

PERES PROJECTS OBATALA

Young Cameroonian Artist Marc Padeu Sets Surprising New Records at Pisa Contemporary African Art Auction

Posted on November 18, 2019 by Hanou Amendah



For African Art lovers, Piasa's contemporary African art auction has become a standard feature on the Parisian autumnal art calendar alongside the art and design fair AKAA, Also Known As Africa. However, the more surprising aspects of the auction were the new records established by young Cameroonian artist Marc Padeu and other artists recently introduced to the secondary market.



Marc Padeu (né en 1990, Cameroun) *The king is dead*, 2019. Courtesy of the artist.

Both of Marc Padeu's large-scale figurative paintings, *The King is Dead*, and *Voici L'homme!* are vivid re-interpretations of Biblical scenes featuring Black characters with intense dark skin treatment reminiscent of Kerry James Marshall's work. They soared past their high estimates of €8,000 to be sold for €195,000 apiece (premium included). It's a notable price for the contemporary African art sector, where prices are, on average, significantly lower than those recorded in the wider contemporary art market.

It's been a year of highs for the young artist whose previous record of €31,200 (\$50,000) was established at the same Parisian auction house back in May. His bold paintings imbued with concerns about the spiritual impact of colonisation and issues of representation have resonated with international collectors. The prices of his work on the secondary market have steadily increased ever since his work *First* appeared at auction at Piasa in November 2018. Coincidentally a day after this latest auction, the London-based Gallery Jack Bell announced it would start representing Marc Padeu.