



Palo Gallery | Art Cologne 2023 | Presentation Text

Palo Gallery is delighted to share details of its debut art fair participation at Art Cologne 2023. Exhibiting works by painters Lorenzo Amos and Lewinale Havette, Palo Gallery's presentation will explore the artist's contrasting interpretations of self-portraiture and the importance of the art studio as an environment. Both Amos and Havette's practice ground the artists in the greater historical context of self-representation and portraiture, while wrestling with their own unique personal histories and stories.

For Amos, the studio exists as a sacred space for the exploration and reinterpretation of the body while maintaining the art historical context of such an environment. Havette uses her own studio space to explore her 'magical' feminine identity in relation to growing up in Liberia and African spirituality. While Havette's focus is on inner reflection and selfhood, Amos explores his identity through the way his subjects occupy, and thus transform his studio space. Both artists rely heavily on the atmosphere of their studios to influence the creation of an ambiance and setting within their works, which allows for an exciting dialogue between their selected pieces and practices as a whole.

About Lorenzo Amos

Lorenzo Amos, born April 18, 2002 in New York City, is a multidisciplinary artist currently based in New York. In an effort to capture the life of his surroundings Lorenzo Amos went back to paper sketches in search of a new way to paint figuratively, a way to trap the truth found in fleeting appearances. The collaborative works with Freya Jones, black and white pastiches of American icons, passerbys on the street, dreams and memories are a perfect example of this newfound immediacy, "drawing what I'm lookin' at".

To do so he engages directly with artists like Bacon, Schiele and Klimt, the masters of figurative expressionism, and with Symbolist painters and poets like Redon and Rimbaud. Architecture still plays an important part in Lorenzo's work, referencing the Italian masters of perspectival drawing and also, in a more personal way, the professional practice of his father. New York's presence is evident in his work, not only a city that has become for Lorenzo the perfect working space but also an emotional Asylum, allowing him to reconnect with his hometown, the city that cradled him, after years of living in Milan.

Engaging with the past doesn't mean that one should simply repeat it, but instead study their work and apply their lessons while still fully painting in 2022. This also means not to follow one straight path, but allowing yourself to be pulled in all directions, looking and stealing from everything, copying both from Vasari and from fashion magazines. Most of his new work is about the body, what the body wants, the way in which the body is painted shows what it wants, how it needs to shape itself to appear as what it is. The body bears a strong connection to clothing, also very important in Lorenzo's imaginary, where clothes are a medieval armor of meaning, protecting and forming the body at the same time. The architectural space swirls in direct connection to the body, always painted afterwards but already-inscribed in it. There is nothing obscure, nothing hidden in his work, what is at stake is not some deeper meaning but the immediacy of sensation, an image so charged it sends a shock directly to your nervous system, just like a pair of red heels.

About Lewinale Havette

Lewinale Havette (b. Monrovia, Liberia) is a painter focusing on the intricacies of feminine identity and explores the complexities of African spirituality, religion, sensuality, and gender power dynamics. Through her work, she unravels the oppressive structures of the past that once entangled her and transcend beyond the limitations of societal expectations, realizing the infinite freedom of liberation.

Stories of Lewinale's maternal grandmother in her childhood Liberian village were her first encounters with life's overflowing Magic. Havette then recognized Magic during her metamorphosis from a young girl to a woman, challenging a system of rigid orthodox ideas. In her studio, she explores and converts memories, fantastical visions, and ethereal dreams into tangible artwork that embodies the supernatural.

Lewinale Havette's artwork has been featured in exhibitions in museums and galleries in the United States and Europe, including Christie's London, 1-54 Contemporary African Fair in NY, Delphian Gallery in London, UK; Cierra Britton Gallery, New York; Black Cultural Archives, London, UK; Launch F18 in New York, NY; Alan Avery Art Company in Atlanta, GA; the Masur Museum of Art in Monroe, Louisiana; and The ROOM Contemporary Art Space in Venice, Italy. In addition, she was represented by the Pérez Art Museum Miami at Art Basel Miami.

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