

**MICHAELA YEARWOOD-DAN
AFTER EUPHORIA**

22 November – 11 January 2020

“As the tide carried me to the realm of self-content and reflection, it is now that I see that it was simply carrying me to the shore of finding myself.”

Michaela Yearwood-Dan

Tiwani Contemporary is delighted to present Michaela Yearwood-Dan's debut solo exhibition at the gallery.

Michaela Yearwood-Dan's work reflects on subjectivity and individual identity as forms of self-determination. Through painting, she explores how selfhood and personal experience – especially love and loss – marks of existence – constitute a vital and highly personal process of self-historicization vis-à-vis identity formation.

The exhibition draws heavily on the vicissitudes of her own romantic life – past and present - exploring what the artist calls the 'bitter-sweet reality' that arrives in the aftermath of heightened emotion and connectivity. Yet the artist also coheres an analogy of falling in and out of love with the mutability of contemporary experience that is desirous of advancement but marked by crisis and change. But what occurs at the end of all these entanglements – amorous or political? Yearwood-Dan proposes a rosy perspective of nostalgia that gives way - starkly and inevitably - to a sudden realisation of disillusionment. The works in this exhibition explore an awareness of the hues and textures of that epiphany.

Yearwood-Dan invents abstracted habitats that feature recurring botanical motifs and forms – each painting often suggestive of a distinctive emotional landscape. She inscribes writing onto the canvas, frequently her own comprising poetry, epigrams as well as references to contemporary culture that all appear with varying degrees of legibility. The geography of their placement on the canvas bears no deliberate design – sometimes appearing on the periphery and in media res. For her latest body of work, she looked to British rapper and actor Kano, dancehall star Spice and has also referenced Kate Bush's 1986 song *The Hounds of Love*.

Whilst her work may be underpinned by an expansive and multivalent repertoire of cultural signifiers borrowing freely from blackness, healing rituals, flora, texting, acrylic-nails, gold-hoops, carnival culture, these reference points enable her to present and privilege the variance of her own individual experience. As such, her work refuses to be framed by narrow expectations of racial or gendered notions of collective identity and history. She defamiliarizes many of those reference points in her work resisting the clichés and strictures of representation.

“I think the second I stopped trying to hide behind how a feminist, millennial, black woman should be and the goals they should attain I felt the load lift of my shoulders and found the ability to make the most honest work I could make,” says Yearwood-Dan.

About Michaela Yearwood-Dan

Born in 1994, London, UK.

Lives and works in London, UK.

She graduated in 2016 with a BA (Hons) in Fine Painting from the University of Brighton. She was the 2018 recipient of the New Contemporaries Studio Bursary with Sarabande: The Lee Alexander McQueen Foundation. Recent exhibitions include *One English Pound*, Sarabande, The Lee Alexander McQueen Foundation (2019); New Contemporaries, Baltic, Gateshead and Block 336, London (2018); *After Césaire/Modern Tropiques*, Platform Southwark, London (2018)

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