

TEMPLON



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ALIOUNE DIAGNE
TUKKI
14 January – 4 March 2023



DJIGUÉNE - Cette femme I, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 155 x 160 cm — 61 x 63 in.

For his first show at TEMPLON's Brussels space, Franco-Senegalese painter Alioune Diagne is unveiling fifteen large-scale canvases centring on the notions of travel, motion and displacement with the Tukki exhibition.

Diagne made an immediate splash in the art world in 2013 when he created his own mode of expression: the "figuro-abstro" style. Composed of figurative images created from an infinite number of motifs, Diagne's work enthralled thanks to its complexity and the energy of the scenes portraying the daily life of the Black community and African diaspora around the world.

The exhibition unfurls in a palette of shimmering colours: lime green rubs shoulders with indigo, aquamarine and canary yellow in an explosion of vivid hues. The pieces in this series flirt boldly with abstraction. At first glance, our gaze is lost in the countless marks that make up the painting, none of them identical. It is only by standing back from the canvas that we can make out the local scenes, captured in all their artlessness. One of them depicts a market scene while another shows a morning gathering in the street. Under their inconsequential appearance lies an opportunity for the artist to

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question the ambivalence of the “tukki”, the journey in Africa, evoking his father’s experience: when looking for work, he and his companions were forced to take long journeys to far-off places.

With the act of overthrowing the codes of figurative painting, Diagne proves himself to be a shrewd observer of Western societies and African communities. “A European abroad is called an expatriate,” he explains. “Whereas the African diaspora, the ‘modu modu’, tend to be called immigrants. It’s a very subtle nuance in our languages that nevertheless illustrates the unvoiced difference that is still firmly anchored in our societies.”

Diagne's work, nourished by his own travels, aims to highlight the dignity of this diaspora and the African community he grew up in. “By painting daily life I’m seeking to give the Black community the credit they are due. I’m not depicting people who are suffering, but a community in all its beauty and power.”

Born in 1985 in Fatick, Senegal, Alioune Diagne lives and works in Dakar and Vienne, in Isère, France. His work has featured in a variety of solo and group exhibitions in Europe, African and Asia since 2011, including Sink or Swim at the 11th Dakar Biennale, Villa Spivey, Dakar, Senegal (2014), Itinéraire en Couleurs at Espace Jean Drevon, Saint-Jean-de-Bournay, France (2014), the off-site show at Art Basel, Switzerland (2017), and Un nouveau regard, Aosta, Italy (2017). His work has also been part of the Senegalese national art collection since 2019 and was shown at the 2022 Dakar biennale at the national theatre in Dakar. As part of the Norval Sovereign African Art Prize 2023, he will participate in a group exhibition at the Norval Foundation from 25 January to 20 March 2023.