

# MARIANE IBRAHIM



Zohra Opoku, "I am of Great Magic...", 2022. Courtesy of Mariane Ibrahim

## ZOHRA OPOKU *I HAVE ARISEN...* ***THE MYTHS OF ETERNAL LIFE, PART ONE***

April 8 - May 14, 2022

Mariane Ibrahim is pleased to announce *I Have Arisen*, the gallery's second exhibition with Zohra Opoku and first in Chicago. The show will be on view from April 8 - May 14, 2022.

*The Myths of Eternal Life* is Zohra Opoku's latest body of work—an art practice that sought to be both healing and transformative. *I Have Arisen* will unveil Part One of this series, the second to debut in her first solo exhibition in Paris in 2023.

Across Zohra Opoku's practice, one might consider an underlying question: How do we hold it all together when things are fragmented or have fallen to pieces? Opoku answers this by making evident her sutures. Her new series continues to ponder this inquiry, as she brings together two years of works that she created in the wake of her cancer diagnosis to stitch together a story of devastation and rejuvenation.



Zohra Opoku, "I have arisen from my egg...", 2020, Courtesy of Mariane Ibrahim



Zohra Opoku, "I pass by the house of the King...", 2022, Courtesy of Mariane Ibrahim

Combining sourced linen, some which are dyed with indigo, these materials, Opoku culls images from her own bodily and meditative archive made up of before and after images of her body as she underwent radiation and countless photographs of trees taken in a wintry Berlin park during the same period. The latter became a particular preoccupation for Opoku, as she contemplated how the trees, then emptied of their leaves, would soon blossom and produce new life in the forthcoming seasons.

At the encouragement of Mariane Ibrahim to return to her practice after a hiatus catalyzed by her diagnosis, Opoku centered the trees as a protagonist in this series, where they appear screen printed as backgrounds in some works or in sculptural form in others.

Opoku divides her new series across four chapters titled Chapter I: Healing Hands and Hieroglyphs, Chapter II: About Dying, Chapter III: Between Light and Darkness, Chapter IV: The Book Of The Dead. Her turn to death and dying is informed by facing her own mortality, as well as the Book of the Dead, an ancient Egyptian mortuary text, which includes spells to prepare one for the afterlife.. The word hieroglyph translates in Greek to "sacred carving" and Opoku approaches the works with particular reverence to not only ancient traditions, but also her own grief and healing.

In other works, these symbols are stitched in their traditional form or referenced via Opoku's own body parts, such as isolated images of her legs and hands, which carry their own symbolism. Working with the Egyptian language system allows her to create a visual lexicon of her own that aids in her making sense of her experience while reclaiming her power.

Excerpts of the press release from a piece written on behalf of the exhibition, To Make Evident the Scar, by Writer and Curator Rikki Byrd.

## Press & Sales

chicago@marianeibrahim.com

### Image Credit:

Zohra Opoku, "I am of Great Magic...", 2022. Courtesy of Mariane Ibrahim

Zohra Opoku, "I have arisen from my egg...", 2020, Courtesy of Mariane Ibrahim

Zohra Opoku, "I pass by the house of the King...", 2022, Courtesy of Mariane Ibrahim

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