

EMMANUEL TAKU

new gallery artist + solo exhibition



MARUANI MERCIER

THE CHOSEN FEW

MARUANI MERCIER is pleased to announce worldwide representation of Ghanaian artist Emmanuel Taku (b. 1986). Taku's first solo exhibition with the gallery will take place in MARUANI MERCIER's Knokke space from 3rd April to 15th May 2021, where he will present new works made during his recent residency at Noldor in Accra, Ghana.

A graduate in Visual Arts and Textiles of the Ghanatta Institute of Art and Design, Taku studied with well-known figurative painters Amoako Bofo and Otis Quaicoe, and has been practicing different forms of portraiture for more than ten years. His subjects are often clothed in striking floral prints, which he prints on the canvas using a distinct silk screen method. Taku's works incorporate a variety of materials, as he applies textiles and newspapers onto canvas, fiberglass, fiber net, mesh, or plywood.

Reminiscent of Malick Sidibé, the artist combines his focus on portraiture with a longstanding passion for textiles and patterns, passed on to him through his mother. Taku's paintings depict black people striking a pose, as if challenging the viewer to take a closer look. For the artist, adding layers of abstraction to his portraits is a way to reclaim dominant narratives about black bodies and to reject their objectification. With their supernatural appearance, Taku lends his subjects the status of demi-gods or mythical heroes. His practice thereby positions black people as worthy of awe and reverence, constituting an important voice in the recent rise of black portraiture in contemporary art.

Entitled 'The Chosen Few', Taku's first solo exhibition with MARUANI MERCIER and the first presentation of his work outside of Ghana, focuses on his newest series of paintings 'It Takes Two'. Hung like flags from plywood beams, each work depicts a pair: two people intimately intertwined and mirroring one another. The artist says: "the importance of capturing two figures in juxtaposition was to create a sense of consolidation, synergy and unity. This is emphasized through the anthropomorphic silhouettes created by the bodies engulfed in silkscreened fabric print ". With cultural signifiers stemming from distinct historical periods and parts of the world, the artist has created a vibrant, timeless body of work.

MARUANI MERCIER is delighted to represent Taku at this crucial stage in his career and is looking forward to developing his recognition and exposure at an international level. As stated by Laurent Mercier, "Taku is an extraordinary emerging talent in contemporary painting. Using his unique style of 'figurative surrealism', he addresses pertinent issues surrounding race and identity with an elegant complexity".





Emmanuel TAKU

Two Brothers in Blue, 2021
acrylic on canvas
84 1/2 x 57 1/4 in | 214.5 x 145.5 cm





Emmanuel TAKU

Four Brothers in White, 2021
acrylic on canvas
200 x 300 cm | 78 3/4 x 118 1/8 in





EMMANUEL TAKU

The Chosen Few

Solo exhibition from April 3rd to May 15th, 2021
Kustlaan 90 in Knokke

For more information and HR images,
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