

Francisco Vidal - *Workshop*

13 November - 19 December 2015

Private view: Thursday 12 November 2015, 18.30 - 20.30



Francisco Vidal, *Luanda Utopia*, 2015, acrylic paint and screen print on handmade recycled paper, 255 x 255 cm

Tiwani Contemporary is pleased to announce *Workshop*, an exhibition of new works by Francisco Vidal. This will be Vidal's first solo exhibition in the UK, following an exhibition and residency at Tiwani Contemporary in July by e-studio Luanda, a Luanda-based artist collective, project space and studio complex co-founded by Vidal. The artist is also part of the official selection for the Angolan Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale.

Workshop is Francisco Vidal's first solo exhibition in the UK, showcasing new, previously unseen paintings and works on paper. The new paintings were produced using the *U.topia Machine*, a 60 x 60 cm plywood box containing an all-in-one toolkit for the mass production of screen prints, which also serves as a portable gallery. The machine was born out of a response to Vidal's own experience of migration and the challenges faced by the modern, itinerant artist. The *U.topia Machine* envisions a system of art making and exhibiting that is no longer tied in with a sense of place, highlighting the status of the artist as an international worker.

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Vidal's practical working methodology considers the notion of the artist as a machine and the studio as a workshop, and advocates machine-based mass production as the means of creating a better world. In a move to unite artistic forms with utilitarian intentions, *Workshop* borrows from the legacy of Constructivist and Bauhaus artists, whose taste for social experiment and revolutionary politics through art and design have evidently inspired Vidal. Flower patterns, which Vidal prints in various colour gradations, are often intertwined with his bold, calligraphic-like black line, emphasising influences such as graffiti and graphic novels. Spray-painted slogans – often with a revolutionary undertone – alongside portraits of intellectual and popular figures also feature in the work, condensed into a visual intersection of colours, words and lines. Vidal's interest in mechanical reproduction is evident in his methodological approach to colour gradation, and his interest in permutations, numbers, repetition and standardisation, though in clear contrast with his exuberantly colourful, gestural and neo-expressionist style.

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Notes to Editors

Francisco Vidal is one of the most unique artistic voices recently to have emerged from Angola, and has played an instrumental role in fostering the visual arts scene in Luanda. Vidal was born in Lisbon in 1978 and lives between Luanda and Lisbon. He is Portuguese, Angolan and Cape Verdean. Vidal holds an MFA from Columbia University School of the Arts in New York, where he was mentored by Kara Walker. In 2005, he was selected for the EDP Young Artists Award. He is currently part of the official selection of the Angolan Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale. Other recent exhibitions include Freies Museum, Berlin (2015); Savvy Contemporary, Berlin (2015); Milan Expo (2015); Instituto Camões, Luanda (2014); UNAP, Luanda (2012); Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon (2011); EDP Foundation, Lisbon (2010); Lux, Lisbon (2010); Instituto Camões, Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique (2007).

About Tiwani Contemporary

Tiwani Contemporary exhibits and represents international emerging and established artists, focussing on Africa and its diaspora. The gallery presents work through its exhibition programme and participation in art fairs.

In addition to its commercial activities, Tiwani Contemporary runs a public programme, Art Connect, supported by the A.G. Leventis Foundation. This provides a platform for discussing contemporary artistic practice through publications, talks and projects.

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Opening hours: Tuesday - Friday, 11am - 6pm, Saturday, 12pm - 5pm