

Morgan Stanley Lates at Somerset House with The Courtauld

PRESS RELEASE

19 October 2022



Wednesday 19 October 2022, 19.00-22.00

Site Wide

Exhibitions open at Somerset House: *Grada Kilomba, O Barco / The Boat; Jamila Johnson-Small, SERAFINE1369: WE CAN NO LONGER DENY OURSELVES; Amba Sayal-Bennett, Geometries of Difference*

Exhibitions open at The Courtauld: *Fuseli and the Modern Woman: Fashion, Fantasy, Fetishism; Helen Saunders: Modernist Rebel; A Modern Masterpiece Uncovered: Wyndham Lewis, Helen Saunders and Praxitella*

In the Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court

Morgan Stanley Lates returns for the third time in 2022, for an evening exploring and reflecting on the complex legacy of European colonialism. In an evening encompassing talks, music, poetry and performance, the event draws inspiration from transdisciplinary artist **Grada Kilomba's** large-scale installation **O Barco / The Boat** (29 September – 20 October 2022).

The installation, at the heart of the courtyard and the evening, aims to draw attention to the forgotten stories and identities of those who suffered during European maritime expansion and colonisation. The striking 32-metre-long sculpture is composed of 140 wood pieces, the configuration of which outlines the 'hold' of a historical European slave ship. The central rows are inscribed with a poem written by the artist, which has been translated into several African languages representing the many forgotten stories and identities from this traumatic time.

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For the Lates event, Somerset House has invited literary & sound artist **Belinda Zhawi** to curate creative responses to *O Barco / The Boat* from three critically acclaimed artists who will each perform pieces throughout the evening. The artists will explore themes of memory, movement, ancestry and topics of power, violence and freedom through poetry, music and soundscapes in performances delivered alongside Kilomba's installation.

Artist, poet and filmmaker, **Asmaa Jama** will perform a poetry reading; sound designer, live loop musician, theatre maker and poet, **Xana** will present a set of sound and poetry; and writer, artist and musician, **brother portrait** will play alongside fellow musicians **Lorenz Okello** (piano/keys), **Amy Gadiaga** (bass) and **Blake Cascoe** (drums). An original soundscape designed by **Belinda Zhawi** in response to the installation can be heard across the courtyard throughout the evening.

In addition, guests for the evening can experience Somerset House's brand-new commission, **Geometries of Difference** by artist **Amba Sayal-Bennett**. Exploring how the British colonial imagination and imperialist attitudes were encoded in the designs of Somerset House, Sayal-Bennett reworks 18th century architectural renderings of the building to create contemporary geometric sculptures out of laser-cut steel. Starting in the Seamen's Hall, Sayal-Bennett will give a talk introducing her new commission. Guests can also explore **We can no longer deny ourselves**, the large-scale installation from Somerset House Studios artist **SERAFINE1369** (Jamila Johnson-Small), reflecting on relationships between time and labour, bodies and capitalism. Unfolding across the River Rooms, the installation is conceived as an 'exploded clock' with several interconnected elements that include a multi-channel video work, sculptural objects within an immersive audio composition, and live dance performances.

Food and drink will be available from the Upper Terrace.

In The Courtauld

The Courtauld's expert team of historians, curators and conservators will be conducting talks throughout the evening, unveiling stories that connect the galleries artworks to colonisation, exploitation and the varied stories of people who lived through these historical periods. Talks include **Sanctum Sanctorum Imperialis: Somerset House and the British Colonial Mindset** and **Decolonising Silverware**. In addition, the team behind conservation and technology at The Courtauld will run interactive drop-in sessions, giving visitors a rare opportunity to ask questions, interrogate and scrutinise the complex and surprising origins of the pigments that make-up much loved artworks.

Major exhibitions opening in October at **The Courtauld** will also be available for guests to explore, alone or guided by a curator tour available exclusively for the event, including **Fuseli and the Modern Woman: Fashion, Fantasy, Fetishism** (14 Oct 2022 – 8 Jan 2023)

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another brand-new exhibition, spotlighting one of the most original and eccentric artists of the 18th-century, **Henry Fuseli**. Fifty of the artist's strange and striking private drawings will be on display, many of which depict the spectacularly extravagant hairdos and fashions of the day, revealing the artist's secret lifelong obsession with the female figure and sexuality. In addition, visitors have the chance to explore, for the first time in 25 years, work by **Helen Saunders**, one of early 20th century's most radical female abstract artists. After falling into obscurity for decades, **Helen Saunders: Modernist Rebel** (14 Oct 2022 – 29 Jan 2023), will showcase a remarkable group of 18 of the artist's drawings and watercolours. The works will be accompanied by an X-Ray of one of Saunders' most famous masterpieces, 'Atlantic City', that has recently been rediscovered by Courtauld students hidden beneath another portrait (**A Modern Masterpiece Uncovered: Wyndham Lewis, Helen Saunders and Praxitella**, 14 Oct 2022 – 12 Feb 2023).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Dates & Times: 19 October 2022, 19.00-22.00

Tickets available via somersethouse.org.uk

ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE

Step Inside, Think Outside

As the home of cultural innovators, Somerset House is a site of origination, with a cultural programme offering alternative perspectives on the biggest issues of our time. We are a place of joy and discovery, where everyone is invited to Step Inside and Think Outside.

From our historic site in the heart of London, we work globally across art, creativity, business, and non-profit, nurturing new talent, methods and technologies. Our resident community of creative enterprises, arts organisations, artists and makers, makes us a centre of ideas, with most of our programme home-grown.

We sit at the meeting point of artistic and social innovation, bringing worlds and minds together to create surprising and often magical results. Our spirit of constant curiosity and counter perspective is integral to our history and key to our future.

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ABOUT THE COURTAULD

The Courtauld works to advance how we see and understand the visual arts, as an internationally-renowned centre for the teaching, research of art history and a major public gallery. Founded by collectors and philanthropists in 1932, the organisation has been at the forefront of the study of art ever since, through advanced research and conservation practice, innovative teaching, the renowned collection and inspiring exhibitions of its gallery, and engaging and accessible activities, education and events.

The Courtauld cares for one of the greatest art collections in the UK, presenting these works to the public at The Courtauld Gallery in central London, as well as through loans and partnerships. The Gallery is most famous for its iconic Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterpieces – such as Van Gogh’s Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear and Manet’s A Bar at the Folies-Bergère. It showcases these alongside an internationally renowned collection of works from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance through to the present day.

Academically, The Courtauld faculty is the largest community of art historians and conservators in the UK, teaching and carrying out research on subjects from creativity in late Antiquity to contemporary digital art forms – with an increasingly global focus. An independent college of the University of London, The Courtauld offers a range of degree programmes from BA to PhD in the History of Art, curating, and the conservation of easel and wall paintings. Its alumni are leaders and innovators in the arts, culture and business worlds, helping to shape the global agenda for the arts and creative industries.

Founded on the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to engage with art, The Courtauld works to increase understanding of the role played by art throughout history, in all societies and across all geographies – as well as being a champion for the importance of art in the present day. This could be through exhibitions offering a chance to look closely at world-famous works; events bringing art history research to new audiences; accessible and expert short courses; digital engagement, innovative school, family and community programmes; or taking a formal qualification. The Courtauld’s ambition is to transform access to art history education, by extending the horizons of what this is, and ensuring as many people as possible can benefit from the tools to better understand the visual world around us.

ABOUT MORGAN STANLEY

Morgan Stanley is a leading global financial services firm providing investment banking, securities, wealth management and investment management services. With offices in more than 41 countries, the Firm's employees serve clients worldwide including corporations, governments, institutions and individuals. For more information about Morgan Stanley, please visit www.morganstanley.com