

Emmanuel Awuni
Lamps
5 March - 23 April 2022

Sundy is delighted to present "Lamps", a solo show by London based artist Emmanuel Awuni and the inaugural exhibition in the new gallery space in Vauxhall.

Emmanuel Awuni's practice encompasses sculpture, painting and installations through which he re-imagines the structures that underlie our senses of hierarchy, space and time. Often informed by diasporic oral traditions, he explores the relationship between the non-hierarchical and non-linear sounds common in Hip Hop, Pidgin English and Patois and translates them into a textured visual language. Hip Hop and Rap become an analytical vehicle for the deconstruction and reconfiguration processes that constitute his work.

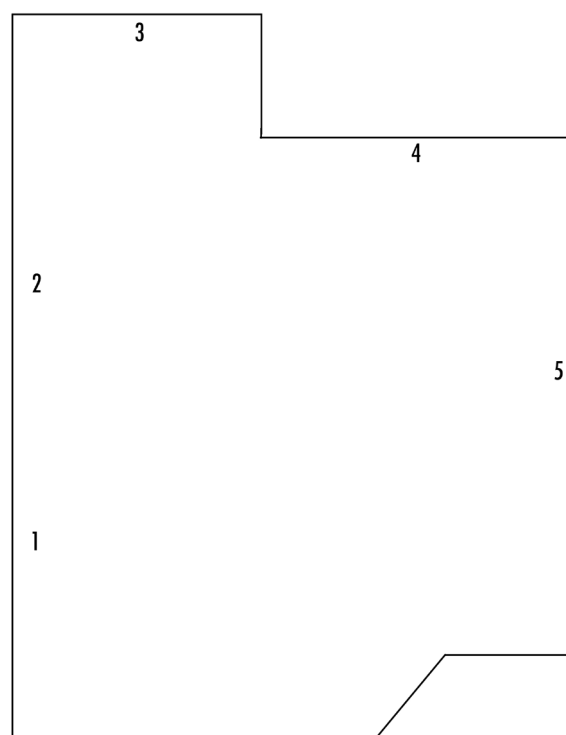
For his solo show "Lamps" at Sundy, Awuni will exhibit a series of sculptural pieces and paintings, giving each of the works the task to function like a lamp - to illuminate a path.
The exhibition is accompanied by a text by Fikayo Olorunfoba and a drawing by Gonçalo Neto.

Emmanuel Awuni (b. 1993 in Accra, Ghana) studied at Goldsmiths University of London and is currently in his final year at the Royal Academy of Arts (2022).

Selected exhibitions include:

Heat, Harlesden High Street hosted by Sadie Coles, London; The Fountain Show, Sundy, London; Reclaiming Magic, Royal Academy, London; Hammer, Harlesden High Street, London; Premiums, Royal Academy, London; House of Togetherness, Harlesden High Street, London; African Migration, 272 High Holborn, London.

- 1.)
Spring, 2022
ceramic, tea towel, memory foam, steel
60 x 40 x 20 cm
- 2.)
The Heart, 2022
oil, acrylic, charcoal on canvas
130 x 160 x 4 cm
- 3.)
Sankofa, 2022
buff clay, memory foam, cowrie shell, gold leaf, steel
24 x 43 x 22 cm
- 4.)
Nobody loves the Head of a Dandelion, 2022
timber, ceramic, jesmonite, spray paint
trestle table, oil, acrylic paint
77 x 111 x 3.4 cm
- 5.)
Nails, 2022
oil, charcoal on canvas, nails
37 x 33.5 x 6.5 cm



Head of a Dandelion

In a world full of deep darkness, dandelions are a sign of God, equal to the flight of birds. But nobody loves the head of a dandelion. Their presence, constant and persistent, breeds contempt; their absence, a sign of folly shrouded in control.

It is difficult to discern with thirsty eyes and an indulgent mind something burning with such bright fervour, pacified only by scratching haughtily at the root of the burns sprouting so soon. A ball of light, blossoming at the joining of intelligent structures, at the base of telephone poles, waste pipes, and between the slabs in the corner workings of the mind.

So why pluck their sunny heads as remnants for the wayside? To gather up the jagged leaves? For a soup to soothe the body? For wine, to mute the mind? It was for such a light that Icarus yielded the back of a wind, bird-like, gliding up for a grasp at the sun. Do we now reclaim his pursuit of God by rejecting this incarnation of the sun?

But, pride is a disconcerting anchor that will not hold the body from sways under the burden of an anthropogenic mind - intellect producing dense thought, stretching cold and metallic around the head, reaching down the spine, gathering at the knees for a fall to anxiety. In the waves of awareness, of the body, its relationship to the soul and connection to the spirit, strong ties to self, nature, and mind will not hold, for anchors too are double-edged.

The feet slap with self-pity as weighty soles hit the ground, wandering off to bed up a long thought trail. And here it sprouts again, between the joining of two pavement branches, luminous, burning back the black shadows. Its amber holds with steady breathing because obedience guards the flame that warms the heart; it gives peace talking to it. The body shivers, enduring the purifying fire. Yet, will is the recognition of hope - the hope of salvation - predicated on a simple truth: fire gives light, though it burns.

In time, the glow is enough to cocoon a heated space in the bed. In this inch, there is enough to peaceably row, row, row your boat, down saline streams of salvation.

Beware but not weary, toneless voices will blow winds in the shadows, casting tasteless hands forward, riding to touch the seed, grabbing at the itch of a kindling fire, the root of the blooming light. Nevertheless, elevate, for it is out of darkness light comes. Levitate - out of darkness will come the light. Not looking for a beyond or green pastures, where God is rationalised to be, but reckoning the grey pastures of a daily route, recognising all the more that the dandelions in sight are a light to hold, akin to grace.

text by Fikayo Oloruntoba

Emmanuel Awuni (b. 1993, Accra, Ghana). Lives and works in London.

Education:

Royal Academy Schools, 2019 - 2022
Goldsmiths University of London, BA Fine Art, 2015-2017
UCA Canterbury, Foundation 2014-2015

Solo shows & two person shows:

2022 Lamps, Sundy, London.
2021 Hammer, Harlesden Highstreet Gallery, London.
2021 Heat, together with Ko_ol, Sadie Coles, London.

Selected group exhibition:

2021 The Fountain Show, Sundy, London.
Reclaiming Magic, Royal Academy, London.
2020 Winter/Summer EXHIBITION, Royal Academy, London.
2020 Rather be your lover, www.soloshowonline.com
2020 House of Togetherness, Harlesden High Street Gallery, London.
2020 Premiums, Royal Academy of Arts, London.
2017 Goldsmiths Degree Show, London.
2017 New Cross Frontline: race and class revisited, London.
2016 African Migration: 272 High Holborn, London.

Residencies

2019 Marianne Ford, Drawing Residency
2019 ARTlife matters, Ghana

Awards:

The FORD Award - Drawing
Jack Goldhill Award - Sculpture