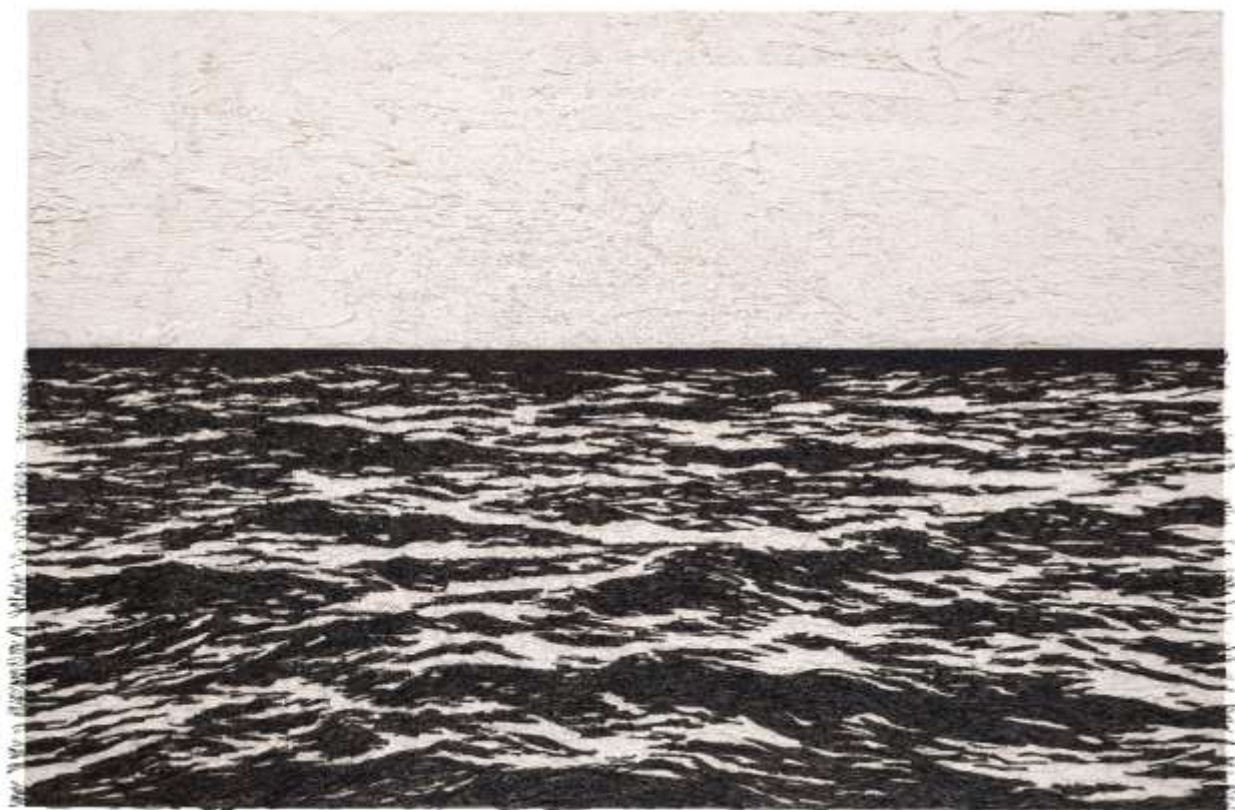


BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Yoan Capote, *Isla (Negro y Blanco)*, 2015, 103.5 x 154 x 6.5 cm. (40 3/4 x 60 5/8 x 2 1/2 in.)

YOAN CAPOTE: ISLA

9 December 2015 – 29 January 2016

Private View 8 December, 6-8pm

Ben Brown Fine Arts is proud to present *ISLA*, Yoan Capote's second solo exhibition with the London gallery. As the Cuban art scene continues to garner international attention, Capote has emerged as a pioneering figure in this rapidly expanding community of acclaimed artists. Capote explores a multiplicity of universal themes in his work, from the human condition to cultural identity, migration and politics. This exhibition focuses on Capote's iconic 'fishhook paintings' and is comprised of twelve seascape paintings, conceived by the artist as an installation for the gallery space in which the vanishing points seemingly merge into one continuous horizon line, surrounding the viewer with their watery depths.

From the calm, serene oblivion of *Isla (Olvido)* (2014) to the driving rain-pummeled seas of *Isla (Mar de Nubes)* (2015) and the vast, breathless skies and careful optimism of *Isla (Punto de Fuga)* (2015), they reflect the contrary impulses, obsessions and conflicts that are so intrinsic to the human condition. Capote's voyage of seeing takes us through the spectrum, from the pink skies of daybreak in *Isla (Albedrío)* (2014) to the inky depths of *Isla (Nada)* (2015). They are not merely representations of the sea

and sky but explorations of spiritual and physical boundaries. Water and air, dawn and night, hope and despair – Capote is a restless creator for whom nothing human is beyond range.

Capote's seascapes stem from his childhood memories of growing up on a politically isolated island, with a strong desire to know the United States and beyond. Capote notes, 'The sea is an obsession for any island population...When I was a child, I looked to the horizon and would imagine the world beyond. The sea represents the seductiveness of these dreams, but at the same time danger and isolation.' As the viewer draws nearer to the surface, these supremely painterly and seemingly benevolent seascapes reveal themselves as powerful images, intimating danger and ambiguity. Thousands of fish hooks are fastidiously attached to the painting's surface, creating tension between beauty and seduction, and danger and entrapment. The occasional traces of blood found on the fishhooks speak of the very real dangers entwined with the dream of migration.

Capote's works have the power to not only engage with his personal experiences growing up in a politically unstable and insular nation, but to simultaneously convey a universality that transcends the autobiographical. His works reinterpret and expand on the ubiquitous theme of marine painting, so prominent not only in Cuban art, but throughout the art historical cannon.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Born in 1977, Capote lives and works in Havana, Cuba. He studied at the Instituto Superior de Arte in Havana, and his work has been exhibited extensively in the United States, Europe and Cuba. Capote has received awards and grants from prestigious institutions such as the Guggenheim Foundation, UNESCO, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, New York, and the Brownstone Foundation, Paris. Notable collections include Museum Beelden aan Zee, The Hague; Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe, Arizona; Daros Latinamerica AG, Zurich; Kadist Art Foundation, Paris and San Francisco, California; and the Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, Ohio.

For further press information and enquires please contact:

Ben Brown Fine Arts

Jemma Beeley

T. +44 (0)20 7734 8888

E. jemma@benbrownfinearts.com

www.benbrownfinearts.com

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