



Inspiration / Art & Culture

Plucked from the imagination, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's enigmatic oil paintings of people

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Lynette Yiadom-Boakye - Citrine by the Ounce 2014 Private Collection © Courtesy of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye

Widely considered to be one of the most important figurative artists working today, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye is celebrated for her enigmatic oil paintings of people who are plucked entirely from her imagination.

Her characters feel both familiar and mysterious, raising questions of identity and representation. Each painting is created in spontaneous and instinctive bursts, revealing expressive, short brushstrokes and a distinctive palette of dark, dramatic tones contrasted with flashes of brightness. If you're wondering if there's any particular era at play, Yiadom-Boakye certainly gives us no clue. Her figures seem to exist outside of a specific time or place, which leaves us to interpret her paintings however we choose. Writing is also central to her work, as she has explained: "I write about the things I can't paint and paint the things I can't write about."

From 19 May 2020, Tate Britain will present the first major survey of the British painter's work, bringing together around 80 paintings and works on paper spanning almost two decades.

The exhibition will feature early paintings such as *First*, created for her MA degree show at the Royal Academy Schools in 2003, alongside more recent examples of her best-known paintings including *Complication* 2013 and *No Need of Speech* 2018.

Born in 1977 in London, where she lives and works today, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye is of Ghanaian descent and in 2019 participated in the critically-acclaimed Ghana Freedom pavilion at the International Venice Biennale.

In 2018, she was awarded the prestigious Carnegie International Prize and was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2013. Her work is represented in museum collections around the world and she has exhibited internationally including solo exhibitions at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York and the Serpentine Gallery, London.

Lynette Yiadom-Boakye will run from 19 May – 31 August 2020 at Tate Britain in London, in association with The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Find out more at tate.org.uk.



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye - No Need of Speech 2018 Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh ©
Courtesy of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye Photo: Bryan Conley



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye - A Passion Like No Other 2012 Collection Lonti Ebers ©
Courtesy of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye - To Improvise a Mountain 2018 Private Collection © Courtesy of
Lynette Yiadom-Boakye Photo: Marcus Leith



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye - Condor and the Mole 2011 Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © Courtesy of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye



Lynette Yiadom-Boakye - Tie the Temptress to the Trojan 2018 Collection of Michael Bertrand, Toronto © Courtesy of Lynette Yiadom-Boakye