

What do our oceans remember? The shifting of the continents? Migrating schools of fish and mammals? The movement of ships transporting enslaved peoples across the Atlantic? The audacious breaths of those who sought freedom? These questions animate Dineo Seshee Bopape's multichannel sound and video installation *Lerato laka le a phela le a phela le a phela/My love is alive, is alive, is alive* (2022). Based in Johannesburg, South Africa, Bopape brings together video, sound, and natural materials in works that consider how the social, political, and spiritual histories of the African diaspora inhabit the physical world around us.

Lerato laka le a phela pays homage to the twelve million enslaved people who crossed the Atlantic—those who survived and those who fled into the waters to seek sanctuary. Across three screens, the artist is seen submerging her hands and placing organic matter, such as fruit, flowers, and various libations, in the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea off the Jamaican coast. Audio elements are incorporated through Bopape's rhythmic drumming of the water and her voice—she can be heard singing in her mother tongue, Sepedi. While making the work, the artist experienced visions of an African American man known only as Peter, who escaped slavery in the United States during the eighteenth century. His story of resilience became known to the world through a widely circulated photograph of his whip-lacerated back.

Projected on a limestone surface, the videos are surrounded by a ring of rocks. A wash of soil has been applied to the gallery walls. Bringing together soil, rock, clay, and water, the work allows multiple timelines—the geological, the historical, and the personal—to converge in the present.

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