

TIWANI CONTEMPORARY

Muzae Sesay's statement on born on the earth.

There is a collision where what we've done meets what has been. I happen to live there. We all do. A place where brutality and majesty can dance around a singular occurrence. What we build here in the haste of survival may forever be in conflict with the tectonic plates they rest on... and Earth always wins, so there's that.

**Que an optimistically nihilistic retreat to the spectator's section*

I figure recognizing our divine charm takes an equally divine type of x-ray vision. A forced fight to extract logic and beauty from circumstances with a debilitating sense of empathy and hopeless frustration. Looking for a total earth, complete with the ultimate highs and the near bottomless lows. My idea of nature has to include our stumbling relationship with land and a stagnant, often insidious approach to infrastructure. The drive to be more human makes the tension quite romantic in an apathetically tragic sort of way.

Really, I wish to wade in the ocean. Let the water envelope me with the incomprehensible swiftness and strength of rushing Bay currents. Only to shortly swim back to a safe shore, unable to withstand. Humbled by true power, I'll sit on the coast and remember the sun and the moon. In my home, the same day I'd want to be map-less in a forest of Redwoods, buildings nowhere. A golden hour so thick and vivid it gives new meaning to the states namesake. Shadows start to stain the floor in the pattern of window shades by this time. That's when you begin to wonder if we could have done something different.

With each new building there's just a little less light. The sun is theirs now so most of us just scurry around for scraps. Ancient societies left such robust structures compared to the ruins we're dealing with today. Seems like we care less and don't want to be remembered. Luckily the air is crisp here and the land is apparent, both in its allure and in its mismanagement.

Enthralled by a despondent collective lack of control, I run to my laboratory to alchemize the pieces I've been given into something beautiful, something curious, something universal. It's hard to make your own world sometimes. So instead, I paint.

Muzae Sesay

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Muzae Sesay: *born on the earth.*

28 November - 18 January 2025

Tiwani Contemporary, 24 Cork Street, London



Muzae Sesay, *A Prayer For Infrastructure (II)*, 2023, Oil pastel, vinyl emulsion, acrylic, and coloured pencil on canvas, 80 x 280 x 5 cm.

Tiwani Contemporary is pleased to present the debut solo exhibition, *Muzae Sesay: born on the earth.*

born on the earth. is an ongoing, psycho-geographic assessment of the Earth we are placed onto and thus acts as a reflection of the artist's neighbourhood in Oakland, California as a metaphorical device inferring more universal sociological ideas. Each painting its own mundane romantic soliloquy built from an instinctive response that reflects on Sesay's daily interactions and thoughts about his community and the larger environment. Within this body of work, the juxtaposition of nature and built infrastructure helps illustrate a more complete idea of landscape in relation to the artist. A dark rhythmic pattern indifferent of morale or judgement emerges as a central device within Sesay's work.

Critically on local and global levels, the omnipresence of deforestation and gentrification paired with a lack of direct agency has contorted changes in our environment as 'natural' phenomena. A pacifying feeling of ambivalence towards how to reckon with these changes is expressed by a sense of underlying love and hopefulness through a robust colour palette suppressed by shadow. Sesay's scenery remains straddled between a fleeting sunset and a mysterious midnight hour. Philosophically, we ask what part does aestheticism and beauty play in his abstract compositions of these life-changing events?

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Artist's biography

Muzae Sesay (b. 1989, Long Beach, CA) has exhibited in group exhibitions at Yerba Buena Centre for the Arts, Museum of Sonoma County, San Jose Institute for Contemporary Arts, United Talent Agency Los Angeles, and the California Governor's Mansion. His work is in the public collections of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, de Young Museum, San Francisco Arts Commission, and Stanford Healthcare. He enjoyed a solo exhibition at SFMOMA titled *Cut Trees* in 2020. Public commissions include: *Lake Merritt, Black Structures, and Colourful Streets*, a 150' x 100' painted mural on 19th and Telegraph, Oakland (2021). *Homecourt*, two painted basketball courts at Rainbow Recreation Centre, Oakland (2019). *I Love the Moon We Share*, painted mural with Museum of African Diaspora and St. Vincent de Paul, San Francisco (2018). *Where Community Happens*, vitreous glass tile mural with San Francisco Arts Commission located in the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, San Francisco (2019). Upcoming public art projects include: SFCTA Yerba Buena Island, West Side Bridges Retaining Wall (2027). SFAC/SFMOMA Minna-Natoma Streetscape (2025). Sesay lives and works in Oakland, CA.