

## NATURALCULTURAL NIGHTS I | ARTISTS & BIOGRAPHIES

### **CAYETANO SANZ DE SANTAMARIA**

@cashesart

Cayetano Sanz de Santamaría is a multidisciplinary visual artist focussed on painting, drawing, and etching. Santamaría's practice fuses personal and cultural mythology with the visual language of surrealism. His vivid, exquisite tableaux conjure the land and sea creatures, flora and fauna of his native Colombia amidst bustling marketplaces, turquoise waters and baroque architecture. These chimeric creatures waver between therianthropy and zoomorphy, figuratively bridging a gap between humankind and the natural world, alluding to the primitive condition latent and encoded in human genes and our subconscious. Metaphor and humorous expression serves as a potent narrative conduit for Santamaría's evocation of the real and imagined magic present in his homeland: a beautiful but complicated landscape shaped by its troubled past. Striving to honour the beliefs, mythologies and folklore of his forebears, Santamaría's dexterous style of figuration and use of traditional printmaking techniques imbues these often-overlooked histories with a palpable sense of realism. His large-scale canvases, often realised in large-scale and rich colour, immerse voyeurs in the exuberance of Barranquilla Carnival, abound with the traditional masks, music and movement forged by centuries of tradition and communal celebration. Santamaría aspires to be a voice for Colombia, using his practice as a reflective tool to navigate both his inner world and an external one abundant with biological, ethnographic and cultural diversity.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

*Cayetano Sanz de Santamaría (b. Columbia) graduated from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York in 2021. He is currently based in London where he is currently completing his MA at the Royal College of Art. He held his first solo exhibition in Galeria La Localidad, and has featured in London group exhibitions with galleries including BWG Gallery, Arusha Gallery, The Bermondsey Project Space and The Gallery at Green and Stone, amongst others. Career highlights include the silent auction of the Association of Friends of the National Museum of Bogotá with the most bidded artwork *The Lord of Light* (2022), a prize of the Colombian news channel Caracol TV to produce exclusive prints, the elaboration of drawings for the production of Corona/Homecenter crockery, winner of the Tagsmart award at The Woolwich Contemporary Print Fair (UK).*

### **EILEN ITZEL MENA**

@eilen.itzel.mena

Eilen Itzel Mena is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice is rooted in documenting a femme afro-diasporic intersectional experience. She focuses on growth and transformation through an understanding of community, ancestry and purpose. Painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and performance are tools for her continuous investigation into the African Diaspora. Mena's work is multi-layered. She re-envisions real and imaginative spaces through her bright hues, mixing in remnants of the figure within abstracted environments; she conjures a space for communication and reconnection. Her semi-representational images and her childlike aesthetic allow her to access the continuous pursuit of joy existent within the diaspora, while also allowing her to reimagine representations of trauma within the context of that space.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

*Eilen Itzel Mena (b. US) is an Afro-Dominican American artist currently based in London. Achieving a BA in Fine Art from the USC Roski School of Art & Design (2017), she went on to graduate with an MFA in Painting from the UCL Slade School of Fine Art (2024). Solo exhibitions include *In Bloom* at Kira Streletzki, Berlin (2024), *Holding Self-Regard* at the Tremaine Gallery, CT (2022), and *Inner Eye* at Leiminspace, Los Angeles (2020). Group exhibitions include *You Can Sit With Us* at Haricot Gallery, London (2024), *Inestable* at Casa Lü, Mexico City (2023), *Torrents: New Links to Black Futures* at Cultural DC (2022), *Home* at Season Aotearoa, Auckland*

(2022) and *Humor Has It* at Olympia Artz Gallery, New York (2022). Residencies include Prose x Mae House Rest as Residency (2024) and Casa Lü Artist Residency in Mexico City (2023). Mena received the prestigious Adrian Carruthers Studio Prize with ACME for her Slade MFA Degree Show which will commence in 2025.

## **KRIS LAMBA**

@krislamba

Kris Lamba is a multidisciplinary artist who works with large and small-scale sculpture, painting and collectible design. Eschewing traditional materials, Lamba employs a variety of industrial biopolymers that he manipulates when molten: they are stretched, re-worked, transformed. Aiming to partly remove the element of 'self', Lamba invites us to explore the deep, often hidden connections in the subconscious mind through shape and form. These otherworldly shapes and forms defy convention, echoing the spontaneous and often violent moments of interstellar evolution. Lamba's process is an energetic one, his works are expressions of a singularity; ideas forged through intense experimentation that are gradually reshaped, reformed and refined.

In his series *Inflated Form I* he brings his bronze sculptures to life through the act of inflation, evoking a perpetual state of becoming through continuous movement and tension. In his series *Fragments*, Lamba uses waste polystyrene, molten wax and cast bronze to create his entirely unique and unrepeatable vessels. His spontaneous forms defy and rework the confines of traditional artistic practice.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

*Kris Lamba (b. UK) is a London born artist currently based in Shrewsbury, UK. His latest 2024 solo exhibition was at The Soden Collection in Shrewsbury, his first solo exhibition was at the Urs Von Unger Gallery in Gstaad (2021). Previous group shows include Urs Von Unger Gallery, Gstaad: Summer Group Show ('20, '21, '22, '23, '24), Urs Von Unger Gallery, Gstaad: Winter Group Show ('20, '22, '23, '24), Queens Gallery, Zurich ('23 & '24), 88 Gallery, London ('22, '23, '24), Curated Group Show by Stephanie Frederickx, Antwerp (2024), The Dali Experience, Shrewsbury Museum (2023), and Into The Cosmere, BWG Gallery, London (2021). Fairs include PAD London at 88 Gallery ('21, '22, '23), Masterpiece London at 88 Gallery (2022) and Art Karlsruhe, Rheinstetten at Queens Gallery (2022). Lamba has an upcoming solo show at 88 Gallery in London.*

## **LAURA KIDDIE**

@l.m.k\_95

Laura Kiddie has developed an artistic practice deeply rooted in experimentation and exploration. She sees painting as a refuge, a means of withdrawing from the external world. Interior spaces have become a central theme in her work, in her large and small-scale still life paintings she engages with the materiality of objects and the vibrancy of colour. Through carefully constructed compositions she employs a bold palette and pronounced textures, creating a dialogue between the objects she paints and the viewer who happens upon them.

Her works are often autobiographical in nature. The narratives woven into her paintings are not only reflective of Kiddie's personal experiences but are also inspired by ancient Greek and Roman tales. Drawing on the works of Livy, Plato, and Homer, she explores timeless themes of love, adventure, conflict, and loss. Synthesising the autobiographical with the philosophical, Kiddie continually pushes the boundaries of the visual and conceptual.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

*Laura Kiddie (b. UK) recently graduated from Edinburgh College of Art with a BA Hons in Painting (2024). Her first London solo exhibition was held at Brushes with Greatness (2022), after a successive run of group and solo shows at the Edinburgh College of Art ('20, '21) as well*

as Glasgow Kelvin College ('19, '20). Kiddie was part of the duo Summer Show at Lillie Art Gallery, Glasgow (2017), after exhibiting at group shows with the Glasgow Art Club (2016) and Art Exposure Gallery (2015).

### **LAURENCE JANSEN**

@laurence\_jansen

Laurence Karl Jansen's painting practice explores the gestural and symbolic potential of mark-making. Rendering fluidity and movement through abstraction, he incorporates collected images to create compositions that play with biomechanical principles in relation to architectural landscapes and the figurative form. Situated on a fine line between utopian and dystopian landscapes, he evokes suggestions of the malleability of perception and identity.

Traversing drawing, photographic field studies, media sources and collage techniques, Jansen's process develops an emerging narrative composed of deconstructed elements that are repurposed to reflect on post-humanisation and urban ecology. Through an ecology of self-healing, living, and breathing building materials, these aggregates of signs search for meaning within a struggle. Yet they also portray the deep desire for symbiosis within our shared socio-political, technological and psychological environment.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Laurence Karl Jansen (b. UK) lives and works in London. He graduated with a BA in Fine Art Painting from Camberwell College of Art, UAL (2018) before achieving an MA in Painting, Royal College of Art (2023). Recent residencies include PADA Studios in Barreiro, Portugal (2022) which led to the invitation to the Galerie Dida Residency, Ivory Coast (2022). The RCA awarded The Basil H. Alkazzi Scholarship to accompany his MA studio practice ('22, '23), Jansen took part in the The Chancellor's Circle Dinner, Alumni and Student Exhibition at the RCA (2023). He took part in the artist-led Turps Off-Site Painters Programme (2021) and was selected for the Clyde and Co Art Award (2018).

### **VASILIS AVRAMIDIS**

@vasilisavramidis\_studio

Vasilis Avramidis draws inspiration from classical paintings found in museums, as well as from his everyday surroundings. Art historical still lifes and portraits serve as points of departure for his explorations, yet he continually returns to them with a fresh perspective, re-imagining them within the context of contemporary sensibility.

Avramidis' oil paintings delve into the interplay between the classical and the contemporary, weaving together 17th century aesthetics with contemporary visual culture to create Impossible landscapes and still lifes that transcend temporal boundaries. His interpretations take on a surreal quality, as figures disintegrate into the landscape and still life or architecture becomes one with the terrain.

At the heart of Avramidis' practice lies a fascination with the very language of painting, its relevance as a medium today, and its permanence during different eras.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Vasilis Avramidis (b. Greece) graduated with an MA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins (2011), after completing a 5 year degree in Painting at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (2004). Solo shows include Understory (2022) and Host (2019) at Hiro gallery, Tokyo, After Hours (2021) at Wilder Gallery, London, and Harvester: The Contemporary London (2016) at START, Saatchi Gallery. Avramidis has exhibited in over 30 group exhibitions, with galleries and institutions including: Hiro Gallery at the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama Japan; James Freeman gallery, London; BEASTON Projects at Arthouse1, London; Slete gallery, Los Angeles; Artforum gallery, Athens; Voyatzoglou gallery, Athens; Oxholm gallery, Copenhagen, and The



*Contemporary and Griffin gallery, London. Avramidis has also shown at art fairs such including London Art fair, The Affordable Art Fair, Art Nagoya and Art Athina. Avramidis' has been widely published, in publications including Juxtapoz, HEY! Magazine (Paris), FAD Magazine, Toner, The Art Circus and Hi-Fructose. His works are held in collections including the University of the Arts London Collection, the In4Art Rotterdam Collection and belong in private collections around the world.*