



Toyin Odutola: Untold Stories

Known for her heavily worked portraits, Toyin Odutola's (b. 1985, Ife, Nigeria) work comprises a variety of mark-making—incorporating short, repeated hatches with sinuous outlines—that build richly detailed yet simultaneously abstracted images. Figures are surrounded by backgrounds that range from unmarked, pure paper to bold, multifaceted patterns. While the features of Odutola's sitters are minutely rendered, the dark tones of their faces and bodies create a flattening of the image that borders on silhouette. The resulting likenesses are at once descriptive and emotionally charged.

Untold Stories is a new series of mixed-media drawings—created specifically for this exhibition—investigating both portraiture and narrative. Featuring works on paper made with charcoal, pastel, marker, graphite, and acrylic ink, the presentation includes text panels for the first time in Odutola's work, bringing the idea of storytelling to the fore in a new way. Odutola's diptychs and triptychs combine image and text to create narratives that rest intriguingly between the tangible and the elusive. Within the space of the exhibition, the works activate one another, and the audience is invited to make connections and construct their own stories.



The Last One, 2014. Charcoal, pastel, marker, and graphite on paper, 30 × 40 inches. Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.



Audio Tour

Download the CAM app at camstl.org/app or ask for an iPod at the front desk to hear directly from the artist on the audio tour.



The Uncertainty Principle, 2014. Charcoal, pastel, marker, and graphite on paper, 30 × 40 inches. Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

Toyin Odutola (b. 1985, Ife, Nigeria) lives and works in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include *Like the Sea*, Jack Shainman Gallery, and *Toyin Odutola: The Constant Wrestler*, Indiana Museum of Contemporary Art, Indianapolis. Odutola has also exhibited at the Studio Museum in Harlem; the Menil Collection, Houston; and the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, Brooklyn. She was the recipient of the Murphy and Cadogan Fellowship Award in 2011 and her work is in the permanent collections of Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama; the Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii; and the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. She earned a BA from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and an MFA from California College of the Arts.

Toyin Odutola: Untold Stories is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Lisa Melandri, Executive Director.

Special thanks to Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.



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