

Welancora Gallery
The Armory Show 2024
September 6 - 8
Javits Center, 429 11th Ave
New York, NY 10001
Booth 205
Press Release
Contact: pr@welancoragallery.com

Material Matters



Oasa DuVerney
Black Power Wave: Arrangement in Happy Marriage Vase, 2024
Acrylic and graphite on hand cut paper
26 x 47 inches

Welancora Gallery is delighted to announce our participation in the main section of The Armory Show at the Jacob Javits Center with our group presentation, *Material Matters*. The fair runs from September 6th through the 8th, with a VIP preview day on September 5th. This marks the first time that the gallery will hold a stand in the Galleries section of the fair; We are located at booth 205.

Material Matters is an intergenerational presentation of works by four artists who utilize differing materials to accentuate their commentary on issues related to home, the African American experience, and the trajectory of a life lived. The booth includes works on handmade paper by Helen Evans Ramsaran, sculpture pieces of found materials by Tyrone Mitchell, abstract paintings by Carl E. Hazlewood, and works with graphite and acrylic on hand cut paper

by Oasa DuVerney. Our presentation foregrounds these divergent materials while also envisioning the parallels within these differing works. *Material Matters* meditates on the varied ways in which materiality advances the storytelling capabilities of an artist. Created in the early 1990s at Dieu Donn , Helen Evans Ramsaran's delicately incised handmade paper pieces depict roadways and paths between residential structures. Ideas around the ways indigenous cultures view the home, ancient African architecture, and paths that we choose to take in life have inspired Helen's work since the 1980s. The muted colors in Carl Hazlewood's abstract triptychs pay homage to the landscape in his native Guyana. Oasa DuVerney's works on hand cut paper comment on the urban landscape and our cultural decisions on its importance. She harnesses imagery of chain-linked fences to speak to the cordoning off of certain groups. Tyrone Mitchell's sculpture is a critique and an observation of American culture as it relates to the African American experience and the broader African diaspora.

About the artists:

Helen Evans Ramsaran (b. 1943, Bryan, Texas) is primarily known for her bronze sculptural work. Ramsaran earned her MFA in Sculpture from Ohio State University, and moved to New York City in 1973. Shortly thereafter, she created a series of bronze relief sculptures called *Visual Tales*: her only series that is autobiographical in its statement and assumes the form of a visual narrative. In the 1980s, Ramsaran's work took a major shift and developed into an exploration of ancient rituals, African oral traditions, and myths; meditating on mysterious fossilized remains, supernatural power, and African architecture. The subtle carvings on many of Ramsaran's bronze sculptures are meant to represent African scarification and elements in nature, such as lighting and rain, that mark the change in plating seasons and, that speak of a lost reverence for nature and its life-sustaining power. Her work has been vastly influenced by her travels: from the ancient architecture of Mexico to the traditional art of Japanese papermaking, Ramsaran's pieces reflect a varied multicultural iconography. Ramsaran has exhibited extensively throughout the world with several international showings in Japan, Paris, and Johannesburg.

Ramsaran continues to travel throughout the world, splitting her time between New York, Europe, and Africa. She has had solo exhibitions at the Studio Museum in Harlem, The Chrysler Museum and Welancora Gallery, and is in the collections of the Sheldon Museum, and the Mead Art Museum among others. Her work is also in the personal collections of Derrick Adams, Marc Benioff, Zachary Miner, and Madeline Murphy Rabb among others.

Carl E. Hazlewood (b. 1951, Guyana) is a multimedia artist known for his abstract reflections on landscape, identity, and symbolism. From the beginning of his precocious career as a fifteen year old professional artist working in late 1960's Guyana, Hazlewood has always made abstract art. He uses the structural language of abstraction as a clarifying act of progress in what he considers an unstable world. Through a suite of shapes and symbols, his work speaks to the power of resiliency through references to Anansi the Spider, a prominent character in West African and Caribbean folklore. More broadly, Hazlewood's approach to his work and life seeks

to counter the insinuation that there may be limitations on what he should do or what he can achieve. Carl strives for an art and life of open possibilities, for a poetic presentness beyond time, place, race and other distracting polemics. After many years of creating free form site-specific installations and other combined-media works, Hazlewood has made new paintings that reflect a heightened sense of introspection in their approach to themes and concepts regarding identity and how one exists in our current social and cultural reality. Paint on canvas retakes its place alongside the extemporaneous wall works the artist has become known for over the last ten years or so. “Without sounding overly dramatic or romantic, my paintings are, at least in the conventions of naming, an acknowledgment of the persistence of cultural and personal memory encoded in the way I see color—that is, landscape color, skin color, pure prismatic color.” -Carl E. Hazlewood.

Hazlewood received a BFA with honors from Pratt Institute, and an MA from Hunter College, CUNY. Parallel to his studio practice, Hazlewood co-founded Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art in Newark, NJ in 1983. Solo exhibitions of his work include *BlackHead Anansi: Constellations* at Charlotte and Philip Hanes Gallery, Wake Forest University, South Carolina (2023); *Racing Thoughts-Fever Dreaming* at Art Basel Miami Beach (2022); and *BlackHead Lyricism* at Welancora Gallery in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn (2022). Hazlewood has been the recipient of fellowships at the MacDowell organization (2023, 2015); the Brown Foundation at the Dora Maar House, Ménerbes, France (2018); and the Bogliasco Foundation, Italy (2018). His fifty-two-foot-tall wall work, *TRAVELER* (2017), was commissioned by the Knockdown Center, Queens. Hazlewood participated in the Art Cake residency at Cordy and Ethan Ryman’s Studio Program in Sunset Park, Brooklyn (2020–22).

Tyrone Mitchell (b. 1944, Savannah, Georgia) is a sculptor whose approach involves integrating personal experiences with a broader understanding of the history of sculpture worldwide. Inspired by the likes of Julio Gonzales, Pablo Picasso, David Smith, and Auguste Rodin, Mitchell incorporates applied stains, industrial paint, metal sheets, and fabrics into his works. Allowing his found materials to speak for themselves is crucial to Mitchell’s artistic practice; by integrating these objects into his artwork, Mitchell not only extends their lifespan, but contributes to a broader conversation of global circumstances. Mitchell’s improvised forms are not only concerned with the individual materials themselves, but how the once disparate pieces join to become a vehicle for storytelling. The sculptures are representative of an ongoing quest to understand international histories and ‘otherness’ as they exist in the western canon. Mitchell’s artistic background is rooted in sculpture; his traditional Beaux Arts training and travels to West Africa both inform his approach. The usage of found objects is directly inspired by African traditions, namely Malian and Senegalese cultures, which aim to extend the lifespan of the materials. His application of architecture parlante (‘speaking architecture’) is indicative of the global crises his work comments upon; repurposing materials in response to the ongoing climate crisis and extending beyond the rubric of postcolonial modalities. The resulting sculptures become both a reaction to global history and a reflection upon personal history and identity.

Mitchell received the equivalent of a BFA in 1965 from the Art Students League of New York. He went on to the New York Studio School, earning his MFA equivalent from the institution in 1967.

He has had solo exhibitions at G.R. N'Namdi Gallery in Chicago and Birmingham; Bomani Gallery in San Francisco; the Bronx Museum of Art; and the Newark Museum. Mitchell has been included in group exhibitions at the Studio Museum in Harlem, Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia, and the Fukui Fine Art Museum in Japan, to name but a few. Mitchell's work is part of various collections, including the Collection of The Newark Museum, The Delaware Art Museum, The Schomburg Center, Time Equities Inc. Readers Digest Corporate Collection, Forma Viva Sculpture Park. Winston Salem State University Sculpture Garden. His honors include fellowships from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the MacDowell Colony, Lila Wallace, and the Guggenheim Foundation. Recent residencies include Art Omi in Ghent, NY and the Surf Point Foundation in York, Maine. Mitchell has taught at Bard College, Hunter College, Queens College and the Delhi College of Art in India.

Oasa DuVerney (b. 1979 Queens, NY) is known for her figurative works utilizing graphite on paper. DuVerney's work centers itself in social and political commentary that relates to her social status as a woman of color and a working-class person. She draws on elements from nature: waves, snakes and mountains to explore the ways in which people of color exist in contemporary society. Oasa's work is part of the collection at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum; her illustrations were part of the group exhibition, *Acquired! Shaping the National Design Collection*. Her work will also be part of a new exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art titled *Flight into Egypt: Black Artists and Ancient Egypt, 1876–Now*. It will be on view from November 17, 2024 through February 17, 2025 in The Met's Tisch Galleries. Her work in this exhibition has been acquired by the Met Museum.

DuVerney received a B.F.A. from SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology and an M.F.A. from CUNY, Hunter College. Oasa is an Assistant Professor for the School of Art and School of Design at Pratt Institute. Selected exhibitions, residencies and media include: (2021) Brooklyn Hi-Art Machine: Paradise Is One's Own Place, Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn, NY; (2021) Jon Gray of Ghetto Gastro Selects, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, NY, NY; (2020) 2020 Women To Watch, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; (2020) Twenty Twenty, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; BLACK POWER WAVE, BRIC, Brooklyn, NY (2019); Something To Say, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn NY (2018); The Window and the Breaking of the Window, Studio Museum in Harlem, NYC (2016); The Brooklyn Biennial II, BRIC, Brooklyn, NY (2016); Through A Glass Darkly, Postmasters Gallery, NYC (2012); Rush Philanthropic Foundation Artist Residency (2016), Smack Mellon Studio Artist Residency (2014-2015); LMCC Workspace Residency (2012-2013); The Guardian UK, UK (2019, 2015), The Independent, UK (2016), Hyperallergic (2015, 2016, 2021), Palestine News Network (2013), and The New York Times (2022, 2020, 2012, 2011).