

MARTOS GALLERY

Kayode Ojo
Equilibrium

November 2 – December 22, 2018

“Equilibrium” is a balance between opposing forces, a calm state of mind, a movie featuring Christian Bale and Taye Diggs, and the title of Kayode Ojo’s first solo exhibition with Martos Gallery. While attempting to create “balance,” Ojo accesses the dark and light moments of glamour and excess by sourcing conventional objects and playing with the cinematic. He combines mass produced items and pop culture to mine ideas of physical beauty while also considering the objectification of bodies. Ojo creates ephemeral scenes that prop themselves up on elusive ideas and shifting values, both monetary and moral, and mask something that lies underneath.

For *Equilibrium*, Ojo has sparsely covered the gallery with intimate moments of self-reflection: a scent that recalls a sweet and sore memory; a near death experience captured on film; a narrated video — like something out of a PBS antique show — that transforms a body into internalized patterns of self-doubt. Ojo sources and lists all materials used to shape these moments and in doing so expresses the servitude of “the object,” and creates a sense of honesty and false neutrality.

There is something slightly perverse in these efforts to superficially remove bias. The presence of personal narrative in both a self-portrait and straight razor allows for one to form their own meaning without ever being fully rid of the artists’ personal method of documenting. Bodies posing in photographs become sculptural objects — perhaps less elusive — and the human body is just as palpable here as in a pair of sparkling earrings left on a table; the visible and the forgotten.

When we attempt to regulate emotions, balance may seemingly be achieved, only because the unbalanced is regularly masked. It often feels forbidden to express true and honest emotions, and cloaking or drugging states of consciousness are encouraged, to keep up with accepted social norms. Ojo manages to both display and mask mental and bodily anxiety with something intimate and shared, sharp and blunt.

Equilibrium features new sculptures, photographs and video, and is on view through December 22, 2018.

Kayode Ojo (b. 1990 in Cookeville, TN) received his BFA from the School of Visual Arts and is currently living and working in New York. Selected exhibitions include *Inventors at the Apocalypse*, curated by Jake McNulty, Institut fur Alles Mögliche, Berlin, DE; *Natural Flavor*, curated by Vivien Trommer, Mini/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow, New York, NY; *Ormai*, Galerie Balice Hertling, Paris, FR; *Running on Empty*, And Now, Dallas, TX; *Closer*, Sweetwater, Berlin, DE; and *Invisible Man*, Martos Gallery, New York, NY. Kayode Ojo is represented by Martos Gallery, New York.