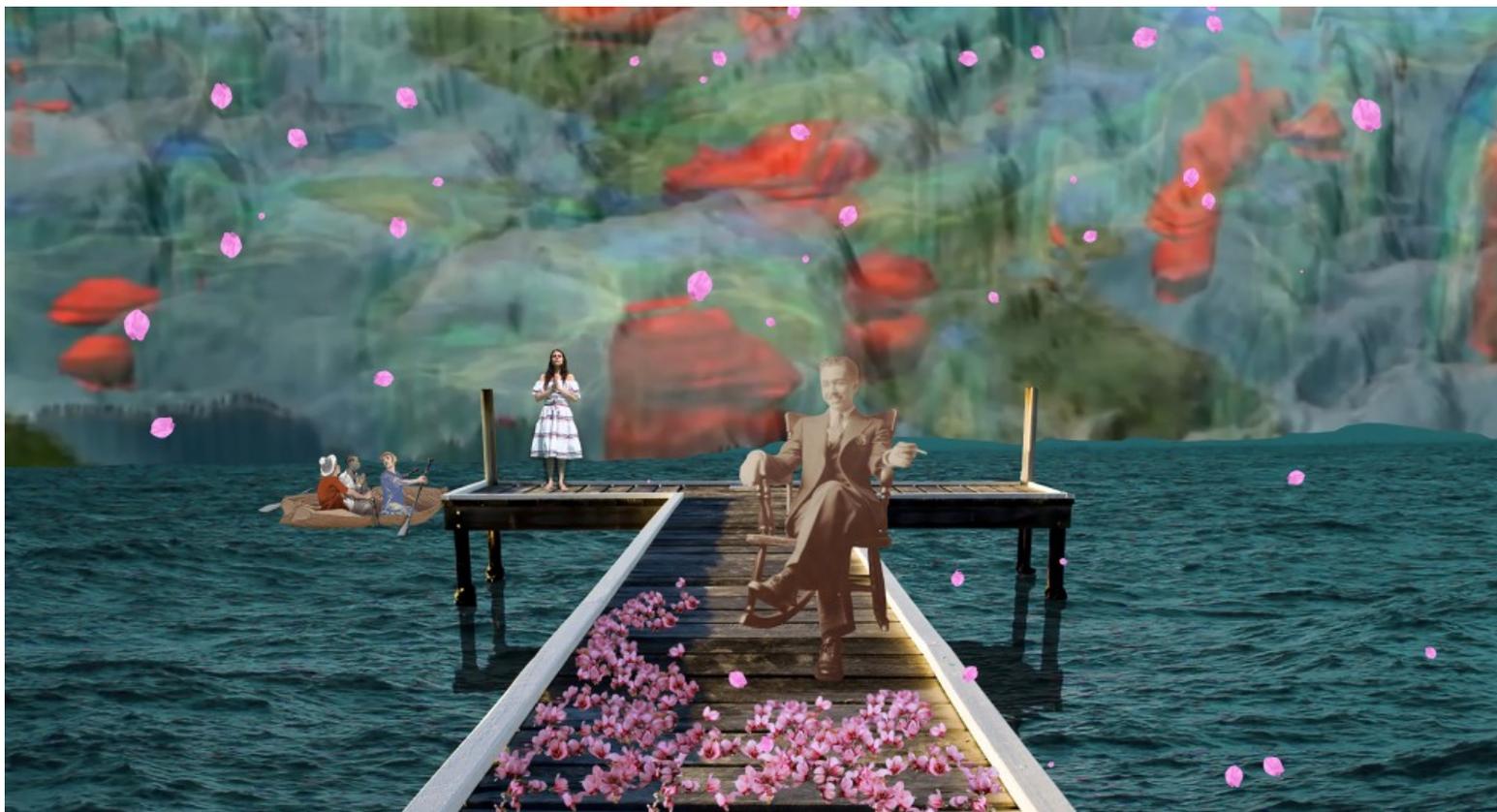


# WGBH NEWS

## ARTS

### Arts This Week: 'After Spiritualism' And 'How To Move A Landscape'



A video still from *"In the Presence of Absence – José María & Ike"*

Allison Maria Rodriguez / Courtesy of Fitchburg Art Museum

By **GBH News**

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**Arts This Week | August 20, 2020**

**“After Spiritualism: Loss and Transcendence in Contemporary Art,”** on view at *Fitchburg Art Museum*, which is currently offering free admission, through Sept. 6

Can the living communicate with the dead? A group of 15 contemporary artists offer their own exploration in “After Spiritualism: Loss and Transcendence in Contemporary Art.” Featuring work that ranges from painting to sculpture and photography to videography, this exhibition taps the philosophies of Spiritualism and Espiritismo to present art that navigates the boundaries between life and what lies beyond.

“It's a metaphor,” says museum director Nick Capasso, “for ... all the connecting points between life and death.”

Featured in the show is Keith Morris Washington, a Black artist whose paintings at the Fitchburg Art Museum depict seemingly beautiful landscapes with a horrifying history. From his series titled, “Within Our Gates: Site and Memory in the American Landscape,” they depict the locations of lynchings that have occurred throughout the United States including on Cape Cod.



Keith Morris Washington's *Milenko Majstorovic: Hyannis Ponds Wildlife Management Area; Barnstable, Massachusetts. 2007*, oil (and acrylic) on linen

Courtesy of the Fitchburg Art Museum

“I take photographs and then leave,” says Washington about the sites he renders. “Many of them are not safe spaces for people that look like me to hang around.”

The Concord Center for the Visual Arts simultaneously features another Keith Morris Washington series. Large-scale portraits comprise his solo exhibition, “Black Lives...”. The works featured are charcoal and pastel sketches of people of color. Inspired by the Black Lives Matter and Say Her Name movements, Washington says the works highlight the humanity of those who live at the nexus of civil and political discourse. “Black Lives...” is on view through Sept. 9, 2020.

**“Blane De St. Croix: How to Move a Landscape,”** on view at *The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art* through Sept. 6, 2021



*Blane De St. Croix, Alchemist Triptych, 2020. Roof flashing, aluminum and copper, recycled foam covered in metal leaves (silver, copper, gold)*

*Kaelan Burkett / Courtesy of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art*

At the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, Boston-born artist Blane De St. Croix is exhibiting his largest and most comprehensive body of work to date. “How to Move a Landscape” features massive sculptures that address climate change and specifically the Earth’s melting permafrost layer. De St. Croix spent years researching his work and traveling with climate scientists from the Arctic Circle to the Gobi Desert. The result is a series of sprawling, earth-like sculptures across MASS MoCA’s triple-high gallery space. They evoke the precarious balance of our planet and how the political infighting of today pales in comparison to the environmental changes we all face.

“I’m taking on difficult, complex subjects,” says De St. Croix. “So I have a level of responsibility to truly understand as best I can the complexity of what I’m trying to visually talk about to the public. And I also feel a level of responsibility to the science community and what’s been happening with the muffling to give them a larger voice.”