

Palais de Tokyo removes Cameron Rowland's Martinican Flag from façade By Alex Greenberger



Installation view of "ECHO DELAY REVERB," 2025, at Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Photo: Aurélien Mole

The Palais de Tokyo in Paris took down a Cameron Rowland piece not long after it went on view, appending new wall text that notes that the removed work may have been “considered illegal.”

Rowland's work, titled *Replacement* (2025), was commissioned for “ECHO DELAY REVERB,” a recently opened exhibition that focuses on American artists who have been influenced by French theory. The show was organized by Naomi Beckwith, deputy director and chief curator of the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the artistic director of Documenta 16.

Replacement involved switching out the French flag that normally hangs above the museum with the Martinican one. As usual for Rowland's work, the piece comes with an extended caption explicating the history behind the artist's gesture.

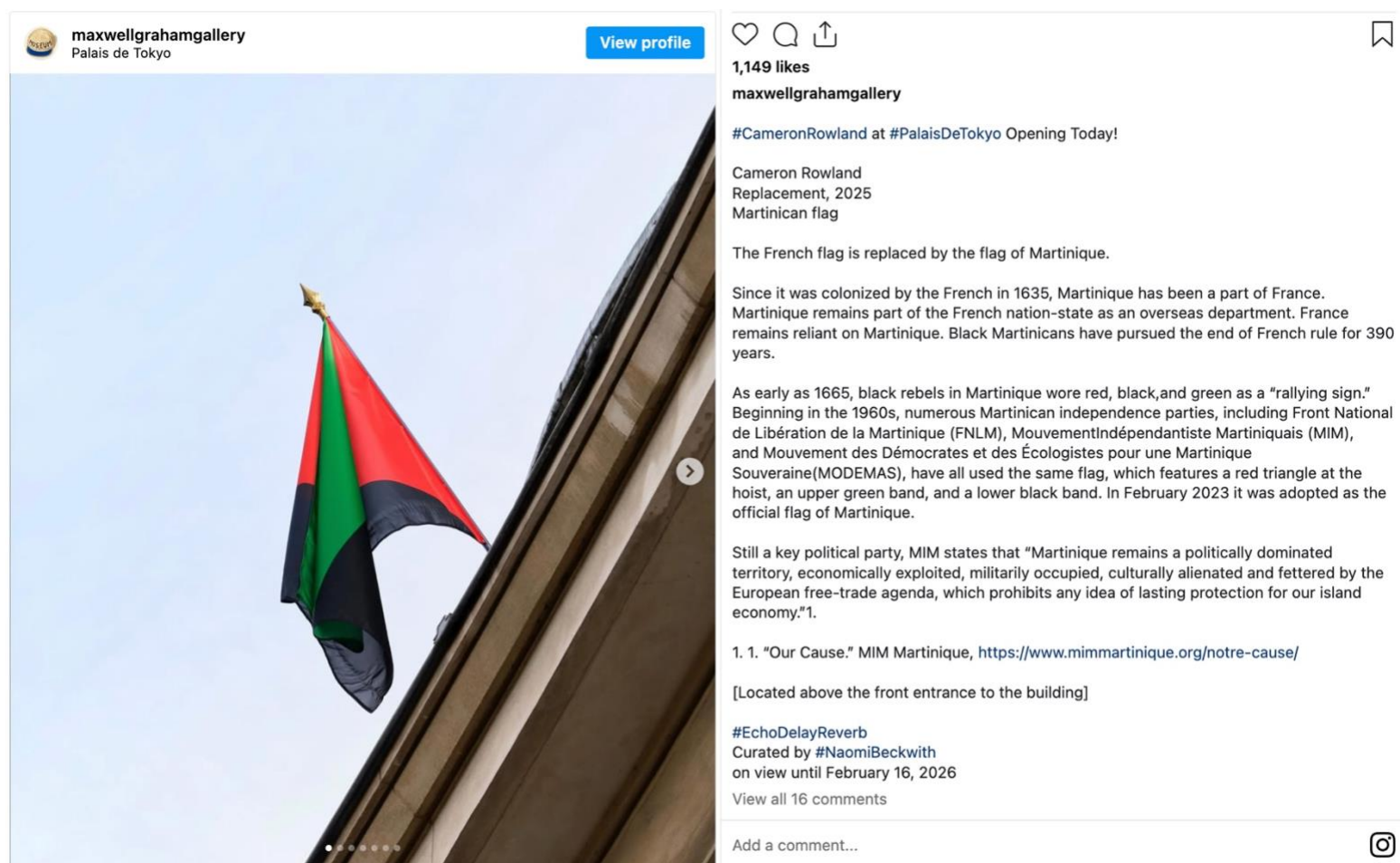
“Since it was colonized by the French in 1635, Martinique has been a part of France,” the caption begins. “Martinique remains part of the French nation-state as an overseas department. France remains reliant on Martinique. Black Martinicans have pursued the end of French rule for 390 years.”

The caption goes on to quote the mission statement of the Mouvement Indépendantiste Martiniquais, a French political party that seeks Martinican independence. That statement reads, “Martinique remains a politically dominated territory, economically exploited,

militarily occupied, culturally alienated and fettered by the European free-trade agenda, which prohibits any idea of lasting protection for our island economy.”

Rowland’s piece uses the flag adopted by Martinique in 2023, featuring bands of black and green, along with a red triangle—not the one that France had used prior to then, with a white cross and four snakes.

Replacement went on view on Wednesday, along with the rest of “ECHO DELAY REVERB.” On Thursday, Rowland’s New York–based gallery, Maxwell Graham, said on Instagram that the work had been taken out of the show.



The gallery posted to Instagram images of the piece’s new wall text, which reads, “Palais de Tokyo has determined that Cameron Rowland’s artwork could be considered illegal. As a result it is no longer included in the exhibition.”

The Palais de Tokyo and a representative for Rowland did not respond to request for comment.

Although it wasn’t immediately clear what was unlawful about *Replacement*, relations between France and Martinique have remained strained in the past year.

In 2024, Martinique was roiled by protests over high food prices. At the time, food prices there were 40 percent higher than they were in mainland France, according to the Agence France-Presse. The protests turned violent, resulting in the death of one person as a police station was set on fire. France subsequently called in an anti-riot police force that had been banned for more than six decades prior, and Martinican authorities banned the demonstrations.

Rowland’s work has been widely shown in the US and Europe, where the artist is acclaimed for their sculptures composed of ready-made objects enlisted to address histories that are under-known or largely invisible. Past works have addressed mass incarceration, systemic racism, the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade, and land ownership.