

NAMSA LEUBA  
ADELAIDE DAMOAH  
DELPHINE DIALLO

**On View at the gallery** 10 December 2020 - 30 January 2021  
**Boogie | Wall**, 50 Brook Street, London W1K 5DR



Divine Objects, 80 x100 cm, 2020, God is a Woman Series © Delphine Diallo

Boogie-Wall is pleased to present this winters exhibition featuring three artists who revisit universal African cultural tradition through the understanding of African artifacts, the deep meaning behind a sacred ceremonial to connect with the ancestors, and through narratives that reenact important rituals inspired by animist traditions of the vodun (voodoo) religion.

An adaptation of myths or fetishes attributable to the “Other” — Reopening the West's view on these symbols that has been countlessly put to the test and misunderstood.

**NAMSA LEUBA - Weke Series**

Is a series of photographs, executed in the Republic of Benin, which is the birthplace of voodoo and predating many religions by over 10,000 years, and there are groups that keep the tradition alive and strong. Vodun cosmology is based on the idea that spirits govern the natural and human world, and religious practices incorporate ceremonies that communicate with mythical gods.

The basic tenet of voodoo stipulates the continuity of all things both visible and invisible in the universe, a belief in the interconnectedness of the living, spirit and natural world. Inspired by the visual codes and symbols of voodoo, Leuba constructed a performative photographic series that reenacted important rituals. The result is not a documentary account of voodoo culture, rather it is a fictive portrayal that imagines new types of communities. While they are based on aspects of the local context, these images take on a new life of its own, rooted in fantasy. The title of this series, Weke, means "the visible and invisible universe, all things created, living, breathing or not" in the local language of Benin.

### **ADELAIDE DAMOAH - Dreams of Overcoming Series**

10 works produced especially for Damoah's first post lockdown performance 'Revaluing the Self' performed at the finissage of her solo exhibition "Reembodying The Real" at Boogie-Wall on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Five of those ten works were exhibited at 1-54 African Contemporary Art fair 2020, in London. The pieces number 1, 2 and 3 were consecrated during the performance as a sacred Suman to release its power for whomever ends up owning it, after breaking with linear time through the act of ritual, into circular time, to connect with the ancestors and request their blessing.

The three consecrated works have sections of the poem performed on the day written on the front of them.

The performance involved a call and return with the audience, followed by me calling on my ancestors to bless the proceedings.

Damoah then took the audience through a journey through the conduit of a poem which journeyed through the past and into the present through metaphor.

The enactment was the metaphorical revaluing of herself through performance, through art, through study, meditation and contemplation. All of these things she has journeyed through over the lockdown period to produce this work.

The images in the work are of Damoah's great grandmother Ama, taken in 1920 and her mother Esi with her husband. The photo of Esi and her husband was taken some time in the mid to late 1800's in Gold Coast (present day Ghana).

### **DELPHINE DIALLO – GOD IS A WOMAN Series**

Diallo started this project after getting access to a wonderful New York collection of African artifacts. While creations of African artists have been admired by the West for their formal power and beauty, it is important to understand these works on their own terms.

In its original setting, an artifact has multiple uses and embodies many of meanings. Understanding the cultural context and symbolism of African art and artifacts enhances our appreciation [of form.]

In this series Diallo focuses on a female representation of artifacts that originate from multiple African traditions while creating a space for the transmission of ancestor knowledge in the present.

Please see [the gallery website](#) for further information.

**Namsa Leuba** (Born 1982), is a graduate of the esteemed Lausanne University of Art and Design (ECAL), Switzerland, where she studied photography and undertook an MA in Art Direction. Leuba's diverse photographic practice examines the representation of African identity through the Western imagination. Spanning documentary, fashion and performance, Leuba creates a visual imaginary that explores the signs and symbols of her cultural heritage.

Leuba Lives and Work in between Switzerland and France.

**Adelaide Damoah** (Born 1976), is a British-Ghanaian and London based multi-media artists. She works at the intersection of painting and performance within the context of colonialism, identity, sexuality, and spirituality. Damoah describes her practice as "generating a spontaneous communi(cati)on between myself and an audience using a performance in which I function as a channel by which a recorded history of what was previously known but became unknown in the past becomes uncannily known again in the present, only to become unknown again at the end of the performance."

**Delphine Diallo** (Born 1977), is a Brooklyn-based French and Senegalese visual artist and photographer. Seeking to challenge the norms of our society, Diallo immerses herself in the realm of anthropology, mythology, religion, science and martial arts to inspire herself creatively. Diallo's work has been exhibited globally in London, New York, Miami, Addis Ababa, Berlin, Dakar and Rome, amongst many other cities.

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