



INTERSECTIONALITY AND INCLUSIVITY AT THE FOREFRONT OF ARMORY ART SHOW BY SHALINI PASSI



An ode to contemporary and modern art, **The Armory Show** opened on 9th September 2022 with a revived enthusiasm. Ranging from iridescent installations at Templon gallery booth to three-dimensional etchings at **Polígrafa Obra Gráfica** exhibit, the show covered the themes of nostalgia, home, displacement, and identity in the context of global economical and ecological changes. The fair divided into five sections namely **Galleries, Solo, Focus, Presents** and **Platforms** has been helmed by three curators **Carla Acevedo-Yates, Tobias Ostrander**, and **EstrellaB.Brodsky** with similar curatorial practice, dabbling in Latin American and Latinx art, celebrating ongoing artistic initiatives worldwide in emerging as well as well-established art spaces.

Marc Padeu, *Le déjeuner dans la plantation*, 2022, Acrylic on canvas. Credit Jack Bell Gallery, Courtesy of the artist.

1) Monique Meloche Gallery, Booth F12

An inclusive space that has dedicated itself to the advancement of socio-political conversations among emerging art practitioners, Monique Meloche Gallery displayed works by artists like **David Antonio Cruz**, **Candida Alvarez**, **Maia Cruz Palileo**, and **Ebony G. Patterson**, with their works delving into similar themes of diaspora, migration, and history of colonialism.

Ebony G. Patterson has used the metaphor of a peacock, its body transforming into a complex garden, manifesting as colonial Caribbean lands under British rule. The artist has touched upon the themes of diaspora, royalty, beauty, and the colonial past. The artist used conch shells to symbolize the burial rituals, where slaves placed the shells on the body of the dead during the memorial, emphasizing the materiality of objects and their cultural connotations. Meanwhile, Palileo's figurative paintings encompass the oral histories of migration and displacement.



Ebony G. Patterson...when the cry takes root..., 2020, Mixed media, Courtesy of the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, The Armory 2022



2) Kavi Gupta Gallery, Booth 214

Kavi Gupta Gallery featured a versatile collection of artworks by artists like **James Little**, **Tomokazu Matsuyama**, **Mary Sibande**, **Deborah Kass** locating socio-cultural issues in contemporary society.

The highlight of the booth is Mary Sibande's sculpture that encapsulates the history of Purple Rain riots in South Africa. Sibande's avatar *Sophie* steps up on a pedestal, garbed in purple and red utilizing chromatic cues to express the historical association of colour purple. Sibande has monumentalized the voices and frustrations of South African Women, weaving a powerful narrative rooted in feminist philosophies. The show is curated by **Tobias Ostrander** and **Estrella B. Brodsky**.

Mary Sibande, *Ascension of the purple figure*, 2013, Kavi Gupta, Courtesy of the Artist and Kavi Gupta Gallery, The Armory Show 2022

3) SMAC, Booth S2

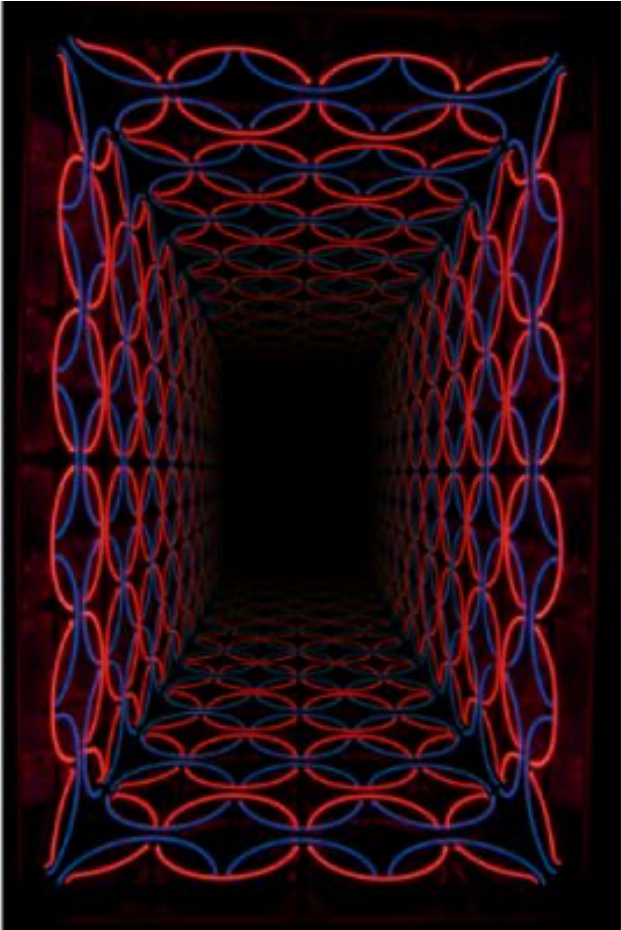
A solo exhibit of **Wallen Mapondera's** sculptural installations was specifically created for the fair. Mapondera's craftsmanship and keen eye to create a statement are masterfully captured in simplistic mediums, executed through sculptures composed of egg crates, silicone threads, and woven polythene bags. His sculptures implicitly symbolize the economical conditions on a global scale as well as his hometown, Harare, Zimbabwe.



Wallen Mapondera, *Torso*, 2022, Egg Cartons, Cardboard Boxes, Sack, Palm Tree Seeds and Waxed Thread,

Image courtesy of SMAC Gallery, artwork copyright of Wallen Mapondera. Each piece is a fragment of material history addressing the current state of affairs. **Wallen Mapondera** is an emerging artist right now in the Zimbabwean art circle, who has solidified his presence in the art world swiftly. The show is curated by **Carla Acevedo-Yates**.

4) Templon Gallery, Booth 307



Exhibiting works by **Michael Ray Charles, Omar Ba, Kehinde Wiley, Chiharu Shiota, Ivan Navarro, and Jitish Kallat**, the booth had an assortment of interactive installations, introspective photographs and narrative paintings. **Galerie Templon** is known to provide an open dialogue between different generations of artists, highlighting the art practices of artists from all over the world.

Iván Navarro, *Polka*, Mixed Media, Templon, 2022,
Courtesy of Artist and Templon Gallery, The
Armory Show 2022

The major attraction among the visitors and critics alike has been the iconic Neon sculpture titled *Polka* by Chilean artist **Iván Navarro**, using multitudes of industrial materials like electrical wires, bulbs, and fluorescent lights that convey a visual social commentary on city landscapes.

5) Jane Lombard Gallery, Booth 326

An art space known for celebrating artists with an interdisciplinary approach to issues plaguing the global climate since 1994, Tribeca-based Jane Lombard Gallery brought a touch of Futurism with the screening of *Doku- The Self* by Chinese multimedia artist, **LuYang**. Inspired by Japanese anime, video games, and interactive digital holograms, Yang's work functions as a multisensory, cerebral, and deeply engaging visual thesis on vitality, mental health, religious ideologies, and concepts of Buddhist reincarnation.



LuYang, *DOKU (still) Digital Descending*, Digital Video, Jane Lombard, 2020-ongoing, Courtesy of Artist and Jane Lombard Gallery, The Armory Show 2022

Analyzing perennial questions about existence through their futuristic works that have employed collaborations with esteemed performers, animators and software engineers worldwide. An interdisciplinary show that has aptly displayed the spirit of our contemporary age.

Text by Shalini Passi

Image courtesy: Artsy, Galleries and artists.

Find out more about the art fair and the artists:

<https://www.thearmoryshow.com/exhibitors-2022/platform/patterson-ebony-e>

<https://www.moniquemeloche.com/>