

PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

ZOË BUCKMAN

NOMI

12 February 2021 – 13 March 2021



NOMI, 2020, hand embroidery and ink on vintage textile, 63.5 x 48.3 cm, 25 x 19 in

Born in London in 1985 and based in Brooklyn, Zoë Buckman's multidisciplinary practice incorporates sculpture, textiles, ceramics, photography, and large-scale public installations. Adopting an explicitly feminist approach, her work explores identity, trauma, and gendered violence, subverting preconceived notions of vulnerability and strength.

Nomi is the artist's first solo presentation in London and marks a powerful and timely homecoming. The exhibition presents a focused body of work that was born from grief and trauma. Over the past two years, Buckman has undertaken a difficult, complex and spiritual journey resulting in a tentative yet defiant proclamation of love and joy as an antidote to the darker side of life. From a real voyage in India, to a psychological journey with EMDR, an interactive psychotherapy technique, Buckman lays herself vulnerable in new works which play with dualities of hard and soft, masculine and feminine, domestic and surreal.

"The limiting and confining conditions of 2020 triggered memories for me of the times I've been held back, literally or symbolically, by patriarchal forces. It put me further in touch with an internal source that exists inside us all: a well of freedom and joy where our wilder instincts originate. I see this force in the women who surround me, in the Divine Feminine, and within myself." Zoe Buckman, November 2020.

Buckman often plays with unexpected juxtapositions in her choice of presentation and source material. Incorporating vintage fabrics such as household linens, and in previous works lingerie and wedding dresses, Buckman teases out narrative from the previous life of the materials that inhabit a feminine and domestic sphere. Text is an integral part of her practice and Buckman's snippets often bear witness to violence, aggression and grief. It is through elegant combinations employing natural forms and dancing figures, and an unashamedly beautiful presentation, that Buckman ensures hope and joy resonant throughout the show.

Her alter ego, Nomi, is expressed in works that reclaim the serpentine motif from negative patriarchal connotations. Her snakes are all powerful, skin shedding, weaving their way on the page between chakras and handwritten excerpts from her ongoing poem, *Show Me Your Bruises Then*. Her hanging sculptures created using boxing gloves unite associations of violence and masculinity with a kind of pristine, sweat and impact free femininity.

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Her latest work creates space for multiple narratives, enigmatic forms and elevates the 'unfinished'. Stains mark the page, threads hang loose, text is not always sewn but sometimes printed and pinned on. Consequently, a raw edge permeates and the collage works feel like they are in the act of becoming. *Nomi* is given free reign, birthing powerful serpent deities with doilies, photography, textiles and ink. Buckman makes work from a personal and introspective position but always engages directly with her audience, inviting them to make their own associations, realisations and even space for healing.

Text by guest co-curator Kate Bryan.

Opening Event

In Conversation: Zoë Buckman & Toyin Ojih Odutola

Followed by live Q&A with Zoë Buckman & Kate Bryan

Friday 12 February, 7pm

Join via [Zoom](#) or watch live on [YouTube](#)

About the artist

Zoë Buckman (b. 1985 Hackney, East London) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Her work has been included in shows at The Museum of Art and Design, NY; MOCA, VA; The Camden Arts Centre, London; The Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; The Children's Museum of the Arts, NY; Indiana University, IN; the Democratic National Convention, PA; the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, GA; and The National Museum of African-American History & Culture, Washington, DC. Collections include Baltimore Museum of Art; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, and Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk. Upcoming exhibitions include the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach, VA, and the Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY.

About Kate Bryan

Kate Bryan is an arts broadcaster and Head of Collections for Soho House and Co globally. In 2017 she curated a ground breaking collection for The Ned London which inverted the gender ratio of the CEO profile of the FTSE 100, acquiring the work of 93 women and 7 men. In June 2019 she published her first book, *The Art of Love*, her second will be published in September 2021. She has written and presented television programmes for BBC, Sky Arts and Sky Arte Italia and is a judge on the long running programmes Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year and Landscape Artist of The Year. In 2014 she won the Arts category in the Women of the Future Awards and is now a mentor for young artists from under represented backgrounds.

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