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Mythic figures: A triptych by Shine Shivan comes to life in his studio. The work forms part of our Frieze London 'Studios' presentation, viewable online at www.studios2022.com

A room of one's own

Cian-Yu Bai, Ruth Ige and Shine Shivan become permanent fixtures in our programme as the gallery's newest represented artists

Cian-Yu Bai was born in 1984 in Changhua, Taiwan, and has called Amsterdam home for the past 10 years, following a residency at De Ateliers. Her work was first brought to our attention by Viviane Sassen, who had seen it while judging a competition and realised it would resonate with our way of seeing. Since then, she has participated in

art fairs, most notably alongside Sassen in Art Rotterdam, and presented *The Breath in the Mind* in Cape Town as part of our AMS series. In the latter, created over two months spent in the city, Bai provided an introduction to her ethos of transition and coexistence. In her paintings she articulates how 'We are all a piece of this vastness – some are flowers, some are trees, but all are together.'

Of an equally diasporic make-up is Ruth Ige. Born in 1993 in Nigeria, raised in Botswana and living in New Zealand, the painter roots her practice in Black speculative

fiction and a formal sensitivity to the richness of the colour blue. Making her gallery debut in the group exhibition *my whole body changed into something else* in 2021, she recently presented *Freedom's recurring dream*, her first gallery solo, in Johannesburg. Her work will be our focus at Art Basel Miami Beach in December. (See Q&A on p7)

Shine Shivan was born in 1980 in Kerala, India, and lives in Faridabad. His work made its gallery debut as part of *Juxtapositions*, alongside Jane Alexander, and has since **CONT. →**



PHOTO: GERT JAN VAN ROOIJ

Omweg, the first major solo exhibition in the Netherlands by Moshekwa Langa, opened on 3 September at KM21, Kunstmuseum Den Haag. The

exhibition spans early and recent works, as well as new large-scale charcoal drawings made for the occasion, and runs to 4 December.

cont.→ formed part of presentations in Basel and Johannesburg. His first solo with the gallery will take place in 2023. A multidisciplinary artist, he describes works as guided by sensation over visuality, stating that images ‘are forms that are emancipating the people who are encountering them. It’s about the joy and the spiritual processes I’m struggling with.’ (See p6)

These artists and others offer a privileged view of how their works come to life on the occasion of Frieze London with our presentation Studios 2022. Zander Blom, Penny Siopis and Ian Grose share views of the tools and materials that furnish their life-long commitment to experimentation, while Neo Matloga, Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Serge Alain Nitegeka and Deborah

Poynton offer deepened insight to the meditative sanctum that is the context for their attention to narrative and anti-narrative. For Frida Orupabo, Mame-Diarra Niang and Zanele Muholi, the conventional idea of the studio is reconsidered entirely with lenses, digital workplaces and social encounters incubating their investigations into the archive and personhood.



To look without fear

Collect Call: Salim Currimjee

IN THIS NEW SERIES OF COLLECTOR INTERVIEWS, WE CATCH UP WITH MAURITIUS-BASED ARTIST, ARCHITECT AND COLLECTOR SALIM CURRIMJEE

When did you first realise you were a ‘collector’? When I was very young I collected vinyl records, Legos, stamps of the Indian Ocean, books and anything everything to do with ABBA.

Why art? I like to live with art and be surrounded by it. Art gives you a window to the world, pulls on your heart and tickles your mind.

What was the first work you bought from us? On Saturday 24 May 2008 I walked into the Stevenson gallery in Woodstock. It was the first show there, *Disguise*. I felt like a kid in a candy store, seeing all the catalogues you published. I think I bought over 30 books

and flew back home with a full and heavy cardboard box.

Art fairs: Love them or hate them? Hate is a very strong word. I prefer to go to museum and gallery openings of the many artists I do love.

What hangs in your bedroom? My room is tiny, so I only have a big Imran Qureshi – a violent red flower and blood painting; a small diamond-shaped Zander Blom painting; two Makonde sculptures; one elongated abstract work in African ebony and a very old ivory piece called *Tree of Life* that I got from my grandmother.

An exhibition by Currimjee opens at Stevenson Amsterdam 12 November

Khanyisa in the ‘City of Lights’

The 2022 FNB Art Prize winner talks to Alex Richards about working in Paris

This July, Dada Khanyisa started their long-awaited three-month residency at the Cité internationale des arts. During pandemic restrictions the moment had been delayed and seemed unlikely to happen. Now, working from the leafy streets of Le Marais, they reflect on the experience saying, ‘A well-equipped studio and a change in scenery helps my work mature.’ A previous instance that confirms this is their 2018 Fountainhead Residency in Miami. Through time spent in the buzzing North American city, their works took on the sensibility of the ‘Versace mansion’ – unbuttoned shirts, gold chains, pastel art-deco buildings and a *humid* feel synonymous with the ‘Magic City’.

While we were anticipating the Paris edition of Khanyisa’s signature style – tables in neon-lit cafés spotted with pastries, glasses of wine and cigarettes – this wasn’t what transpired. Khanyisa saw this residency as an opportunity to explore different media and materials, the context manifesting in an exploration of techniques and styles rather than subject matter. On the social scene in Paris, the artist explains, ‘I haven’t connected with that culture here because I don’t drink. So it’s tricky to match where



Work in progress in Khanyisa’s studio at the Cité internationale des arts

I’m at with what’s going on around me.’ Rather, Khanyisa recalls that one of the first words they learnt in French was ‘bois’ (wood) so they could study the different variations of the material so close to their heart at local art shops.

During phone calls, ambulance sirens rang in the background and we spoke about how different they sound to the ones at home. There is a long history of South African artists taking up residence in Paris – Gerard Sekoto famously enjoyed the dark smoky bars of St Germain but couldn’t shake home sickness. Khanyisa echoes this sensation, but states that trawling record shops and finding gems from South African musicians, like Caiphus Semanya’s

Streams Today ... Rivers Tomorrow, was a way to quell those feelings. Another way was with their bicycle: in Cape Town they cycle during the golden hour through the palm trees of the Sea Point promenade, pulling inspiration from the light and buildings around them. It’s the same in Paris: in deep summer, the streets are alive and best explored on two wheels. Trying to carry large pieces of wood on a bike is tricky if not impossible – but this hasn’t stopped Khanyisa from producing new work. Whether in Paris or Cape Town, making art for Khanyisa is as simple as riding a bike.

Khanyisa will have a solo exhibition at Johannesburg Art Gallery in 2023 as part of the FNB Art Prize.

Calendar Oct-Jan

1 October

Simphiwe Ndzube's solo exhibition *Masemola Road* opens at Stevenson Cape Town, alongside *How to Fix a Lift*, a project by Simon Gush and Bridget Kenny TO 19 NOV

1 October

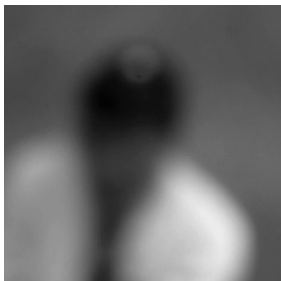
Frida Orupabo presents newly commissioned work in *The Machine is Us*, the inaugural Munch Triennale at the Munchmuseet, Oslo TO 11 DEC

7 October

Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi has work in *New Formations* at deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts TO 23 MAR

8 October

Mame-Diarra Niang presents *Sama Guent Guui*, a new body of photographic work, at Stevenson Johannesburg TO 19 NOV



8 October

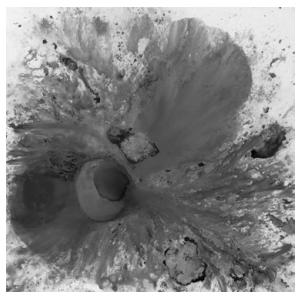
Simphiwe Ndzube takes part in *California Biennial 2022: Pacific Gold*, one of the opening exhibitions at the new Orange County Museum of Art TO 26 FEB

11 October

Last week to catch ARS22 at Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Frida Orupabo is included TO 16 OCT

12 October

Barthélémy Toguog presents an installation inside the Pyramid at the Louvre in Paris as part of *Things: A History of Still Lives* TO 23 JAN



12-16 October

Stevenson shows new works by gallery artists at Frieze London, with an online portal offering views into their studios. While in London, don't miss Penny Siopis's solo *For Dear Life* at Tiwani Contemporary

13 October

Last week to see Moshekwa Langa's work in *Globalisto: A Philosophy in Flux* at Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporaine, Saint-Étienne Metropole TO 16 OCT

15 October

Zanele Muholi's travelling survey exhibition opens at the National Gallery of Iceland TO 12 FEB

18 October

Last chance to see Barthélémy Toguog's solo *Faith Can Move*

Mountains at Villa Merkel, Esslingen am Neckar TO 23 OCT

27 October

Last days to see Pieter Hugo's *Solus* series, 'concerning atypical beauty and youth', at Stevenson Amsterdam TO 22 OCT

2 November

Steven Cohen's new performative installation *Boudoir* debuts at Théâtre Vidy-Lausanne TO 17 NOV

2 November

The ICP in New York's 11th Spotlights event honours Zanele Muholi. The activist will be in conversation with Thelma Golden, director of the Studio Museum

2 November

The Gym, with work by Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, opens at Soho Studios in Vienna TO 2 DEC

5 November

Last chance to catch Zanele Muholi's work in *Known and Strange: Photographs from the Collection*, V&A Museum, London TO 6 NOV

9 November

Films by Simon Gush are screened at Diez Gallery during the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam TO 20 NOV

10-13 November

Stevenson presents works by Pieter Hugo, Mame-Diarra Niang, Viviane Sassen, Guy Tillim, Zanele Muholi and Mario Peliti at Paris Photo, booth A16, Grand Palais Éphémère

12 November

Architect, artist and collector Salim Currimjee shows at Stevenson Amsterdam TO 17 DEC

18 November

Last weekend to view Penny Siopis's *Shadow Shame Again* at the Peltz Gallery, Birkbeck, University of London, as part of the pandemic-themed *Enduring Circumstances* TO 21 NOV

20 November

When We See Us, exploring Black self-representation in painting, opens at Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town. Dada Khanyisa, Neo Matloga, Meleko Mokgosi, Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi and Barthélémy Toguog are included

22 November

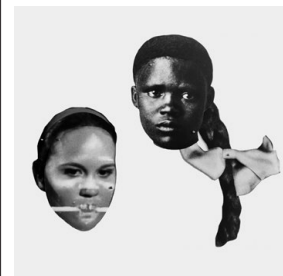
The last week of the 59th Venice Biennale. Portia Zvavahera shows new paintings in *The Milk of Dreams* TO 27 NOV

24-26 November

Steven Cohen presents *Boudoir* at the Centre Pompidou as part of the Festival d'Automne à Paris

26 November

Frida Orupabo opens her first Cape Town solo exhibition, with video by Silvia Martes screening as part of our AMS series TO 28 JAN



26 November

Head and shoulders portraits by Pieter Hugo, a variation of his acclaimed Arles exhibition, show at Stevenson Johannesburg TO 4 FEB

29 November

Last week to view Moshekwa Langa's first major solo show in the Netherlands, *Omweg*, at KM21 (Kunstmuseum Den Haag) TO 4 DEC

13-15 December

Steven Cohen's *Boudoir* travels to the Théâtre National de Bretagne

15 December

Stevenson Johannesburg closes for the holidays; the Cape Town gallery is open throughout the festive season except for public holidays

16 December

Day of Reconciliation, South Africa

17 December

Last days to see *Regards de Femmes*, works by women artists including Jo Racliffe in the collection of Fondation A Stichting, Brussels TO 18 DEC

6 January

Civilisation: The Way We Live Now, featuring Pieter Hugo's *Hell* series, draws to a close at Musei San Domenico, Forlì TO 8 JAN

7 January

Last weekend to view Zanele Muholi and David Goldblatt - *From South Africa* at Espace Louis Vuitton, Munich TO 8 DEC

14 January

Kiang Malingue present gallery artists at Stevenson Amsterdam, while Stevenson artists Frida Orupabo, Simphiwe Ndzube and Thenjiwe Nkosi show at their space in Hong Kong TO 25 FEB

15 January

Viviane Sassen's *Venus and Mercury* is included in the travelling exhibition *Orlando*, in its last days at C/O Berlin TO 18 JAN



20 January

In Brussels, Steven Cohen presents *Boudoir* at the Halles de Schaerbeek and *Put your heart under your feet... and walk!* at the Theatre National Wallonie-Bruxelles TO 28 JAN

28 January

Brave New World, including works by Portia Zvavahera and Neo Matloga, opens at Museum de Fundatie, Zwolle

Ongoing shows

→ Until 26 February

Barthélémy Toguog exhibits at the Picasso Museum in Barcelona - his first institutional solo in Spain

→ Until 1 March

Paulo Nazareth is featured in *Scenorama*, a 'collaborative platform for experimentation' at Javett-UP, Pretoria

→ Until April

Pieter Hugo, Zanele Muholi and Serge Alain Nitegeka feature in *Labor & Materials* at 21c Museums, Kansas City

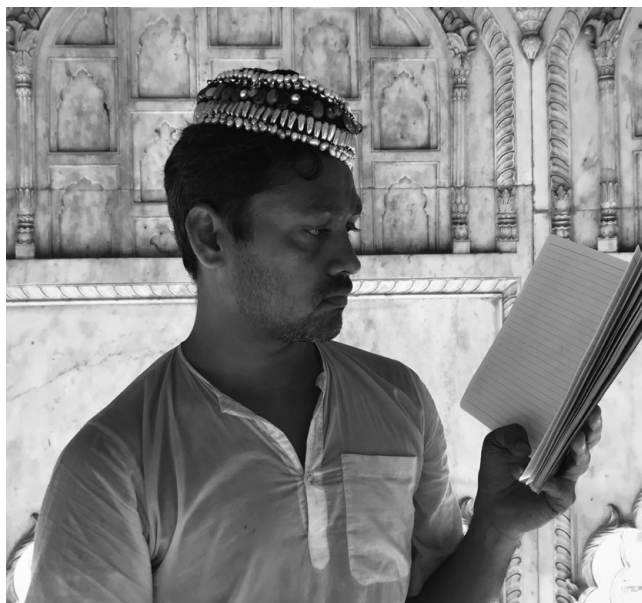
→ Until 31 May

Zanele Muholi features in *Looking Forward*, celebrating the 10th anniversary of Pier24 Photography in San Francisco

Sisipho Ngodwana
conversed with Shine
Shivan at the time of
his Cape Town debut

Shine Shivan:

‘Focus on the
power that
created us’



SN: You speak a lot about happiness. What is this feeling for you?

SS: When I met [the painter] A Ramachandran, he told me he had noticed a lot of unrest in the city – that he saw a person being murdered on the street, through his window, and was incredibly touched by it. He thought about how he was drawing dead bodies and corpses in rituals in which gods were enjoying death. Later, he wanted to draw what actually creates joy for the world. Lamenting this, he said, ‘We have so much pain in the world. For an artist, it is our responsibility to spread the joy and happiness we have – to select what is needed for our life.’

Ramachandran was saying that when you are a person in this universe, you do not have to focus on just people, you have to focus on the power that created us. And this power is so joyful and very simple, but not as easily accepted in society.

SN: For the drawings you’ve shown with us you have worked with colour, but previously you mostly kept a monochromatic palette. Can you speak a little on the transition?

SS: These works are not just images; they are forms that are emancipating the people who are encountering them. It’s about the joy and the spiritual processes I’m struggling with. Most times, it doesn’t even feel like I am the one making the work because I don’t feel like I’m in my body. The hands and brain feel distant and the process sometimes feel alien – as though someone or something else is doing the work.

SN: Do you believe the works are reincarnations of energies from elsewhere?

SS: See, as we see a mango seed, we see a mango tree. We know that the tree comes from a seed. We know that in the future the seed will transform to mangoes and the

mangoes will bring more seeds. This is the way of nature – even if we breed two different seeds together, we will end up with mangoes that reflect both the original seeds. We have to think about the present as though we are in the future because the seeds we plant now will be the fruit we eat later.

SN: What about the connection between the vessel and the process of reincarnation?

SS: I’m human, so I must be in a vessel that has the capacity to occupy my soul. If I’m an artist, that means my past self was associated with art. Everything is connected and you can judge the present state of our presence to understand your future and past existence.

Shivan (born 1981 in Kerala; lives in Faridabad) exhibited alongside Jane Alexander in a *Juxtapositions* pairing earlier this year, and will have a first solo with the gallery in 2023

Writer Zoe Hopkins
spoke to Ruth Ige over
email ahead of her
Johannesburg solo

Ruth Ige:

‘I am still
anchored to
history and
grounded in
the present’



ZH: Can you speak about how the colour blue informs your work?

RI: I see the colour blue as a form of language. It can convey sadness, renewal and hope simultaneously. It can be otherworldly, but also familiar. I can create a meditative atmosphere and cultivate mystery, which is conceptually important for me. I also love that blue also connects to my Nigerian heritage. Being both Yoruba and Igbo, among the former we have an indigo fabric called Adire which holds deep cultural significance. All these factors tie in and more.

ZH: Who are the figures in your paintings? What is their relationship to the personified vision of freedom you’ve named in your writing?

RI: The figures are fictional black individuals of both extraordinary and ordinary walks of life. I try not to not give too much away, but Freedom is a mothering entity to

them. She wants the best for them individually, and as a collective in the diaspora. She has gone through obstacles to realise her dream of freedom, but it never fully comes to pass, so it keeps on recurring. The paintings are made from her perspective. Sometimes she intervenes with blessings, ideas for resistance and spiritual gifts. Many of the figures have not met her, and some have only seen her as a glimpse or in a fleeting dream. This is important because freedom is not accessible to all. Many of us are living only in its glimpses because of injustice and systematic racism.

ZH: Can you expand on the tradition of Black speculative fiction and how it shows up in your work?

RI: The tradition is so expansive you could trace it back to African mythology, but my relationship with it began when I was around 9 years old, living in Botswana. I wanted to be a writer and created a story about

a girl who shrunk to the size of a pencil. I have always carried a sense of imagination.

I began to add this framework to my painting practice through titles. With names like *The seer*, *The Time Traveller*, *The women with the healing gift* I could evoke sci-fi elements, thus challenging stereotypes around blackness by placing it in an unexpected context. There is a power in seeing ourselves in alternate realities.

This also shows up in my work through *time*. I want there to be a conversation between the past, present, and future; I am not just focused on the future – I am still anchored to history and grounded in the present. I want to explore blackness within all these frames.

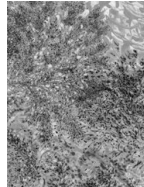
Ige (born 1992 in Nigeria; lives in New Zealand) her debut solo with the gallery took place in Johannesburg in August. A special focus on her works shows at Art Basel Miami Beach in December

Reading matter

New additions to our shelves



my whole body changed into something else. Published by Stevenson (cat. 98), 2022, on the anniversary of the show



Cian-Yu Bai. Published by Stevenson (booklet), 2022, with text by Noëlle de Haan

WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO

Stevenson associate Nala Xaba recommends *Group Theory: Black Music* by jazz percussionist Tumi Mogorosi, released via Mushroom Hour Half Hour/New Soil (July 2022). In this album Mogorosi is grappling with the notion of mass as political contestation. Leading an instrumental ensemble alongside a nine-person choir, he deepens his exploration of the inaudible, dislocated epistemes and aesthetic limitation, following the 2021 release of his book *DeAesthetic. Writing with and from the idea of the Black Sonic*.

Each of the project's 11 tracks offers its own sonic methodology for the charge laid out by poet and scholar Amiri Baraka: 'New Black music is this: find the self, then kill it.' The album's cover image has been retrieved from the archives of veteran photographer Andrew Tshabangu.

Xaba says, 'I first picked up this album because I was intrigued by the features, especially of previous bandmates Gabi Motua (lead vocalist, The Wretched) and Siya Mthembu (lead vocalist, Shabaka and the Ancestors), who's also led projects like The Brother Moves On. I keep returning to it because there's a maximalism about Tumi's work that isn't always easy to listen to and I enjoy that discomfort.'

From the press

→ Ronald Berg reviews Deborah Poynton's *Folly* at Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin:

'In Poynton's virtuoso paintings one might also have the idea that the depicted people, things, plants and blossoms must be charged with symbolism. Surely nothing can have been randomly introduced into such precisely painted images. Each and every object, in its place, must always have been intentionally and carefully inserted into the composition. But then, amidst the large number of things heaped up in the pictures of the South African, born in 1970, one can also see white spots, unfinished fragments and amorphous brushstrokes which unwrap the illusionistic spectacle as a mere construction, as an ironic play with meanings, and as folly, *Folly* being the title of this exhibition at the Haus am Lützowplatz.

'The fact that someone spends hours every day immersing themselves in the production of such detailed image-worlds is perhaps not unusual among artists. And the fact that Poynton herself doesn't really know what's behind it may seem a bit crazy. Nonetheless, for the viewer, there are manifold opportunities – not only for sensual pleasures, but also for sensual questions. Is there anything to see here at all? Is it about the picture or what is depicted, is one sensually seduced or senselessly led around by the nose? Poynton's peculiar "follies" provide endless fabric for projection, as their ostentatious sensuality challenges the fleeting gaze. Because the longer you look, the more you see and the more questionable (in the literal sense) the idyllic happenings become. So it's worth taking the time to be moved – into a world of images with its own rules.'

'Right under the skin', *tipBerlin* magazine, 23 July 2022
(translated from German)

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