

Ruby Swinney presents *Human Nature* exhibition at Zeitz MOCAA

Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA) has opened a new solo exhibition by artist Ruby Swinney titled *Human Nature*. The exhibition comprises six gallery spaces situated on the fourth level of the museum.

Human Nature presents an extensive body of ethereal paintings created by Swinney following her graduate show at the Michaelis School of Fine Arts in 2015 and consists of a comprehensive collection of oil-on-tracing-paper paintings curated by Julia Kabat, Zeitz MOCAA curator.



An alternative approach to painting

The exhibition itself invites the viewer on an existential journey through various curated rooms, each representing a different terrain; named The Province, The Cityscape, The Garden, Water and Nature, respectively. Each painting within the show depicts people within various landscapes expressing the idea that humans actively seek to establish a place in nature, a space that is often vastly unknown and uncontrollable.

“I am intrigued by Swinney’s alternative approach to painting, using oil paints on tracing paper. However, this interest extends beyond the materiality of the works to the subject matter that she portrays. As a viewer, one is profoundly affected by Swinney’s ability to encapsulate the multiple facets of the human soul and condition, its fragility and vulnerability.

These qualities are expressed through the bare paintings that appear to float on the walls in a liminal state. In this sense, the exhibition will resonate with every person that steps inside the gallery as we all face the universal crisis of understanding our place and space in the world, of understanding where and how do we belong. We are vulnerable if we have no place in nature,” says Kabat.

Committing to emerging art and artists

Nature’s mastery over humans is evident in how its presence influences emotional states. The meaning of Swinney’s

paintings thus transcends rational thought. The silence evoked by the indescribable resonates with the quotes that grace the walls of the exhibition space.



Zeitz MOCAA board co-chair, David Green says: “Ruby Swinney, one of the youngest artists exhibited at the museum, represents Zeitz MOCAA’s commitment to emerging art and artists. The inclusion of new voices at Zeitz MOCAA echoes the very nature of the museum as a young institution that serves as a platform for the diversity of artistic voices that permeate the African continent.”

To accompany *Human Nature*, and a first for Zeitz MOCAA, there is a carefully edited exhibition shop created to present an array of art-led lifestyle products that take their point of departure from Swinney’s work. The new Swinney-inspired range includes desirables such as limited-edition signed prints, posters, tote bags and hand-rolled silk scarves, all specifically developed from the paintings included in the show.

Exhibition name *Human Nature*

Curator Julia Kabat, Zeitz MOCAA

Run dates Friday 1 June – Wednesday 31 October 2018

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