

## TIWANI CONTEMPORARY

*As Feeling Births Idea*: Virginia Chihota, Rita Alaoui, Ranti Bam, Euridice Zaituna Kala, Paula Do Prado, and Wura-Natasha Ogunji

22 February – 06 April 2024



Rita Alaoui, *Orpin 6*, 2022 Acrylic and oil stick on raw linen | 210 x 250 cm / 82 5/8 x 98 3/8 in | RAL 008

Tiwani Contemporary proudly presents, ***As Feeling Births Idea*** a group show featuring: **Virginia Chihota, Rita Alaoui, Ranti Bam, Euridice Zaituna Kala, Paula Do Prado, and Wura-Natasha Ogunji**. The exhibition gathers together a reflection on each artist's poetics of interiority and engagement: the phenomena, live, or recollected encounters that inform and shape the featured works in the show. The title borrows a sentence extracted from African American poet and activist, Audre Lorde's short essay, *Poetry Is Not A Luxury* (1977) which draws together a constellation of thoughts, about the illuminatory power of introspection; the 'poetry' of experiences that can instigate action, inspire changes, enlighten our own and other's perspectives. How do each of the artists interpret and make legible the poetics of their experiences through their materials and methodologies?

**Upper Gallery and Vitrine:** Virginia Chihota, Wura-Natasha Ogunji, Euridice Kala.

London | 24 Cork Street | W1S 3NG  
Lagos | 13 Elsie Femi Pearse Street | Victoria Island

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### **Virginia Chihota** (Zimbabwe/US)

Chihota has established a practice that in large-scale, unique serigraphs, centralises the differing modes of her subjectivity: as a woman, parent, member of an extended family, and community. Her densely layered compositions are created through the repeated pull of multiple screens across her surfaces creating a palimpsest of gestural marks, textures and motifs, featuring abstracted representations of herself caught within environments that seek to resolve a dilemma or a question. Chihota applied her reflexive process to immerse herself in the feelings and thoughts of the fictional character Aida; an enslaved Ethiopian princess who is torn between loyalties to her father Amonasro and her lover, Radamès, a high-ranking general of the Egyptian army at war with Ethiopia at the centre of Giuseppe Verdi's tragic opera, *Aida* (1871). On view will be the works: *My Mind is lost in a bitter night, and in such cruel anguish I wish to die* (2020) and *Sacred words father and lover - I can no longer speak them* (2020).

### **Wura-Natasha Ogunji** (USA/Nigeria)

Movement is an important context in Ogunji's practice that encompasses painting, drawing, sewing on paper, video, sound and performance. These media including her body are used as tools and materials to think about what affect does motion and mobility create for the body and psyche. What occurs in the blurs, and trembling that Ogunji's subjects are captured in? What comprehension of time and space is being experienced? The works on show include: *Everything that is you plus everything that is not you* (2023), *Your backflips go unnoticed* (2023) and *So Pretty* (2023) present these engagements and adaptations to events and scale; the minimalism of her larger paintings enables an experience of freedom, speed and an association that contrasts to the range of refined movement, precision, and intimacy of her stitched drawings.

### **Euridice Zaituna Kala** (Mozambique/France)

Presenting two works from *Personal Archives: An Exercise on Emotional Archaeologies* (2021), *Modele 1* and *Modele 2* are glass plate, photographic sculptures from a larger series of multiple stand-alone and stacked structures, which configure and re-present visual references excised from different photographic archives that Kala reviewed: her personal images, the French social-historical glass-plate archive of Montparnasse photographer Marc Vaux (1895-1971) and the journal, *Revue Noire* (1990-2000) a French bi-lingual pioneering contemporary art and photography publication that focused on practices from the Africa continent and diaspora, and Mozambican photographer Ricardo Rangel's (1924-2009) archive. Kala's absorption and interweaving of these ostensible disparate archives, recasts a new archival narrative, a logic materialised for viewers that she wants them to experience, based on her search to connect with well-known and underseen figures and events.

**Reception and Lower Gallery:** Paula Do Prado, Rita Alaoui, Ranti Bam.

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### **Rita Alaoui** (Morocco/France)

Alaoui contemplates the human relationship, (dis)connection and displacement to nature. The empty chair as a motif that recurs in her paintings series, *Autumn* (2021-ongoing) alludes to absenting the human, speed and extractivism, to slow down time for nature to thrive without human intervention. Her intimate studies begin from her immediate surroundings; her home, exterior spaces such as her garden, and studio where Alaoui has built an expanding archive of botanical, mineral, animal and insect ephemera, that she also collects from excursions further afield, and revisits repeatedly in her imagery, accruing knowledge and giving new life to these forms in her studies across her multidisciplinary practice which includes painting, natural pigment production, assemblage, plant knowledge and healing practices inherited from her grandmother and referenced in performances, and artist book production. The exhibition also features, *Orpin#6* from the 2021- ongoing series.

### **Paula Do Prado** (Uruguay/Australia)

Do Prado centres the intersections of her Bantu- Kongo, Iberian and indigenous Charrúan Uruguayan ancestry, in her mixed media fibre weavings, fabric sculptures and hangings. Her work references her experiences of diaspora as a migrant living on the unceded lands of Gadigal People of the Sydney Basin. Do Prado's works reference matrilineality and embody the spiritual and philosophical cosmologies of her aforementioned heritages to inform decolonial practice. Her woven forms and soft sculptures invite contemplation of the connections between nature, history, duration and space through the intricacies of knots, fissures, crochet loops, coils and beadwork. The exhibition will feature the works: *Sorrow* (2023), *Abya Yala* (2022), and *Resonance* (2018).

### **Ranti Bam** (Nigeria/UK)

The curative and healing properties of clay guides Bam's meditative explorations of the Yoruba divine and spirituality, communion and care through the creation of her vessels. Earth in its senses as an astrological planet, and the organic composite material forming the ground we walk upon, are celebrated in her hands. Her *Ifá* (2023) are sculptures formed from slabs of clay that are physically embraced by the artist for a duration: the union acknowledging and embodying metaphors, around relationships to the environment and people, vulnerability, and contact. Bam regards her vessels collective presence as a hearth; a place to convene and facilitate community and conversations around creativity and renewal.