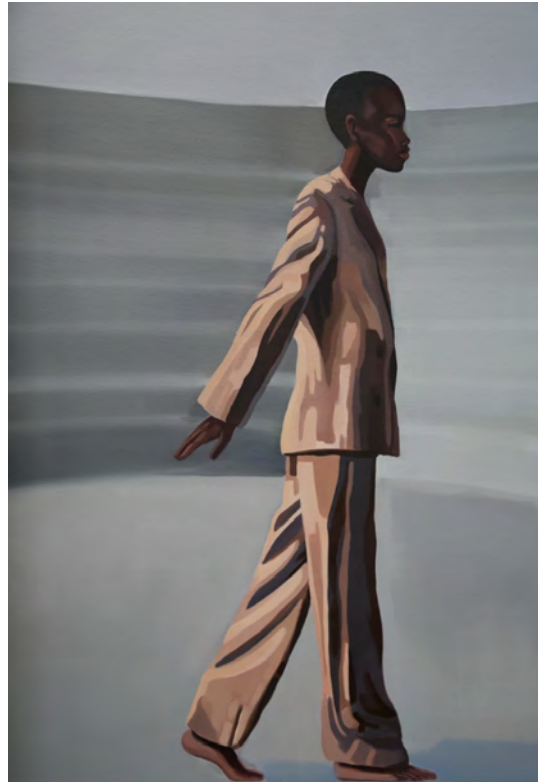


METRO

‘Black figures as the protagonist’: Groundbreaking exhibition showcases Black female artists

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Historically, the art world has been dominated by white, male artists for centuries.

Now, a new exhibition is putting Black women front and centre, and showcasing some of the leading artistic talent working today.

At Peace is an exhibition curated by Jade Foster for female and non-binary artist gallery Gillian Jason Gallery in London.

The exhibition features the work of five leading female Black artists who are challenging and subverting the way Black bodies are represented in art. Miranda Forrester, Sahara Longe, Cece Philips, Alanis Forde and Emma Prempeh, create works that are unbound by prejudice; subverting and rethinking how Black women have been regarded by classical and modern traditions in painting.

Traditionally depicted as ‘at service’, mocked, or absent, Black figures in art are often seen through a racialised lens – as homogenous and primitive, this is something curator Jade Foster is keen to challenge. ‘It’s important to spotlight practices that are systematically marginalised and people who are staunchly undervalued, under-recognised or minoritised in the Western region of the art world,’ Jade tells Metro.co.uk.

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‘These artists contribute important and necessary narratives to contemporary art. They are integral in contributing varied cultural perspectives so that art is not homogenous.’

Jade says the art world is a microcosm for society, so if inequality in one place, it is echoed everywhere.



‘Change is frustratingly simple, but it requires a cultural phenomenon and systemic unilateral support,’ says Jade.

‘Stop categorising, stop tokenising – not all Black people care about the same things or make the same work. Encourage specificity and see nuance, stop focusing on diversity and start focusing on mainstreaming and widely accepting the contributions of Black and female artists in the most exclusionary parts of our sector.’

‘These practices should be commonplace and they are not. We need support from the general public as well.’

With this new exhibition, Jade is encouraging people to question the norms that they are used to seeing in art.

‘Why does working in the art sector have to feel so exhausting, inequitable, traumatic for some and stressful?’ asks Jade.

‘I want people to feel “at peace” and content when making art, as well as to challenge systems of racial and gendered othering in the art world and broader society.’

The artworks and artists can be their authentic selves in this exhibition.

‘Sitting within all of the unclarity, murkiness, and complex histories in regards to traditions of painting and cultural identity.’

Managing Director of the Gillian Jason Gallery, Elli Jason Foster comments: ‘We are thrilled that At Peace is the inaugural exhibition in Gillian Jason Galley’s new gallery, which will act as a space for artists, curators and other industry innovators to foster and present their ideas.’

‘The ethos of the exhibition plays an important part in highlighting the importance of championing excellence in thought, concept or ideology in under-represented minorities – be it race, gender, ethnicity.’