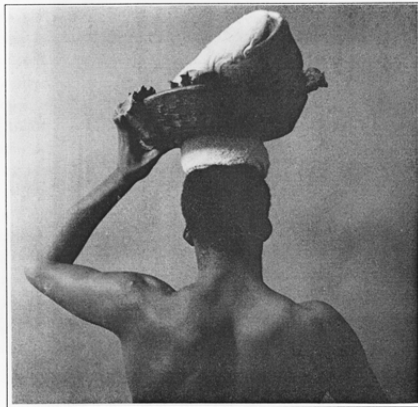


ROTIMI FANI-KAYODE

(IN MEMORIAM)



© Rotimi Fani-Kayode

Rotimi Fani-Kayode, the photographer was an explorer of the differences and affinities existing between Africa and the West. An experimenter and innovator, he operated in a spirit of uncompromising opposition to hypocrisy and unflinching commitment to the true and the beautiful. He worked prolifically, refining and redefining his themes. His recent photographs have a strangely prophetic and serene quality, urgently questioning death and the fragility of life.

Fani-Kayode's work is

admired for its originality and technical precision. His work on the male nude is central to his oeuvre. He had an eclectic approach to his craft, and acknowledged many influences on his understanding of form, including Cartier-Bresson, Platt-Lynes, Stieglitz and Mapplethorpe. He admired Dore and Paul Cadmus as draughtsmen and the Renaissance painters for their sense of colour. He often referred to surrealism through his work. However it was his West African attitude to visual representation in both formal and spiritual terms

Rotimi Fani-Kayode, photographer, born Lagos 20 April 1955, died London 21 December 1989.

IT IS WITH GREAT SORROW THAT WE HAVE TO REPORT THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF ROTIMI, NOT ONLY ONE OF OUR FOUNDING MEMBERS AND MEMBER OF OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE BUT ALSO OUR CHAIRPERSON SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE COMPANY IN JULY 1988. HE WAS MUCH LOVED BY ALL THOSE WHO HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH HIM. A MEMORIAL GATHERING IS BEING PLANNED; DETAILS TO FOLLOW IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER. MESSAGES OF CONDOLENCES TO HIS PARTNER & FAMILY CAN BE SENT c/o AUTOGRAPH.

which combined with his appreciation of Western forms to give his its special quality. In that he was a true original.

He created a complex, sometimes disturbing, but always honest and elegant view of the world. He leaves a unique body of work which has been widely exhibited. He had regular one-man shows in Britain and Nigeria. The most recent exhibition in London was Akibu: Born to Die at the 181 Gallery in 1988.

cont'd on page 3

ECSTATIC ANTIBODIES



© Rotimi Fani-Kayode & Alex Hirst / *Ecstatic Antibodies*

In a recent article in a national newspaper the arts world was criticised for not responding in a creative way to the AIDS crisis. That sexual myopia characterises our cultural life. Where are the plays, films and literary works dealing with AIDS, the article asked?

No mention was made of the visual artists and photographers who have been actively involved in producing work on the many issues around AIDS. Could this be another myopia at work in our culture?

This exhibition will redress directly challenge the mythology that institutions like the media, law and medicine have constructed around AIDS.

Tessa Boffin and Sunil Gupta have organised the exhibition and are the editors of an extensive book of articles which is published to coincide with the exhibition and published by Rivers Oram Press at £8.95. Photographers, artists, writers and film-makers include; Rotimi Fani-Kayode & Alex Hirst, Joy Gregory, Allan deSouza, Isaac Julien, Mehboob Dada and Pratibha Parmar.

ECSTATIC ANTIBODIES RESISTING THE AIDS MYTHOLOGY

An Impressions Gallery Touring Exhibition
January 27-March 10,
Impressions Gallery, York

AUTOGRAPH INTO PUBLISHING

The publishing of photographers work into good quality magazines, catalogues and books, photo-packs etc., is most important to the visibility and documentation of specific ideas, projects, and initiatives. It becomes a way of furthering debates on photographic practice both nationally and internationally. The excuse used for not making known or referring to black photographers work is always that the work is not visible, well known or published. This turns full circle when it's apparent that the majority of photographic publishers in whatever form have little intention of publishing black photographers work. That's where it becomes clear that we have to do it ourselves.

AUTOGRAPH is looking to form a WORKING EDITORIAL GROUP of no more than four to five people, to further the discussions of a regular magazine and other one-off publications which would be in addition to our regular newsletter. The editorial group MUST be made up of people who have already had experience in some aspect of publishing. The group would be expected to meet regularly to:

Develop and formulate ideas for publication

Look at ways of securing funding and make necessary applications.

See the production

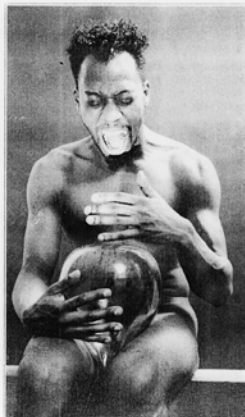
of publications through.

Explore ways of marketing the publications.

The time and commitment would vary according to production. Each member of the editorial group would be expected to undertake specific tasks until funding is secured.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ROSHINI KEMPADOO (0533) 706927 OR MONIKA BAKER AT THE OFFICE (01) 274 4000 EXT 353 FOR ANY FURTHER INFORMATION.

**NEXT MEETING
WEDNESDAY
7TH
FEBRUARY
1990, 7:00 PM
AT AUTOGRAPH
OFFICES.
BON MARCHE
BLDG
444 BRIXTON
RD**



© Rotimi Fani-Kayode

He was also keen to involve himself in group exhibitions and had recently begun to extend his collaboration with other artists. At the time of his death his work was being exhibited as part of the show *Transatlantic Dialogues* at Camerawork in London, which had transferred here from New York.

As Chair of Autograph: The Association of Black Photographers and a member of the Brixton Artists Collective, he was consistently involved in the day-to-day struggles of the arts. He was not remote from or disdainful of the mundane. It was in everyday life that he found his inspiration.

He was much loved and will be remembered as a man of irrepressible good humour, generosity and warmth. A person of rare integrity and few enemies, he lived with *joie de vivre* and a quiet trust in the power of his gods.

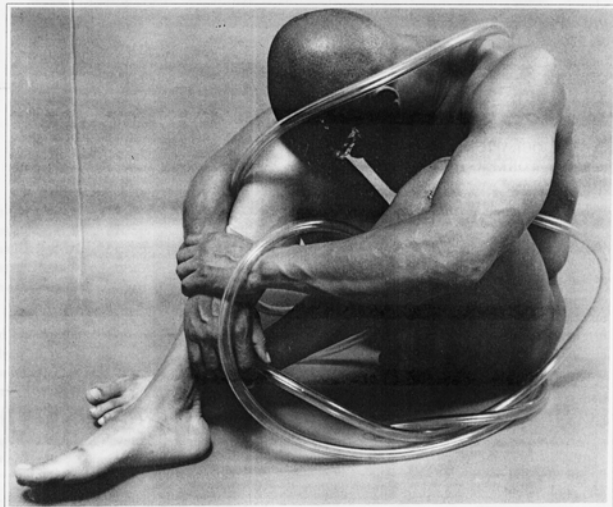
For me, his life partner and sometime collaborator, his great achievement was to transmute

the disparate elements of his experience, creating a vision of his understated but fierce belief in the power of the human spirit to overcome the impoverishment to which it is so frequently reduced. His work will remain as a forceful celebration of the beauty and mystery which await discovery beneath the grim surfaces of the modern world.

Fani-Kayode was born in Lagos in 1955. His father is Remi Fani-Kayode, the present Balogun of life. The Kayode family of Ile-Ife traditionally hold the title of Akire, keepers of the Shrine of Yoruba Deities and priests of Ifa.

Fani-kayode went to school in England after the Nigerian military coup of 1966. After Millfield School, he attended Georgetown University, graduating in Economics. He took an MA in Fine Art at the Pratt Institute in New York. He returned regularly to Nigeria but settled in England in 1983, living modestly in Brixton.

Alex Hirst



© Rotimi Fani-Kayode

THE OTHER STORY

REVIEWED BY MARK SEALY

Finally, we have an exhibition which celebrates the contributions that artists of African, Asian and Caribbean descent have made to the post war period in British art. That the Hayward Gallery is the venue does, perhaps, represent a major achievement. But what and who does The Other Story represent? How will The Other Story be cited historically? Has The Other Story now set a precedence for more shows, perhaps next time at the Tate? Or does The Other Story signify an end to a specific argument, i.e. one which circulated solely around the issue of access to traditionally exclusive white art venues? It is interesting to consider the show's title: The Other Story. It conjures up images of a unified otherness and smothers the notion of difference within Afro/Asian art practices. There are still many other stories to be told, but how, where and when may prove to be as problematic as is this exhibition. I suspect that as long as artists of African, Asian and Caribbean descent rely on the European tradition to provide them with space and sponsorship, they will always be in the position of taking handouts for their existence. Why should we wish to be included in a European art tradition which has historically given artists of African, Asian and Caribbean descent such a raw deal? I look forward to the next decade when maybe we will see the creation of a Black Market in which the telling of Other Stories is made possible by patronage within Black business. This could happen not just from the UK but through investigating the possibili-

ties of Transatlantic/Transworld finance. Its "otherness" need not be defined by its exclusion from white art tradition, but in ways that it is conceived, constructed and shown. Lets look at ways of deconstructing the hierarchical traditions of European and at constructing a Black Market force which deals specifically in artists of African, Asian and Caribbean descent, where Afro/Asians construct their own agendas, resources and audiences. Lets look away from this very exclusive club and more towards what the likes of Soul II Soul have achieved: create the business and keep your own identity. The European tradition has a long history of ripping-off Black artists. In the nineties lets make them pay for the privilege. Four decades of bitter struggle with the art institutions has produced a show which Rasheed Araeen has a right to feel proud of. But lets use this as a spring board to launch into a new era. Lets sell ourselves through being in the driving seat. Lets not sell out.

THE OTHER STORY (AFRO/ASIAN ART IN POST WAR BRITAIN)

continues until Feb 4, at the
HAYWARD GALLERY
The South Bank
London SE1

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

DIARY

Dates for forthcoming meetings; all Autograph members are eligible and encouraged to attend. All meetings to be held at Bon Marche Building, 444 Brixton Road, London SW9

Agency Meeting

Sunday

21 January 1990

1 pm to 3pm

Quarterly General Meeting

Sunday

28 January 1990

1pm to 3 pm

Publications Meeting

Wednesday

14 February 1990

7pm to 9pm



© Rotimi Fani-Kayode

AUTOGRAPH T-SHIRTS

£ 5.99

Please cut out and return with your payment as below to AUTOGRAPH

MEMBERSHIP

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

INDIVIDUAL £5 (UK) £10 (FOREIGN)

INSTITUTIONS £15 (UK) £20 (FOREIGN)

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO AUTOGRAPH



HAPPY
NEW
YEAR
INTO
THE
'90'S