

**ADA \ CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY PRESENTS THE END  
OF RESIDENCY SOLO EXHIBITION BY BRITISH GHANAIAN  
VINCENTIAN ARTIST EMMA PREMPEH**

Emma Prempeh's latest paintings, titled *In and Out of Time*, deals with similar themes of the late American activist and poet, Maya Angelou's poem: a meditation on love, conflict, relationships, connections, and experiences forever bonded through time. The series of paintings are a reflection of Prempeh's brief encounters with her Ghanaian heritage, her family, its people, architecture, and landscapes.

04 September – 17 October 2021



Prempeh's paintings play upon the notion of distant memories yet simultaneously draw from immediate and future evocations. Her series of canvases project warm, darkened earthly tones and create wide-ranging spaces, recalling feelings of nostalgia, loss, and intimacy. She enjoys working on life-size canvases and using pigment in ways that transcends surfaces and edges. Partially defined figures and objects float freely through the space they inhabit, almost mystifying forms and shapes.

Prempeh's constellation of paintings, reflect her lived experience during her one-month residency in Ghana, coming into direct contact with her Paternal heritage for the first time. The residency brought Prempeh closer to her unique, inherited sense of family identity: values, traditions, perhaps to unlock histories and connect with her roots and rebuild the bridge to her present self. The opening lines of Maya Angelou's poem: *The Sun has come. The mist is gone. We see in the distance our long way home*, suggests a journey in which her destination is home.

In her work, Prempeh contemplates the notion of 'home' to be revisiting her past and heritage, connecting it to present existential narratives and envisioning possible futures. *In and out of time*, ties with the concept of "Sankofa", a Bono Adinkra symbol. "Sankofa" is expressed as a mythic bird that flies forward while looking backward with an egg (symbolizing the future) in its mouth. Indicating it is not a taboo to go back and fetch what has been forgotten. The urge to go back and the need to reflect on the now and the past to build a successful or meaningful future, are inherently present within Prempeh's work, mirroring complex relationships through time.

*In and out of time*, disrupts the way we think about temporality and quantified narrative experiences, generating subjective progression through moments and scenes. The imitation gold leaf on the canvas surface of the majority of Prempeh's work signifies the inevitable passing of time and transitory nature of existence. Gradually, the gold leaf deteriorates, and changes colour, and loses its vibrancy, and aura. The introduction of fabric transforms the surface of the canvas into a three-dimensional state and the sand and other materials into a quasi-installation environment. Prempeh's work also includes words in the context of self-identification and definition, with excerpts taken from her diary or other literary materials.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:  
**About Emma Prempeh:**

Emma Prempeh (b.1996, London) is a British, Ghanaian and Vincentian fine art graduate from Goldsmiths University (graduating in 2019) and winner of the Alumno/SPACE Studio Bursary award for 2020. She is currently attending an MA in Painting at the Royal College of Art under the LeverHulme Trust Arts Scholarship.

Prempeh's practice emerged through existential thought and is premised on her need to understand her own freedom in relation to memory and time. Thinking and reflection play a dominant role in her practice, which is often a daunting and laborious task for her, when analysing the essence of her paintings.

*In and out of time* is the first end of residency solo show in ADA \ contemporary art gallery which was launched this August, bringing together a local Ghanaian artist and an international artist whose practice is rooted in Africa and its legacy.

**About ADA \ contemporary art gallery:**

Based in Accra, Ghana, ADA \ contemporary art gallery specializes in the work of emerging artists across Africa and its diaspora. Established in 2020 by contemporary African art advisor Adora Mba, ADA is committed to nurturing Ghana and the continent's contemporary art community and to fostering its ties and influence amongst global audiences.

Highlighting individual early career artistic practices, the gallery's program includes dedicated solo exhibitions; offsite projects and exhibitions; site-specific commissions; talks; creative partnerships and philanthropic activities with local actors; and international art fairs.

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Image credits: Intimacy, Oil Acrylic, imitation Gold leaf and thread on canvas.175cm x 175cm