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African Continuum: Sacred Ceremonies and Rituals

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New Exhibit

African Continuum: Sacred Ceremonies and Rituals
Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, California
March 20, 2010 to August 28, 2010.

Description from the Museum:



Bryan Wiley is a photojournalist who has traveled the Atlantic Black diaspora documenting altars and ritual practices by African descendants and in doing so, illuminates continuities in beliefs and customs of descendants of former slave populations. Wiley uses the concept of altar (a high place of veneration) as a vehicle for intersections in art

and history. Altars, in many cultures represent sites of ritual communication that often open a pathway to divine consciousness with the supernatural world. They also act as a place of public social interaction and intervention that explores disruption and continuity of African peoples and their descendants.

Wiley has assembled his photographs of altar objects from Brazil, Haiti, Cuba, South Carolina and New Orleans into large ornate frames creating collages that reveal the blurred lines between sacred and secular worlds. Wiley's assembled images focus on the power of the natural elements, earth, wind, fire, and water as manifest in the deities venerated in the altars. Large photographs of the physical locales and the surrounding landscapes contextualize his interpretive installations creating a quiet atmosphere of reverence. Wiley reveals that the process of visiting the countries, gaining access to the rituals and ceremonies has profoundly impacted his art practice, "Since I've been on this journey, I have listened to my spiritual voice more" said Wiley (Lizzetta LeFalle-Collins, Ph.D., Collaborating Curator).