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FRAGMENTS FOR VENUS

A FILM BY ALICE DIOP

A black woman wanders through a museum, carefully examining each painting, searching for something. In the background, a voiceover recites titles, describes paintings, and gradually reveals the place that Western art has often reserved for black female bodies. Another black woman wanders through the streets of Brooklyn, looking in wonder at the black women around her, living incarnations of the new Venus.

FRAGMENTS FOR VENUS, directed by the French filmmaker, Alice Diop, is the 30th commission from Miu Miu Women's Tales. The acclaimed short-film series invites today's most profound and original female directors to investigate vanity and femininity in the 21st century.

Alice was introduced to — through her friend and translator Nicholas Elliott — the poem *Voyage of the Sable Venus* (2015) by American poet laureate, Robin Coste Lewis. The poem's title references the slave trade to the West Indies, and its central section consists of titles, catalog entries or exhibit descriptions in Western art that depict the black female form going back to 38,000BC. "My time in America, especially my recent stay while teaching at Harvard University, nourished me," says Alice, "and allowed me to question what it means to be a French, black woman in French society." Her new Women's Tales film is a "filmic gesture" and "tribute" to this experience, and to black American artists that inspire her — such as Robin Coste Lewis, Claudia Rankine, Saidiya Hartman etc. "And then there's the bodies," adds Alice excitedly, "the joy of seeing black women fill the streets of New York City." She states that through their existence she feels herself exist and describes the joy of making this new film as "self-celebration, as a gesture of repair."

Alice believes that although *Fragments for Venus* is just 21 minutes long, "it has the same importance as my feature, *Saint Omer*" and "there is calm in the way this short film proceeds, which is a political gesture."

In many ways, *Fragments for Venus,* is a film about ways of looking at looking, which has been central to feminist film theory from the 1970s onwards. "We — black people — come from this history of painting," Alice explains, "in which we have been marginalized, objectified." Her film wants to show that "we — artists, writers, thinkers — are here now. It attests to the way in which we are now ready to express ourselves."

The final part of *Fragments for Venus* introduces Meshell Ndegeocello's song, *Thus Sayeth the Lorde*, which summons "black, lesbian, socialist, mother, warrior, poet" Audre Lorde, delivered as slam poetry, turning Lorde's ideas against injustice into a rousing, defiant canticle. "This is an essential film to make at this time," Alice admits, referring to the rise of authoritarianism, racism and bigotry around the world. In its historical depth and structural precision, *Fragments for Venus* rewards careful attention. "It is my most simple and radical work to date," Alice concludes, "and it is there to make people talk."

French filmmaker Alice Diop (born 1979) has established herself as a vital chronicler of contemporary social realities through incisive documentaries examining marginalized communities, including *La Permanence* (2016) and *Vers la tendresse* (2016). Diop's breakthrough feature *Saint Omer* (2022) marked a decisive shift toward fiction, premiering at Venice where it claimed both the Grand Jury Prize and Luigi De Laurentiis Award. Inspired by her attendance at the trial for infanticide of a Senegalese woman who abandoned her infant daughter, the film transforms courtroom proceedings into meditation on motherhood, migration, and justice. Critics have drawn comparisons to *Jeanne Dielman* by Chantal Akerman, with Céline Sciamma describing Saint Omer as a "cinema poem." The film's rigorous formal approach earned widespread acclaim for its "intellectually charged" examination of storytelling's limitations in confronting human experience.

Alice Diop's new episode for *Women's Tales* will be premiered at the Venice Film Festival's *"Giornate degli Autori"* on **August 30th 2025** alongside a screening of the 29th episode, *Autobiografia di una Borsetta* by Joanna Hogg.

The short will subsequently be on Miu Miu digital channels.

FRAGMENTS FOR VENUS will be available to stream on MUBI globally from September 15th 2025.

About Miu Miu Women's Tales

Over 15 years and 30 unique episodes, Miu Miu *Women's Tales* is the longest running commissioning platform of female-led short films. Directed by today's most distinctive female filmmakers, every *Tale* is a beautiful, relevant world inhabited by women's idiosyncratic imaginations. Since 2011 and across every continent, *Women's Tales* has evolved and enriched in scope and meaning.

Miu Miu has asked filmmakers to celebrate femininity in the 21st century with a critical eye, armed with total freedom to create whatever they want. The Miu Miu clothes counterpoint the narrative drama throughout each episode. Across the film series, Miu Miu collections become a cast of characters in their own right, playing alongside noted actresses and models.

The *Women's Tales* have extended Miuccia Prada's lifelong commitment to culture-for-all into the art of filmmaking: a serious but playful examination of ever-transforming ideas around femininity she too has explored through Miu Miu for over 30 years.

The *Tales* create new, empowering roles and images of women for our times, around which a cross-generational community of cinephiles are rediscovering cinema in the post-cinema age. As Miuccia Prada put it herself, "with the *Women's Tales*, we created a conversation *with* women *about* women."

For further information:
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