

# NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

**Tunji Adeniyi-Jones**

*Emergent Properties*

October 20 - November 23, 2022

Opening reception Thursday, October 20, 6-8 PM

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Emergent Properties*, Tunji Adeniyi-Jones's third solo exhibition with the gallery.

In *Emergent Properties*, Adeniyi-Jones turns to his long-standing interest in printmaking—particularly lithography and monotype work—as a formal and conceptual inspiration for new large and small-scale, oil on canvas paintings. Recent stone lithographs, published by Utopia Editions and Jungle Press Editions, are also on view.

The British-born, Nigerian artist grapples with West African mythologies, religion, and ceremonies through a diasporic lens, making images that produce a cultural and iconographic “third space” through which manifold expressions of identity can exist. As a result, Adeniyi-Jones' floriated paintings often feature androgynous figures dancing through densely-patterned spaces. It is this amalgamation of African, African-diasporic, and European influences—medieval manuscript illustration, 20th century West African painting, the Harlem Renaissance—that informs the artist's distinct approach to representation and abstraction.

From the Harlem Renaissance, Adeniyi-Jones specifically identifies with artist Aaron Douglas' use of silhouettes as a pictorial stand-in for many. “The silhouette,” as the artist has come to understand, “increasingly creates an open space for any viewer to assume the position of what they're seeing.” This speaks to the tension present in much of Adeniyi-Jones' work: a specificity coming from the artist's own background coinciding with an impulse for viewers to be able to relate to the figures and characters present in the work.

The silhouette also connects to figures in West African representation, such as those that appear in the *Négritude* series by Nigerian painter Ben Enwonwu (1917-1994). Comprising silhouetted female figures among various Igbo symbols, Enwonwu's series reflected the anti-colonial principles of the Négritude movement of the 1930s, while also pushed against European manners of representation, a syncretic approach to image-making continued by Adeniyi-Jones.

**Tunji Adeniyi-Jones** (b. 1992, London, England) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He received an MFA in Painting & Printmaking from the Yale University School of Art and a BFA from the Ruskin School of Art at University of Oxford.

Recent solo exhibitions include White Cube, London and Paris; Morán Morán, Los Angeles; and Charleston, East Sussex, UK. He is currently included in the group exhibitions *Dark Light Realism in the Age of Post-Truths*, curated by Massimiliano Giono, at Aïshti Foundation, Beirut and *Young, Gifted, and Black: The Lumpkin-Bocuzzi Family Collection* (traveling). Other recent group exhibitions include the Dakar Biennale, Senegal; Public Art Fund, New York; Morán Morán, Los Angeles; The Perimeter, London; Venus Over Manhattan, New York; Clima, Milan; and Deitch Projects, Los Angeles.

Adeniyi-Jones' work can be found in the public collections of the Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama; ICA Miami, Florida; MOCA Los Angeles, California; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, North Carolina; Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Pérez Art Museum Miami, Florida; and Dallas Museum of Art, Texas, among others. He was an inaugural recipient of the Black Rock Residency, Dakar, Senegal.