

REBEL: Artist Torkwase Dyson Is Trying to "Desperately Live Up to Blackness"

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Torkwase Dyson
((image courtesy of artist))

Torkwase Dyson makes art that captures and extends the zeitgeist by mining the history of black bodies in America. Best known for her sculptures and multi-media installments, Dyson has recently been named the Robert Gwathmey Chair at Cooper Union, where she is launching her newest installation, I Can Drink the Distance.

In it, she marks a connection from slavery to climate change and modern-day migration and how black bodies have discovered ways to self-emancipate through that adaptation. She says she was moved to make art out of a desire to understand this.

"When I discovered that I could be a creative person, and that creative condition could teach me things that other systems were not, when that occurred to me — that's when the work started."

She adds: "I'm just trying to desperately live up to blackness."

Her work is cerebral and stunning and a tribute to the adaptability of black folks.

On April 2, Dyson will speak about her work in Cooper Union's Great Hall. For more information, visit [here](#).