

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Art Basel

Booth J4

Unlimited:
Monday 13 June 2022

Private:
Tuesday 14 June –
Thursday 16 June 2022

Vernissage:
Thursday 16 June 2022

Public:
Friday 17 June –
Sunday 19 June 2022

Messe Basel
Messeplatz 10
4058 Basel
Switzerland



Stephen Friedman Gallery presents a group exhibition of artists focusing on themes of diasporic cultures, migration and displacement. The presentation brings together new and historical works by gallery artists **Leilah Babirye, Lisa Brice, Melvin Edwards, Denzil Forrester, Kendell Geers, Jeffrey Gibson, Hulda Guzmán, Tau Lewis, Deborah Roberts, Yinka Shonibare CBE RA and Kehinde Wiley.**

The exhibition explores the cultural inspirations the artists have found through travel and in connecting with their heritage.

African-American artists who are central to the presentation include Leilah Babirye, Melvin Edwards, Deborah Roberts and Kehinde Wiley. Two new ceramic sculptures by Babirye continue the artist's ongoing project imagining and creating a community of queer Ugandans. Babirye's practice transforms everyday materials into objects that address issues surrounding identity, sexuality and human rights. The artist lives in New York having fled Uganda in 2015. A new commission of Babirye's large-scale sculptures is included in Public Art Fund's 'Black Atlantic' at Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York until November 2022.

Deborah Roberts' work investigates the challenges encountered by Black children as they strive to build their identity. By working with collage, Roberts explores how the world's social constructs influence their sense of self. Roberts's touring museum exhibition 'I'm' is currently at California African American Museum (CAAM) and Art + Practice in Los Angeles until August. 'I have something to tell you', an exhibition of new work by the artist, is on at Stephen Friedman Gallery until July 2022.

Melvin Edwards, whose renowned 'Lynch Fragments' sculptures are displayed, draws inspiration from Africa. The artist has been travelling to the continent since the mid-70s and has a studio space in Dakar. Like Edwards, Kehinde Wiley also spends time in Dakar, which is home to the artist's residency Black Rock. A new painting by Wiley continues the artist's vibrant and highly naturalistic paintings of contemporary African American and African-diasporic men and women.

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African masks by British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare CBE RA represent the artist's ongoing practice of producing hand-carved wooden replicas of those originally worn by African people. Shonibare reimagines those from the collection of Pablo Picasso and reveals the roots of European Modernism in African aesthetics through the lens of his own Nigerian heritage and British art education.

South African artists Lisa Brice and Kendell Geers, who both now live in Europe, also feature in the exhibition. Brice looks to European old masters and the 19th century for inspiration. The artist has also spent time in Trinidad which informs her work, and recently featured in Tate Britain's exhibition, 'Life Between Islands - Caribbean British Art 1950s-Now' alongside Denzil Forrester (Grenadian British). Forrester has long been inspired by dub and reggae music and travelled to Kingston, Jamaica, where dub had originated at around the time that he moved from Grenada to East London in the late 1960's. While there, the artist spent time making sketches at nightclubs, portraying the action of flourishing musical scenes. The artist's work will be included in the 58th Carnegie International in Pittsburgh and 'Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora, 1990s-today' at Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, in November this year.

Other artists featured from a Caribbean perspective include Hulda Guzmán and Tau Lewis. Dominican artist Guzmán resides in her country of birth and depicts the paradisaical surroundings in her paintings. To coincide with her participation in La Biennale di Venezia's 59th International Art Exhibition, 'The Milk of Dreams', three new works by Tau Lewis (Canadian) feature in the exhibition. Lewis constructs intricate sculptural portraits and quilts using found, gathered, gifted and recycled materials drawn from personal environments in Toronto, New York and her family home in Negril, Jamaica.

A new multifaceted painting by American artist of Choctaw and Cherokee descent, Jeffrey Gibson, is also displayed. Gibson's work synthesises Native American iconography and late-capitalist aesthetics. Employing vibrant colour and rhythmic pattern, Gibson uses a psychedelic palette inspired by Native American geometric designs.

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Stephen Friedman Gallery represents exceptional artists from around the world. Since its inauguration in 1995, the gallery has been based in London on Old Burlington Street, Mayfair. The gallery has three spaces in which it hosts solo and group exhibitions throughout the year. Additional works can be viewed by appointment in private rooms and office spaces. There is also a facility to exhibit outdoor sculpture in a landscaped private garden.