

# NOMA

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## **TORKWASE DYSON: BLACK COMPOSITIONAL THOUGHT**

*15 Paintings for the Plantationocene*



Torkwase Dyson with her installation *Nautical Dusk*, 2018. Photo by Gabe Souza, Courtesy of the Colby Museum of Art and Lunder Institute.

**NEW ORLEANS, LA** – The New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) presents *Torkwase Dyson: Black Compositional Thought (15 Paintings for the Plantationocene)* on view January 24 through April 19, 2020. Produced for NOMA, this new series of fifteen paintings layer dense, minimal shapes, diagrammatic lines and thick textures of graphite, acrylic and charcoal over washes of deep blue paint. These compositions examine the legacy of plantation economies and their relationship to the environmental and infrastructural issues of the current age, often characterized as the *plantationocene*.

“Torkwase Dyson’s new body of work for NOMA responds to New Orleans’ past and takes up painting as a tool for reshaping the contemporary social and political landscape of our city” said Susan Taylor, Montine McDaniel Freeman Director at NOMA.

Dyson has developed a vocabulary of abstract lines, shapes, and edges inspired by the design systems of architecture, water infrastructure, the oil and gas industry, and the physical impact of global warming. Informed by her own evolving theory of Black Compositional Thought—a working term that considers how waterways, geographies and other spaces are composed and inhabited by black bodies—Dyson’s paintings explore how the properties of energy, space and scale can form networks of liberation. Her paintings ask us to picture how these systems of oppression might be reimaged and reshaped from within.

“Environmental liberation is an ongoing practice, and, as a painter, I’m committed to a language of shape that thinks of our work as spatial and haunting; liquid and mountains; bird and lava. And in this moment of climate change, I am certain that the beauty in black world-building will continue to be guided by the poetry of our own hands,” said Dyson. “So as an artist, I am committed to praising black spatial genius through my work.”

### **Additional Information**

[Press-approved images are available here](#)

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Website: [www.noma.org](http://www.noma.org)

### **About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden**

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 40,000 works of art encompassing 5,000 years of history. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Tuesday through Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM, select Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM, Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by more than 85 artists, including several 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>-century master sculptors. NOMA’s Besthoff Sculpture Garden is free and open to the public seven days a week: 10 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Children 12 and under receive free admission. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

For more information about NOMA and to sign up for updates, visit [www.noma.org](http://www.noma.org).

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