

Tiwani Contemporary
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Shoshanna Weinberger, *Forever Yours*, 2013, gouache and mixed media on paper, 59.6 x 43.8 cm

Mutations

**Works on paper by ruby onyinyechi amanze,
Douglas Rodrigo Rada, Helô Sanvoy and Shoshanna Weinberger**

30 May – 16 August 2014

Private View: Thursday, 29 May 2014, 6:30 – 8:30pm

Tiwani Contemporary presents *Mutations*, an exhibition showcasing recent works on paper by four international artists: **ruby onyinyechi amanze** (Nigeria/US), **Douglas Rodrigo Rada** (Bolivia), **Helô Sanvoy** (Brazil), and **Shoshanna Weinberger** (Jamaica/US). All artists have exhibited frequently and across the globe, though this is the first time that their work has been shown in the UK.

amanze, Sanvoy, Rada and Weinberger follow distinct conceptual trajectories and approaches to drawing. The works in the exhibition are broadly diverse in technique, scale and imagery, but share an interest in pushing the boundaries of drawing as a medium and in asking essential questions around fixed categories of both forms and identities. Drawing (a line) is, by essence, defining a threshold, however the works in *Mutations* focus on the hybrid, the liminal, the fragmented and the de-centered as fundamental elements of the human experience, and as devices to probe the possibilities of the medium.

Notwithstanding the plurality of their practices, the artists in the exhibition posit their inquisitive approach to the ever-evolving medium of drawing as a vehicle to explore ideas around shifting identities, hybridity and alterity.

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ruby onyinyechi amanze's works on paper feature a bestiary of wild animals, ghost-like figures, alien entities and architectural elements, often connected by modular constellations of bridges and nodes. The works shown in the exhibition were triggered by amanze's longest trip to Nigeria (where she was born), as a Fulbright fellow in 2012. There, she conceived *ada*, an alien alter ego often present in the work and whose evident alterity echoes amanze's own experience of (non-)belonging. A reflection on the diasporic experience, and rooted in the genre of Afro-futurism, her drawings envision speculative narratives of self-discovery, supernatural existence and spatio-temporal escapism to evoke ideas around cultural hybridity, belonging and displacement.

Douglas Rodrigo Rada's *Metamorphosis* (2011) was inspired by Jorge Luis Borges' *Dr Brodie's Report* (1971), the tale of a Scottish Presbyterian missionary's encounter with a faraway society, whose members practise cannibalism and devour their king's corpse. The series also draws upon Ovid's eponymous epic poems, which has exerted a vast influence on European art and inspired artists such as Titian, Michelangelo and Caravaggio. Rada's pencil drawings, detailed studies of truncated male bodies in various states of torsion, display a fragmented physicality that suggests the impossibility of a unified self, and a conspicuous sense of 'otherness' that questions the purpose and perception of the post-modern human body.

Helô Sanvoy's work often features linear patterns, which may have the aspect of written data, but are in fact impossible to decipher. In *Cyclopaedia* (2013) Sanvoy's text is inscrutable. Covered by nebulous shadows of graphite, it highlights the artist's interest in 'word as image' and the relationship between drawing and writing. The textural darkness of the graphite reveals anthropomorphic shapes and sketches of objects: ghost-like figures of anatomical studies, diagrams and notes that recall the work of Andreas Vesalius, Juan Valverde de Amusco and Leonardo da Vinci. Produced by an accumulative process, building up and deleting layers of graphite at once, the work embraces the permeable states of text and its elasticity vis-à-vis subjectivities and memory. Prevailing throughout is a nagging sense of ambivalence towards language, communication, and a play between memory and forgetfulness.

Shoshanna Weinberger's gouaches explore the cultural contingency of beauty and the idea of 'otherness' in relation to hybrid corporeality, race and gender. Her blacked-out silhouettes, grotesque caricatures of hyper-sexualised female figures, all bright lips and protruding bosoms, envision the black female body as a monstrous, erotically violent entity, radically at odds with Western ideals of beauty. Ligatured, and amputated, endowed with multiplying limbs but no head, these mutant Venuses embody the historical myth of a deviantly sexual black female body, which has influenced Western representations of black women for centuries, from Saartje Baartman to Nicki Minaj.

Tiwani Contemporary cordially invites you to join the exhibition opening on:

Thursday 29th May 2014, 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Tiwani Contemporary | 16 Little Portland Street | W1W 8BP
T: + 44 (0) 207 631 3808 | Directions (Oxford Circus tube)
@Tiwaniart | www.tiwani.co.uk

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About the Artists



ruby onyinyechi amanze was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship in 2012 and has recently exhibited her work at MoCADA (New York, 2013) and CCA Lagos (2013). Forthcoming exhibitions include *DISGUISE*, at Seattle Art Museum (2015). She is a graduate of the Tyler School of Art (Philadelphia) and the Cranbrook Academy of Art. She currently lives and works in New York.

ruby onyinyechi amanze, *kindred*, 2014, graphite, ink, pigment, enamel, photo transfers, glitter on paper, 198.1 x 203.2 cm



Douglas Rodrigo Rada was awarded First Prize at the SIART Biennial in Bolivia in 2005 and won a prize at the Biennial in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in 2012. Recent exhibitions include Museo de Arte Contemporáneo of Santa Cruz de la Sierra and Oonagh Young Gallery in Dublin, Ireland (2013), Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil and SIART Biennial at AEC Contemporary Art Space, Montevideo, Uruguay (2011). In 2013, he co-curated the 3rd Performance Festival CIMIENTOS in Bolivia.

Douglas Rodrigo Rada, *Metamorphosis 6*, 2011, pencil on paper, 40 x 30 cm



Shoshanna Weinberger studied at Yale School of Art (Master of Fine Arts) and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Recent exhibitions include BIAC International Biennale, Martinique (2013), National Gallery of Jamaica Biennale, Kingston (2012), ISE Cultural Foundation, New York (2012) and the Gateway Project (Newark, 2014). She currently lives and works in Newark, New Jersey.

Shoshanna Weinberger, *Strange Fruit*, 2013, gouache on paper, 90.17 x 65.4 cm



Helô Sanvoy's recent exhibitions include Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Jataí (2013), BIENAL 1, Belo Horizonte (2012) and Museu da República, Brasília (2011). Sanvoy is a member of the artists' collectives Grupo Empreza and Grupo Desenha. He lives and works in Goiânia-GO, Brazil.

Helô Sanvoy, *Cyclopaedia*, 2013, graphite on paper, 10 x 29.5 x 21cm

Notes to Editors

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Gallery hours are Tuesday to Friday; 11am - 6pm; Saturday 12pm - 5pm

Tiwani Contemporary, founded in 2011 and based in the heart of the Fitzrovia gallery district, focuses on contemporary artists from Africa, including Nigeria, its diaspora, as well as from the Global South. The gallery's aim is to present the works of emerging and established artists through solo, group and thematic exhibitions to a London institutional, corporate and collector base. In addition to its commercial activities, Tiwani Contemporary presents *Art Connect*, a dynamic and innovative public programme of events, panel discussions and curated projects within the gallery space as well as in collaboration with other partners in London and across the UK. The programme is developed in collaboration with The Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos and generously supported by the A.G. Leventis Foundation.