

BUNMI AGUSTO: *THE CAVE*

17 May – 13 July 2025

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In her exhibition *The Cave*, Bunmi Augusto explores the relationship between past and present. She uses modern, simple materials that are also reminiscent of ancient cave paintings. By combining prehistoric narrative forms with futuristic aesthetics, she creates a space in which the boundaries of time seem to be suspended. The eternal cycle of existence is thus reinterpreted - through the lens of both antiquity and modernity.

Installation

The exhibition is conceived as a two-part room installation. In these rooms, Augusto unfolds her imagined cosmos *Within* - an inner world that materialises both in her paintings and in the space itself. *Within* is a mental space in which the artist explores psychological, cultural and personal developments through the prism of fantasy. Her works on paper depict a surreal world populated by humans, hybrid beings and spirits - embedded in a sensitive, interwoven inner landscape.

Front room: Creation and cosmos

Four diagrams **(1-4)** visualising different creation myths can be seen in the brighter lit front room. Augusto contrasts scientific and spiritual views of the world: While in the Big Bang theory, life emerges from physical forces and matter, in religious narratives it arises through the work of a divine being that breathes life into matter.

In Augusto's work, the portal that connects the two exhibition spaces becomes a symbolic threshold - a contact zone between the spiritual and material worlds where different levels of existence and experience meet.

Interior: The act of creation as a vision

In the darker, atmospheric interior, Augusto shows large-format works of surreal landscapes **(6,7,8)**, in which she visualises the process of creation from her own perspective. The *Within* cosmos she has created is inspired by the spirituality and religion of her Yoruba ancestors from Nigeria.

In Yoruba culture, there is no separation between matter and spirit - the spiritual permeates everything, even after the act of creation. This idea is reflected in Augusto's motifs: creatures and shapes made of braided hair pervade her paintings - trees grow braided into the sky, islands appear as hair structures. The works themselves are framed with real braids **(5)**. The braid patterns symbolise the connection

between the spiritual world of the artist's ancestors and her material present, from which new, hybrid creatures emerge.

Jujuism

Born in Nigeria in 1999, the artist and essayist Bunmi Agosto describes her artistic approach as Jujuism - a term she derives from Africanfuturism and Africanjujuism, as coined by the sci-fi author Nnedi Okorafor.

Africanfuturism engages with visions of the future, technology, interstellar movement and is deeply rooted in African culture. Africanjujuism, on the other hand, is dedicated to the cosmic present and spiritual realities, without limiting itself to alternative futures.

Agosto sees jujuism as a subcategory of fantasy that recognises and appreciates the fusion of real African spiritualities and cosmologies. She consciously distances herself from the term Afrofuturism, as in her view this does not do justice to the diversity of magical African narratives - both on the continent and in the diaspora.

Bio

Bunmi Agosto was born in Lagos, Nigeria in 1999. She lives and works in London. Agosto holds an MFA from the Ruskin School of Art, an MA in History of Art & Archaeology from SOAS University and a BA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins, for which she received distinctions in all three degrees. She was selected as one of the Bloomberg New Contemporaries in 2023 and she was awarded the Mansfield-Ruddock Prize in 2023, the Clarendon Scholarship in 2022 and the Cass Art Prize twice in 2019 and 2020.