

HIDDENINPLAINSIGHT

Pap Souleye Fall

Organized by Peter Kelly

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*Images: Pap Souleye Fall, GRIGRIGREENSCREEN, 2025, Web around expandable screen, 2012 to 2024 gri gri, pearls, Kirby eyes
52 x 52 inches*

In her essay *Gender Dynamics of the Japanese Media Mix*, cultural anthropologist Mizuko Ito describes the phenomenon of “media mixing” in the following terms: “Japan has a more integrated and synergistic relationship among media types than one tends to see in US children’s culture. Popular series make their way to all different platforms of media and each plays off the strengths of the other. Weekly or monthly manga magazines provide the serialized narrative foundation for series, as well as a venue for disseminating information about new game and toy releases, strategy, and tournaments.”

Media mixing, as defined by Ito, plays a central role in Pap Souleye Fall’s studio. To properly contextualize this relationship one must first contextualize “Dead Pixel,” a personification of the conceptual underpinning of Fall’s work. Created as a central figure of Fall’s eponymous comic series, Dead Pixel began as an amorphous figure who digests and processes digital sediment, and has become a trickster spirit embodied in the multimedia artist’s entire practice.

Even in a nominal sense, Dead Pixel calls attention to some central tenets: a pixel is a physical object, directing light to comprise a digital image—simultaneously a physical and digital object. Colloquially, when an individual pixel’s light stops working, it is pronounced dead. A common theme in which Fall engages is the tension and balance between the physical and digital. In *KEYEDUPKEYEDOUT*, Dead Pixel is made corporeal, with human extremities protruding from quilted found fabrics, signifying the hue of green screen. Rather than conventional tracking points used in motion capture technology, Fall utilizes pearls, cowrie shells, and peanuts—a nod to the history of Senegalese peanut farming and traditional West African decorative motifs. The green screen is referenced again through *PIXEL OF “GUTTED VORTEX,”* covered in monochrome green paper—Dead Pixel’s digestive process as detailed in the *DEAD PIXEL*

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comics—in which a group of objects are flattened, broken down, and ultimately processed. The green screens reference the vast expanse of the digital void—an empty space designed to be filled. Notably, “chroma keying” is a process that is teetering into obsolescence as CGI technology advances.

Each aluminum wall-based sculpture quotes a panel from Fall’s *DEAD PIXEL* manga series—segmented and cast into aluminum sculpture. This process highlights his interest in both media mixing and the embodied histories of physical objects. Recycled aluminum, quilting, beading, and assemblage are all notable in their incorporation of existing objects into a new distinct form.

Pap Souleye Fall (b. 1994) received a MFA in Sculpture at Yale School of the Arts in 2022 and a BFA in Fine Arts (concentration in Sculpture) from Philadelphia’s University of the Arts in 2017. Fall is a Senegalese-American artist who explores the transmedia potential of sculpture, installation, performance, cosplay, digital media, and comics. Fall has received the Daedalus Foundation Fund for Past Fellows & Awardees in 2023, the Black Rock Fellowship in 2023, the Ilab Fellowship in 2023, the Dedalus Foundation Emerging Artist Grant in 2022, the Alice Kimball Travel Grant in 2021, and the Florence Whistler Fish Award for Student Excellence in 2017. Much of Fall’s work reflects his growing up within the African Diaspora. Being of two worlds, he realized that through art Fall had the ability to construct his own worlds. As such, Fall became fascinated with the ways art could be embedded in everyday life, activating common materials to explore themes such as utopia, identity, notions of masculinity, Africanisms, and Afro-Futurism.