

Seattle . June 09, 2017 Mariane Ibrahim Gallery is delighted to represent British-Liberian, multidisciplinary artist Lina Iris Viktor.

Viktor's work transcends mysticism in a post-colonial spectrum and in doing so; she reenacts a disruptive idea of primitivism. Misinterpreted and distorted, her interpretations reveal intelligence, beauty and perfection. Yet trapped in refuge and confinement, her reflections of post-modernist societies seem dark and threatened. By blackening her naked body, she inverts European notions of beauty and purity. Viktor poses with defiance.

Her use of gold on and around the black body reminds the viewer that she acknowledges light because of the existence of dark. One begins where the other ends. Centering the black female body alludes to women's mysteries of African matriarchal collectives and the preeminent roles women played within these collectives as a harmonizing, enforcer of justice.

Viktor's narrative poses a concept of utopian threat where women reign supreme as the arbiters of justice, the aesthetic ideal, and the divinity we all look to reestablish balance in the world. Her utopian décor contradicts values incarnated in a society that has long lost, or is trying in earnest to regain, its values through spiritual introspection. Viktor layers her body on top of the canvas and gold on top of her body such that the imaginary becomes secondary. Viktor's works recall the realm of adornment that once existed prominently.

So far, her intuitive introspection reveals a collective memory. Meticulous and mysterious, her works are an entreaty to the divinities. Each portrait is gilded, adorned, and blessed with her own hands as a personal and intimate offering. Using symbolic characters, the artist spreads a light that invokes the desire to celebrate the inner substance of life, but also excavates the essence of wealth from under earth: oil and gold.

Viktor's aesthetic narrative and visions reflect "our" aesthetic standard and thus a very good fit into the gallery's artistic program. Having worked with Viktor on previous projects, most recently *Back Stories*, we are very confident her work will contribute to and broaden the mission of the gallery.

About

Lina Iris Viktor is a conceptual and performance artist, and painter living between London and New York. The multidisciplinary approach to her work weaves disparate materials and methods belonging both to contemporary and ancient art forms while calling into question the nature of time and being. Her works are a merging of photography, performance, and abstract painting along with the ancient practice of gilding with 24-karat gold. This crosspollination of genres unite to create increasingly dark canvases embedded with "layers of light" in the form of symbols and intricate patterns that Viktor calls "light-works". Viktor has exhibited in museums in the United States and abroad most notably the Harvard Art Museums and The Cooper Gallery, Harvard University (Boston, MA); and the Spelman Museum of Fine Art, Spelman College, (Atlanta, GA). Viktor has engaged in critical talks and panels at New York University, The Institute of Contemporary Arts (London), Saint Louis Art Museum and King's College (London).

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