



Jorian Charlton

I Am The Woman

March 12-April 16, 2022

COOPER COLE is pleased to present *I Am The Woman*, a solo presentation of the work of Jorian Charlton. This is the artist's first exhibition at the gallery, and the curatorial debut of Solana Cain. A text by the curator follows.

Jorian Charlton creates portraits in medium format that capture the vibrancy of diversity within the Black community. Charlton holds a strong place in a lineage of Black photographers who create in a collaborative way. She shares agency with her models by using familiar environments as her set, she encourages models to direct their own poses, incorporates their authentic style and then names the works after the models. Charlton's approach to portraiture is significant because it gives Black people control over how they are represented. This process is Charlton's way of pushing back at photography's imperialist history, countering colonial photographic practices, and addressing restriction in movement and over-surveillance of the Black community that continues today.

The portraits in *I Am The Woman* highlight an array of identities present in children of the African and Caribbean diaspora. To Charlton, the gaze has weight. When taking a photograph, she locks eyes with models, sharing a moment of recognition and validation with them through the lens. When viewers look at her portraits, the models are staring at you, again speaking to the artist's reclaiming of the Black experience at the photo studio. They are watching you because they are empowered; they are rooted in their autonomy and command the space the viewer beholds. They cannot be defined based on stereotypes or other narratives viewers may hold; they are telling you who they are. In Toronto's Black community, when Charlton asks to take your portrait, people say yes. Charlton's work is celebrated and wields authority because it reflects how Black Canadians view themselves and deserve to be seen.

The title of the exhibition, *I Am The Woman*, references the poem *Remember Me?* by American writer and activist Alice Walker. Walker's poem asserts that the healing of women of colour, namely Black women, is hopeful, only if they find justice; only if their resiliency is acknowledged and space is created for them to exist freely. Charlton's work mirrors this cry from Walker by advancing new modes of representation for Black people. Throughout these works, Charlton is reminding viewers that you cannot simply define any or all Black people based on what you've read or been told. Her work reminds you, and the Black community, that we each possess a unique story that is ours to share.



Jorian Charlton (b. 1989, Toronto, Ontario, Canada) is a portrait photographer. Her work focuses on Jamaican-Canadian culture through her personal experiences, highlighting beauty and style when it comes to contemporary modes of black representation. Charlton pursues reflections of identity and diasporic relationships to homeland, while her poetic approach to these themes characterizes her method of visual storytelling. Charlton earned a Bachelor of Photography at Sheridan College, and has exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Gallery TPW, Patel Brown Gallery, and the 2021 edition of Arles Les Recontres de la Photographie. She currently lives and works in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Solana Cain (b.1989, Toronto, Ontario, Canada) is an independent curator, journalist and photographic professional. Solana was selected as one of the inaugural artists in residence at Nia Centre for the Arts in Toronto. She is a graduate of the School of Journalism at University X, and the photojournalism program at Loyalist College. Solana is an accomplished photo editor and currently holds a position at The Globe and Mail newspaper. Solana Cain currently lives and works in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.



Jorian Charlton
Sydné & Keverine, 2020
Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
25 x 21 x 1.5 in (63.5 x 53.3 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0002



Jorian Charlton
Bambii, 2021

Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
25 x 21 x 1.5 in (63.5 x 53.3 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0004



Jorian Charlton
Yemisi, 2021

Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
25 x 21 x 1.5 in (63.5 x 53.3 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0007



Jorian Charlton
Ayo & Georgia, 2019
Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
25 x 21 x 1.5 in (63.5 x 53.3 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0008



Jorian Charlton
Sydné, 2021

Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
25 x 21 x 1.5 in (63.5 x 53.3 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0009



Jorian Charlton
Nyabel & Nevine, 2021
Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
25 x 21 x 1.5 in (63.5 x 53.3 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0011



Jorian Charlton
Kadine, 2021

Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
33 x 41 x 1.5 in (83.8 x 104.1 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0003



Jorian Charlton

Whak & Mo, 2020

Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
41 x 33 x 1.5 in (104.1 x 83.8 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0006



Jorian Charlton
Nyabel & Nevine, 2021
Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
41 x 33 x 1.5 in (104.1 x 83.8 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0012



Jorian Charlton
Georgia & Kukua, 2020
Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
55 x 44 x 1.5 in (139.7 x 111.8 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0005

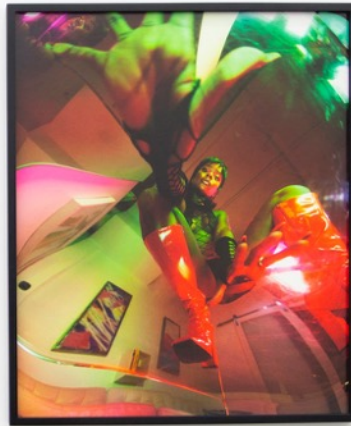


Jorian Charlton

Susie, 2021

Baryta Fine Art Print mounted to Dibond
44 x 55 x 1.5 in (111.8 x 139.7 x 3.8 cm) Framed
J.Charlton0010























Jorian Charlton

Born 1989, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Lives and works in Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Solo Exhibitions

- 2022 *Jorian Charlton: I Am The Woman*, curated by Solana Cain, Cooper Cole, Toronto, Canada
- 2021 *Jorian Charlton: Out of Many*, curated by Emilie Croning, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada
Jorian Charlton: Out of Many, curated by Emilie Croning, Gallery TPW in collaboration with Wedge Curatorial Projects, Toronto, Canada

Group Exhibitions

- 2021 *The New Black Vanguard: Photography between Art and Fashion*, Arles Les Recontres de la Photographie, Arles, France
Flesh on the Floor, Patel Brown Gallery for Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival, Toronto, Canada
- 2019 *A Love Ethic*, curated by Wedge Curatorial Projects, Gladstone Hotel, Toronto, Canada
- 2017 *Liminal Sense*, curated by Wedge Curatorial Projects, Gladstone Hotel, Toronto, Canada
- 2016 *57 Voices*, 99 Gallery, Sheridan College, Toronto, Canada
- 2016 *Figuratively Full*, Art Pop Montreal, Montreal, Canada

Programming

- 2021 *Antwaun Sargent and Yaniya Lee: In Conversation joined by Jorian Charlton and Emilie Croning*, Gallery TPW, Toronto, Canada
- 2019 *The Dis/Appearing Black Body*, Artist Talk- In the Living Room, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada

Publications

- 2021 *As We Rise: Photography from the Black Atlantic*, Selections from the Wedge Collection, Published by Aperture

Press

- 2021 Kelsey Adams, "10 Toronto visual artists to watch in 2021" NOW Magazine, August 5
"The Way We Were: Artist Jorian Charlton on the meaning of the Black family photo album and the essential nature of these archives" The Walrus, June 15
Yaniya Lee, "Private Archives: Jorian Charlton at Gallery TPW" Art in America, May 16
"An exploration of lovely prints through the eyes of Jorian Charlton" S Magazine, April 7
Michèle Pearson Clarke, "When it comes to photography and Black History Month, it's good to look forward as well as back" The Toronto Star, February 21
Nya Lewis, "The Power is in the Black Gaze-Out of Many" Femme Art Review, February 6
- 2019 Cheryl Thompson, "Black Canadian women artists detangle the roots of Black beauty" The Conversation, January 17

Awards

- 2016 Shaw Media Journalism Award, Sheridan Grad Show