

Adam de Boer, Fool's Cap Map of the World no. 2, 2022, Batik, crayon, oil paint on linen, 101.6 x 116.8 cm; (40 x 46 in.)

GHOSTS OF EMPIRES

CURATED BY LARRY OSSEI-MENSAH

HURVIN ANDERSON | ADAM DE BOER | DELPHINE DESANE | THEASTER GATES JEANNE F. JALANDONI | CHRIS OFILI | FADEKEMI OGUNSANYA | MAIA CRUZ PALILEO MIGUEL ANGEL PAYANO JR. | PAUL ANTHONY SMITH | LIVIEN YIN | ZAO WOU-KI

Ben Brown Fine Arts Hong Kong, 201 The Factory, 1 Yip Fat Street, Wong Chuk Hang, (22 March – 14 May 2022) Ben Brown Fine Arts London, 12 Brook's Mews, London W1K 4DG (Autumn 2022)

Ben Brown Fine Arts is pleased to announce **Ghosts of Empires**, a two-part group exhibition curated by Ghanaian-American writer and curator **Larry Ossei-Mensah**. Taking place at Ben Brown Fine Arts' galleries in Hong Kong (22 March – 14 May) and London (Autumn 2022), the exhibition seeks to explore the intersections, overlaps, and dissonance between the Black Atlantic and Asia Imperialist Trade routes and brings together an extraordinary group of contemporary artists hailing from African and Asian diasporas.

This seminal exhibition features the work of Hurvin Anderson, Adam de Boer, Delphine Desane, Theaster Gates, Jeanne F. Jalandoni, Chris Ofili, Fadekemi Ogunsanya, Maia Cruz Palileo, Miguel Angel Payano Jr., Paul Anthony Smith, Livien Yin and Zao Wou-Ki.

Inspired by the formative text by British-Ghanian author and MP Kwasi Kwarteng, *Ghosts of Empire: Britain's Legacies in the Modern World*, the exhibition at its crux is an examination of how artists from African and Asian diasporas are engaging with the legacies of slavery, migration, colonialism, sovereignty, trade, and imperialism in contemporary times. By amplifying the conscious acts of liberation, resistance, and perseverance these communities have exhibited – despite their historical circumstances – *Ghosts of Empires* will provide a forum for a nuanced understanding of collective histories and will explore how current diasporic artists are engaging with those histories today.

"This show will highlight that among these narratives which History has taught us are different, there is overlap. There is a multitude of communities that have been oppressed because of colonization and imperialism, who in spite of that have been able to thrive, have been able to create rich cultures, and have been able to develop important ideas." Larry Ossei-Mensah

The curatorial process here seeks to present a balanced set of dialogues, showing how the narratives cross and overlap, finding reverberations and echoes across time and space. Working in painting, photography, sculpture, textiles, and myriad mixed media, employing both traditional and new techniques, these artists have all found ways to examine their unique and often multifarious cultural histories, highlighting that the residue of the past is omnipresent, and that history, culture and identity are neither linear nor easily demarcated.

"In reading Kwasi Kwarteng's book Ghosts of Empire, I was struck by a sense of the ripple effects throughout modern history from so many different places that have been colonized; so I wanted to look at the role of art and culture in cracking open this conversation to a broader audience. Ben Brown Fine Arts and I have been in conversation for several years, but the time now feels right for a show that is not only articulating the nuances of the Black experience, but also looking at how over time other communities, including Asian, have been oppressed. I think starting this conversation in Hong Kong is interesting – looking at how Hong Kong has come to be and what is happening in Hong Kong now. In London, we will also be exhibiting pieces from Notting Hill Carnival, which is an act born out of resistance, but which has ultimately become one of ritual and celebration." Larry Ossei-Mensah

ABOUT BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

In 2004, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened its first location in the heart of Mayfair, London. The gallery quickly established itself on the international art scene with exhibitions of long-term gallery artists Candida Höfer, Tony Bevan, Claude & François-Xavier Lalanne, and Heinz Mack, amongst others, as well as momentous exhibitions of 20th century masters including Lucio Fontana, Alighiero Boetti and Gerhard Richter. In 2009, Ben Brown Fine Arts opened an exhibition space in Hong Kong, becoming the first international gallery to move to the city that would soon become a major international art hub. In Hong Kong, the gallery introduced notable exhibitions of Pablo Picasso, Sean Scully, Frank Auerbach and Miquel Barceló, as well as survey exhibitions of Chinese contemporary photography, the Düsseldorf School of Photography, 20th century Italian art, and the ZERO movement. Both the London and Hong Kong galleries regularly exhibit and develop programming for our renowned stable of international, multi-disciplinarian artists, including the aforementioned as well as Yoan Capote, Rob and Nick Carter, Kitty Chou, Awol Erizku, Nabil Nahas, José

Parlá, Enoc Perez, Ena Swansea, Hank Willis Thomas, Gavin Turk and Jan Worst. Ben Brown Fine Arts is also recognized for our depth of expertise and inventory in 20th century European and American art. Ben Brown Fine Arts participates in major art fairs worldwide, including Art Basel, Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Basel Miami Beach, The Armory Show, Frieze Masters, TEFAF Maastricht, TEFAF New York, and West Bund Art & Design.

Instagram: @benbrownfinearts Facebook: /BenBrownFineArts Twitter: @BenBrownFineArt

ABOUT LARRY OSSEI-MENSAH

Larry Ossei-Mensah uses contemporary art as a vehicle to redefine how we see ourselves and the world around us. The Ghanaian-American curator and cultural critic has organized exhibitions and programs at commercial and nonprofit spaces globally. A native of The Bronx, Ossei-Mensah is the co-founder of ARTNOIR, a global collective designed to engage this generation's dynamic and diverse creative class and to celebrate the artistry and creativity of Black and Brown artists around the world. Ossei-Mensah was a contributor to the first-ever Ghanaian Pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennial with an essay on the work of visual artist Lynette Yiadom-Boakye. Ossei-Mensah is the former Susanne Feld Hilberry Senior Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCAD), Detroit, and currently serves as Curator-at-Large at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), where he curated the exhibition *Let Freedom Ring* in 2021. Recently, Ossei-Mensah co-curated the 7th Athens Biennial, and curated Ghanian painter Amoako Boafo's first museum solo exhibition, *Soul of Black Folks*, at the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD), San Francisco and the Contemporary Art Museum Houston which will open Spring 2022.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Hurvin Anderson (b. 1965, Birmingham, U.K.)

Hurvin Anderson studied at Wimbledon School of Art and Royal College of Art in London where he received a BA and MA during the 1990s. The UK-based artist takes inspiration for his paintings from his heritage as a second-generation Jamaican-British artist. Anderson is known for his paintings that are both abstract and figurative depictions of human landscapes, that are often public places or sites of leisure, that bear the features of his origins. Anderson investigates themes of familial roots, displacement, and the visibility of Blackness. The artist's chosen subjects overlap his parents' generation's experiences with his own. The sense of something familiar yet absent is conveyed through his canvases in their displaced sense of place and obscure comprehension of detail. Anderson also works from photographs, instead of memory, a process which further heightens his aesthetic of distance.

Anderson completed a Caribbean Contemporary Arts Residency Program in Trinidad in 2002. The artist's works can be found in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Tate, London, among others.

Adam de Boer (b. 1984, Riverside, CA, U.S.A)

Adam de Boer graduated with a BA in Painting from the College of Creative Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara (2006) and an MA in Fine Art from the Chelsea College of Art, London (2012). Recent exhibitions include Taymour Grahne Projects, London (2022); Gajah Gallery, Singapore and Yogyakarta (2022/2021); Gazelli Art House, London (2021); The Hole, New York (2021); ISA Art + Design, Jakarta (2020); Hunter Shaw Fine Art, Los Angeles (2020/2018); World Trade Centre, Jakarta (2018); and ArtlJog, Yogyakarta (2018/2015).

In 2017, de Boer was awarded a Fulbright research fellowship to Indonesia. Other grants include those from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, Arts for India, The Cultural Development Corporation, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and The Santa Barbara Arts Fund.

For the past ten years de Boer has travelled throughout Indonesia to investigate his Eurasian heritage. His recent work employs imagery and traditional crafts from the region to connect his artistic practice with those of his distant cultural forebears. He currently lives in Los Angeles.

Delphine Desane (b. 1988, Paris, France)

Delphine Desane is a painter and sculptor living and working in New York City. Born and raised in France to Haitian parents, she started painting during a maternity leave in 2017. Desane paints individuals of the African and Caribbean diaspora – mostly women, within familial contexts. Many of her portraits of women are drawn from her own experiences of motherhood, Black womanhood, and her experience as an immigrant in the United States. Desane's portraits are full of expression against vivid backgrounds, which exalt their inner state of mind.

Desane had her first solo-exhibition at Luce Gallery in Turin, Italy in 2021. The artist has participated in various group exhibitions, including *Black Femme: Sovereign of WAP and the Virtual Realm*, Canada Gallery, New York, (2021); *Contemporary Domesticity*, Taymour Grahne Gallery, London (2021); *Black Voices/Black Microcosm*, CFHILL, Stockholm (2020); *A Peripheral Reverie*, PENSKE projects, Los Angeles (2020); and a residency at the POCOAPOCO in Oaxaca (2020).

Desane first gained international recognition after she was commissioned to make a work for the cover of *Vogue Italia's* January 2020 issue. Her works have been acquired by the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL), Marrakech, and multiple private collections across the United States and Europe.

Theaster Gates (b. 1973, Chicago, IL, U.S.A.)

Theaster Gates received an MS and BA from Iowa State University, and an MA from the University of Cape Town, focusing on religious studies and urban planning. Gates also studied pottery in Tokoname, Japan. The artist's practice includes painting, installation, performance, urban intervention, and land development. Through his practice, Gates explores the history of objects and the built environments that engender racism, exploitation, and the denigration of Black identity.

Gates is a professor at the University of Chicago in the Department of Visual Arts and the Harris School of Public Policy and serves as the Senior Advisor for Cultural Innovation and Advisor to the Dean. Since 2009, Gates has led the Black Monks, a musical ensemble channeling traditional secular and religious Black music through experimental forms of improvisation and dialogue. Additionally, the artist created the Rebuild Foundation in 2019, a non-profit platform targeting neighborhood regeneration, community arts programming and cultural development in Chicago. Gates founded the Black Madonna Press in 2018, distributing materials drawn from his expansive collection of print media and archival photography.

Gates has recently exhibited and performed at TANK Shanghai (2021); Prada Rong Zhai, Shanghai (2021); Tate Liverpool (2019); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2019); Sprengel Museum Hannover (2018); Kunstmuseum Basel (2018); National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. (2017); Art Gallery of Ontario (2016); Fondazione Prada, Milan (2016); and Whitechapel Gallery, London (2013). Gates has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the Arts Mundi 6 Prize (2017); the Légion d'Honneur (2017); the Nasher Prize for Sculpture (2018); the Urban Land Institute, J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development (2018); the World Economic Forum Crystal Award (2020); and an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal Institute of British Architects (2021). Gates was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2021.

Jeanne F. Jalandoni (b. 1993, New York, NY, U.S.A.)

Jeanne F. Jalandoni is a painter and textile artist born and based in New York City. Her work navigates Filipino American cultural identity through personal research on historic Western influences on the Philippines, family archives, and personal experience growing up as a second-generation American who has never been to the Philippines. She uses national symbols such as the carabao, bangus, and mangoes to express characteristics she associates with her biculturalism, aiming to redefine their meaning and reclaim the Filipino American narrative.

Jeanne received her BFA in Studio Art with a concentration in painting at New York University (2015). Jeanne has had solo shows with Taymour Grahne Projects, virtual (2021); Real Art Ways, Connecticut (2019); the Little Underground Gallery/Jefferson Market Library, New York (2018); and the Berkshire Art Museum, Massachusetts (2018). Jeanne has exhibited in various group shows including, *Considering Mass and Density*, Textile Arts Center, Brooklyn (2021); *Super Sarap*, curated by Patricia Cariño Valdez, Asia Society Texas, Houston, (2019) and curated *Cultural Cousins: a show of Filipinx and Latinx artists*, ChaShaMa, New York (2019). Jeanne was an artist-in-residence at 36 Chase & Barns Residency, Massachusetts (2018) and the Textile Arts Center, Brooklyn (2021).

Jeanne has been awarded the 2019 Real Award, Hartford, CT, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) Creative Engagement Grant, New York (2019).

Chris Ofili (b. 1968, Manchester, U.K.)

Chris Ofili received his BFA from the Chelsea School of Art in 1991 and an MFA from the Royal College of Art in 1993. He is considered one of the Young British Artists (YBAs). Ofili has been influenced by a variety of sources from works by William Blake to the Bible. The artist is also inspired by specific music genres, in particular jazz and hip-hop. Ofili became known for his unorthodox use of materials in his works, like elephant

dung, glitter, beads, resin, etc. His works are multi-layered with meaning that often explore diverse themes, from Black history and sacred ideals to high and low culture, as well as self-awareness.

Major international solo exhibitions of Ofili's work include the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami (2017-2019); National Gallery, London (2017); New Museum, New York (2014), travelling to Aspen Art Museum (2015); The Arts Club of Chicago (2010); Tate Britain, London (2010 and 2005); Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover (2006); The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2005); and Serpentine Gallery, London (1998). The artist represented Britain in the 50th Venice Biennale in 2003 and won the Turner Prize in 1998.

The artist's works are in prominent international collections, including The British Museum, London; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Tate, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

Fadekemi Ogunsanya (b. 1995, Lagos, Nigeria)

Fadekemi Ogunsanya is a multi-disciplinary Nigerian artist based between Lagos and London. She received her MA in Architecture from the Architectural Association in London in 2020. She began painting in 2016, first in a more colourful figurative style, and then from 2018 onwards, with differing shades of blue watercolour and gouache. Recently she has started experimenting with oil and oil pastel. Ogunsanya's architectural background imbued her interest in objects. She views her work as both two-dimensional and three-dimensional. In 2019, she began making prototypes for hand-painted, laser-cut, wooden frames that could hold each painting and allow them to straddle the space between image and object. Her debut exhibition, titled *Sweet Joy, Sweet Suffering*, took place in Lagos in June 2021.

Maia Cruz Palileo (b. 1979, Chicago, IL, U.S.A.)

Maia Cruz Palileo is a multi-disciplinary, Brooklyn-based artist. Migration and the permeable concept of home are constant themes in the artist's work. Influenced by the oral history of Palileo family's arrival in the United States from the Philippines, as well as the history between the two countries, the artist infuses these narratives using both memory and imagination. When stories and memories are subjected to time and constant retelling, the narratives become questionable, bordering the line between fact and fiction, while remaining cloaked in the convincingly familiar.

Palileo has had solo exhibitions at the Kimball Arts Center, Park City, Utah (2022); the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (2021); the Katzen Arts Center, Washington D.C. (2019); Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago (2019); Pioneer Works, Brooklyn (2018); Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York (2017); and Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space, curated by Jordan Buschur, New York (2015). Upcoming group shows include *Ghosts of Empires*, Ben Brown Fine Arts, Hong Kong (2022); *The Outwin 2022: American Portraiture Today*, National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C. (2022); Jeffrey Deitch Gallery, New York (2022); Wave Hill Public Garden and Cultural Center, New York (2022); *Our Blue Planet: Global Visions of Water*, Seattle Art Museum (2022). Palileo's work has been included in exhibitions at Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco (2019); Perrotin, New York, (2019); The Rubin Museum of Art, New York (2018); St. Joseph's College Gallery, Brooklyn (2017); Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn (2016); and the Bronx Museum of the Arts (2011). Palileo is a

recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant, Jerome Foundation Travel and Study Program Grant, Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant, NYFA Painting Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Foundation MFA Award, and the Astraea Visual Arts Fund Award. The artist received an MFA in sculpture from Brooklyn College, City University of New York, and BA in studio art at Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts. Palileo has participated in residencies at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Madison, Maine; Lower East Side Print Shop, New York; Millay Colony, Austerlitz, New York; and the Joan Mitchell Center, New Orleans. Their work is in the collections of The San Jose Museum of Art, California; The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, North Carolina; The Speed Museum, Louisville, Kentucky; and The Fredriksen Collection in Norway.

Miguel Angel Payano Jr. (b. 1980, New York, NY, U.S.A.)

Miguel Angel Payano Jr. is an Afro-Caribbean American artist working between Beijing and New York. With a visual vernacular that is informed by American, Caribbean, and Chinese cultures, he creates works that oscillate between painting and sculpture and investigate class, identity formation / socialization and storytelling. His transcultural surrealist sensibilities bind aesthetics with humour and the grotesque, often translating and transgressing different artistic forms.

Payano received a dual degree in Studio Art and Chinese Language from Williams College in Massachusetts in 2003 before moving to China and attending the renowned Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, where he graduated with an MFA in 2008. In 2020, Payano received a second MFA from Hunter College in New York, where he was the recipient of the S&W Scholarship. Payano has mounted solo exhibitions with Galleria Poggiali, Milan (2022); Ad-Diriyah Biennale, Riyadh (2021-2022); Make Room, Los Angeles (2021); Charles Moffett, New York (2021); the Williams College Wilde Gallery in Williamstown, Massachusetts (2014); LDX Contemporary Art Center, Hong Kong (2013); and the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing (2006).

Paul Anthony Smith (b. 1988, St Anne's Bay, Jamaica)

Paul Anthony Smith was born in Jamaica and currently lives and works in New York. The artist creates paintings and unique picotage, a stippling method used commonly in textile printing where brass pins driven into wooden blocks are used to create highlight and shadow patterns on fabric. The artist utilizes this method on pigment prints that explore the artist's autobiography, as well as issues of identity within the African diaspora. Referencing both W.E.B. Du Bois' concept of double consciousness and Franz Fanon's theory of cultural confusions caused by colonialism, Smith alludes to diasporic rituals of adorning the body. Memory, migration, and home are central to Smith's work, which probes questions of hybrid identities between worlds old and new. Smith's layered picotage is often patterned in the style of Caribbean breeze block fences and modernist architectural elements that function as veils, meant both to obscure and to protect Smith's subjects from external gaze. Picotage serves as an access point as Smith interrogates which elements of identity are allowed to pass through the complexities of borders and migration.

Selected solo exhibitions include *Tradewinds* at Jack Shainman Gallery, New York (2021); Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha (2019); The Green Gallery, Milwaukee (2018); and *Walls Without Borders* at Atlanta Contemporary, Atlanta (2017). Smith's work has been included in exhibitions at Perrotin, New York (2022); Gana Art Gallery, Seoul (2021); Somerset House, London (2019); and New Museum, New York (2017). Smith's work is also

included in an exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., *Men of Change* (2019 – 2023), which has traveled to the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, Baltimore (2022); Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit (2022); African American Museum, Dallas (2021); Anacostia Community Museum, Washington D.C. (2021); California African American Museum, Los Angeles (2021); Washington State History Museum, Tacoma (2019-2020); and National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati (2019). His work is in public collections, including 21c Museum, Louisville; Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas at Austin; Belger Arts Center, Kansas City; Minneapolis Institute of Art; and Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

Livien Yin (b. 1990, Cambridge, MA, U.S.A.)

Livien Yin is a painter and sculptor based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her art practice examines the histories of Chinese migration. In her recent work, Yin paints vignettes of the first waves of Chinese Immigration to North America. She repurposes Imagery from photographic archives and paintings made during the Chinese Exclusion Era to portray fictional Identities. Yin responds to the absence of visual documentation by rendering the imagined desires, pleasures and new camaraderie experienced by Chinese Immigrants.

Yin received her MFA in Art Practice at Stanford University and her BA in Studio Art at Reed College. She has been awarded a 2021 Nō Studios Visual Art Grant (2021), Graduate Fellowship at Headlands Center for the Arts (2019-2020), the American Austrian Foundation/Seebacher Prize for Fine Arts (2019), and recently completed an artist residency at the Marble House Project in Dorset, Vermont. Yin has had solo exhibitions at The New Gallery in Calgary, Alberta (2021) and Friends Indeed Gallery In San Francisco (2022).

Zao Wou-Ki (b. 1921, Peking (Beijing), China, d.2013, Nyon, Switzerland)

Zao Wou-Ki was born in Beijing (then "Peking") and studied calligraphy and painting at the School of Fine Arts in Hangzhou. He moved to Paris in 1948 where he lived out most of his remaining life. Zao worked primarily in oils, ink, and watercolor but also experimented with engraving and lithography. Zao is famously known for his synthesis between Eastern calligraphy and European Art Informel; a unique style defined by contrasting colors, intense linework and lyrical abstraction. His legacy of more than seventy years presents a life of experimentation and negotiation between Chinese and Western artistic traditions. Zao is a master of the post-war era artists and among the highest-selling Chinese painters of his generation.

Zao's first solo exhibition was in 1949 at Galerie Creuze in Paris. The artist proceeded to take part in international exhibitions, which included the group show *The School of Paris 1959: The Internationals* (1959), Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Retrospectives of his work have been presented at Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge (1964); Museum Folkwang, Essen (1965); Fine Arts Museum, Taipei (1993); and Jeu de Paume, Paris (2003). He received Japan's Imperial Prize for painting (1994) and was elected to the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Paris (2002). In 2006, the artist was inducted into the Order national de la Légion d'honneur, France's highest order of merit. Zao's paintings are a part of many museum collections worldwide, including the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Fundaciò Joan Miró, Barcelona; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Tate, London, among many others.

For sales enquiries please contact:

sales@benbrownfinearts.com www.benbrownfinearts.com +44 (0)20 7734 8888

For media enquiries please contact:

Hong Kong & Asia Region Cat Wong: <u>cw@advisorycouncil.com</u> Blair Ng: <u>bn@advisorycouncil.com</u>

Global Kata Mialura na

Katy Wickremesinghe: <u>katy@ktwlondon.com</u> Tani Burns: <u>tani@ktwlondon.com</u> Ella Williams: <u>ella@ktwlondon.com</u>