

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

JULY 16 - AUGUST 23, 2015

OPENING RECEPTION
JULY 15, 6-9PM



Halida Boughriet, *Diner des anonymes* (from the Pandora series), 2014.
Color photograph, 47.2 x 31.5 in (120 x 80 cm).

«Folks can't seem to come to terms with the fact that African artists have now taken and secured their seat at the dinner table, invited or not!»

—Chika Okeke-Agulu

Richard Taittinger Gallery is pleased to present *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?*, a summer exhibition of works by a diverse group of contemporary artists from Africa, curated by **Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi**, co-curator of the 11th edition of the Dak'Art Biennale, the foremost platform for contemporary art in Africa. The show borrows its title from Sidney Poitier's 1967 classic comedy-drama film, a fitting metaphor, in reference to the astute observation of art historian Chika Okeke-Agulu. Over the last few years, African artists have steadily gained access into the mainstream art world. This year marks an important milestone with Nigerian-born Okwui Enwezor's 56th Venice Biennale, aptly titled *All the World's Futures*, showcasing an impressive number of African artists.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? celebrates the growing impact of African art on the global stage and serves as a crucial platform for visibility in New York. The exhibition introduces the work of twelve African artists: **Aida Muluneh, Amalia Ramanankirahina, Amina Menia, Beatrice Wanjiku Njoroge, Chika Modum, Chike Obeagu, Ephrem Solomon Tegegn, Gopal Dagnogo, Halida Boughriet, Onyeka Ibe, Sam Hopkins, and Uche Uzorka.**

Of crucial importance to the exhibition is an earnest desire to question received or fixed assumptions of "Africaness" as either a cultural signifier or aesthetic primer in the work of contemporary African artists, particularly as it relates to their reception in the West. The work of these artists challenges such bias often seen through the lens of identity politics in the global art marketplace. Etched in their individual works are the intimate contexts that motivate their creative preoccupations, as well as the internationalism of their individual practices. Such contexts bear the markers of what is increasingly being referred to as global contemporary. While these artists are comfortable with their ties to Africa, either as a place of birth or a space of cultural significance and connection, their creative visions reflect the deep signs of our changing times. *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?* invites the New York audience to encounter the rich variety of media and diversity present in contemporary African art, as shown in the works of these twelve artists. On view through August 23, 2015.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi is an artist, art historian, and curator of African art at the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH. He holds a B.A. in Fine and Applied Arts from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria; a postgraduate diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies from the University of Western Cape, South Africa; and a Ph.D in Art History from Emory University, Atlanta, GA. Nzewi has curated major exhibitions in Nigeria, South Africa, and the United States. His recent book is the co-edited volume *New Spaces for Negotiating Art (and) Histories*, focusing on independent art spaces and initiatives in Africa (forthcoming, 2015).

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