

# SKOTO GALLERY 529 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street, 5FL.

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## Africa in Portraits

Afi Nayo. Bernard Guillot. Bruce Onobrakpeya  
Chriss Nwobu. Mor Faye. Osaretin Ighile. Romain Ganer.  
Sokari Douglas Camp. Trokon Nagbe. Uche Okeke

**November 21, 2024 – January 25, 2025**

Skoto Gallery is pleased to present *Africa in Portraits*, a group show that brings together works by a diverse group of established and emerging African artists working in a variety of media including painting, drawing, photography and sculpture. **The reception is on Thursday, November 21, 2024**

With a mix of abstraction and sensitive realism that combines technical accomplishment with strong aesthetic appeal, this exhibition brings together works by ten African artists working across different time-period. Each of the artists re-imagines history, inheritance and vast possibilities in their work through the lens of individual and collective experiences, offering fresh perspectives that reflect the complexities and realities of contemporary identity. Each artist utilizes a unique take on narrative and material exploration.

Afi Nayo's (b. 1969, Lome, Togo) work is intensely personal and displays a blend of fragility, modesty and refinement. She uses pyro gravure and mixed media technique on wood panel to create pictures that consist of fantastic dream images, wit and imagination as well as overtones of fantasy and satire. They are dense with sensual surfaces, formal rigors and color harmonies that demonstrate a playful openness to art historical influences while simultaneously encouraging multiple layers of meanings. She uses a complex language of symbols and signs drawn from the unconscious to obtain a poetic amalgam of abstraction and reality. She presently divides her time between Paris, France and Lome, Togo

Mor Faye (Dakar Senegal, 1947-1984) was a versatile and complex artist whose ability to express a vivid interior existence while simultaneously opening to some of the larger issues of our time was reflected consistently in his work throughout his career. As an artist, Mor Faye absorbed and engaged the outside world, drawing from a multitude of sources yet claiming allegiance to none. Since his death in 1984 at the age of 37, Mor Faye's reputation as a troubled artistic genius has reached mythic proportions. A prolific artist, he lived a short and very productive life and left behind a rich body of work that will help liberate as well as enrich contemporary thinking in Africa

Sokari Douglas Camp is a groundbreaking artist whose works combine motion with history, culture and contemporary global politics. Her work is predominantly sculpted in steel and draws inspiration from her Nigerian roots and international issues. Perhaps best known for kinetic life-size welded steel sculptures of Kalabari masquerades, Sokari Douglas Camp sculptural practice defines gender and cultural stereotypes. She was the recipient of a Henry Moore Bursary in 1983 and was selected as a finalist for London 4<sup>th</sup> Plinth in 2003. In 2005, Douglas Camp was honored as a Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her career in the arts. Her work is held by the American Museum of Natural History, New York, British Museum, Setagaya Art Museum, Japan and the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC.

Uche Okeke (1933-2016) Renowned for his immense contribution to the development of modern Nigerian art and pioneering visual experimentations with traditional Igbo Uli mural and body design, Uche Okeke's early drawings in graphite, charcoal or ink are pure meditations upon the nature of line itself. A master of lyrical and sensitive lines, he uses resplendent curves and fluid lines to convey the true harmonies of his artistic vision. His work is included in several permanent collections including the National Gallery, Lagos, Nigeria, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Newark Museum, Newark, NJ; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; The High Museum, Atlanta, GA, Iwalewa Haus, Bayreuth, Germany. He was included in the exhibition *Stranieri Ovunque-Foreigners Everywhere*, curated by Adriano Pedrosa at the 2024 Venice Biennale, Venice Italy.

