

# Tiwani Contemporary

Press Release

## **Sokari Douglas Camp, CBE: *It's Personal***

6 April - 19 May 2012

Press Private View: Thursday 5 April 2012, 5:30-6:30pm

Private View: Thursday 5 April 2012, 6:30-8:30pm

Tiwani Contemporary, London

Tiwani Contemporary is delighted to announce ***It's Personal***, an exhibition of new sculptural works by Sokari Douglas Camp. Critically renowned for her towering steel sculptures, Douglas Camp's work is largely informed by both her life in London as well as a celebration of her Nigerian heritage.

This exhibition presents a continuation of the artist's exploration of life, but presented from a more intimate and biographical perspective. Personal as well as physical maturity are Douglas Camp's point of deviation. Her steel sculptures, metal drawings, fusion of colour and found objects are both an honest examination of emotional transitions as well as celebration of maturity, power and independence.

The swearing sculptures *Waka Shege* (2011) (Northern Nigerian swear word) and *The Finger* (2011) are holding vessels for profanity and anger, and give reference to Congolese effigy figurines, which symbolise the passing of ones suffering to statues as a way of healing ones ailments. Whilst *I Heat* (2011) and *Two Heat* (2011), red and blue sculptures, represent Sokari's relationship with her two daughters. "By touching my girl(s) I get some youth/ heat. As a parent I appreciate being close to young people. The figures in both these sculptures express my feeling in colour." Effervescence of youth is also seen in *Theo Butterfly* (2011), a tribute to one of her daughter's friends.

Other rarely seen works include *Coca-Cola Bird* (2011) a playful representation of eternal youthfulness and *Middle Age Middle Rage* (2011). This metal drawing emanates her pattern making style, a return to her first love (painting) and her first artistic exploration of the relationship between herself and her husband.

Of the artist, Co-Director Maria Varnava says: "It is a great pleasure for us to be working with an artist of Douglas Camp's pedigree. The work we will be presenting departs from the political work that she has been making recently taking on a more introspective perspective and giving us an insight into the personal world that motivates her work."

Sokari Douglas Camp has been working as an artist since the 1980s. She was born in the Kalabari town of Buguma in the eastern Niger Delta, Nigeria in 1958. Her art education took place in London at the Central School of Art Design (1980-1983), and the Royal College of Art (1983-1986). Sokari Douglas Camp has had more than 40 solo shows worldwide, most notable 'Spirits in Steel - The Art of the Kalabari Masquerade' at the American Museum of Natural History and Imagined Steel at the Lowry Arts Centre, Manchester. Her most high profile piece to date is 'Battle Bus: Living Memorial for Ken Saro-Wiwa' (2006), a full-scale replica of a Nigerian steel bus, which stands as a monument to the late Niger Delta activist and writer. She was short listed for the Trafalgar Square Fourth Plinth in 2003 and her work is in permanent collections at The Smithsonian Museum, Washington, D.C., Setagaya Museum Toyko, The American Museum of Natural History, New York, and the British Museum, London. In 2005, Sokari Douglas Camp was awarded a CBE in recognition of her services to art. Sokari Douglas Camp lives and works in London.

Sokari Douglas Camp: *It's Personal* is organised by Stephanie Baptist.

Curatorial Advisor is Bisi Silva, Founder and Director, CCA, Lagos, Nigeria.

The exhibition will run from 6 April 2012 - 19 May 2012 at Tiwani Contemporary.

The Directors Ayo Adeyinka, Jude Cesar and Maria Varnava invite you to join them for the private view:

5 April from 6:30-8:30pm at Tiwani Contemporary

16 Little Portland Street

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### **Notes to Editors**

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Gallery hours are Wednesday to Saturday, 11am - 6pm and by appointment.

## **Tiwani Contemporary**

Tiwani Contemporary focuses principally on contemporary artists from Nigeria, across Africa and its Diaspora as well as the Global South. The gallery's aim is to present the works of emerging and established artists to a London institutional, corporate and private collector base. In addition to its commercial activities, Tiwani Contemporary intends to present a dynamic and innovative public programme that will include publications, talks, panel discussions, curated projects and events within the gallery space as well as in collaboration with other partners in London and across the UK.