

Radiant

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Curated by Abigail Fakoya

Copeland Gallery, London, United Kingdom

28th November - 1st December 2024



Amaani Oluwa, *Right Where We Belong [RWWB] Photography Series*, 2021. Photography Print, Courtesy of the Artist.

LONDON, October, 2024 - Mojun Art Space in partnership with Copeland Park is proud to present *Radiant* at Copeland Gallery on the 28th of November 2024. Funded by Arts Council England and Curated by Abigail Fakoya, this exhibition features the work of seventeen contemporary artists and creatives who share the intersectional identity of 'Black Woman'.

The *Radiant* exhibition explores the experience and cultivation of joy for, with and by Black Women through different mediums of art and creative practices. Working exclusively with emerging and established Black Women artists and creatives, the goal is to intentionally create and hold space for the sole purpose of an immersive exploration of joy through all the senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste).

Inequality is commonplace for Black people; however, it is especially more so for Black women who exist at the intersection of racism and sexism. The term 'misogynoir' was coined by Black feminist writer Moya Bailey to describe "*the specific hatred, dislike, distrust and prejudice directed toward Black women.*"

From microaggressions to harmful stereotypes and archetypes, Black women are continuously faced with traumatic and exhausting situations, including the mainstream portrayal of Black trauma in the media, in addition to the fact that the pain and trauma Black women themselves experience is routinely ignored and criticised. In this climate that exacerbates the fatigue already present, joy is a necessity.

The society we currently live in was not designed to hold space for Black woman joy and racialized capitalism makes rest and joy a privilege afforded only to the social majority. As such, intentionally creating spaces in which joy can be experienced is not only imperative to our survival as a collective, but also to our individual well-being.

The Radiant exhibition is an immersive, multisensory experience in which works of every medium engage with one or more of the senses. Engaging with sight are photographs by **Amaani Oluwa, Adanma Nwankwo** and **Gifty Dzenyo** exploring themes of softness, femininity and playfulness, themes not often associated with Black women.

Paintings by **Saidat Animasaun, Yvadney Davis, Sabina Silver, Tomilola Olumide, Sade Popoola**, and **Lola Betiku** explore themes of vulnerability, storytelling, folklore and the Black female body; while Collages by **Funmi Lijadu** and **Kirsty Atek** bring together different facets of joy in friendship, community, motherhood and faith.

Engaging both sight and sound is the short film by **Yelita Ali**; an ode to Black women and a bespoke soundscape inspired by the ethos of Radiant, created by **Bexx**, weaves a rhythm and melody connecting all the works in the show.

Birungi Kawooya's natural fibre installation 'Can You Rest?' is a tactile invitation for all visitors to lay on and within the regenerative banana fibre and bark cloth, and rest for a while; surrounded by words of affirmation woven in crimson coloured yarn on hessian by **Joke Amusan**. The synthetic hair installation by **Farrah Riley Gray** is an ode to Black hair, how it coils, waves, weaves and tangles.

The creator of **CR1B** has curated scents for each room to go with the works on display, creating a fully enveloping ambience to be accompanied by the exquisite taste of **Amandla Wines**; an all Black, all female led wine company from South Africa that will be present at the opening of the exhibition.

The Radiant exhibition is a community centred initiative. It's an invitation for all members of our community to explore what joy looks, feels, sounds, smells, and tastes like to them as we invite them to experience different expressions of Black woman joy.

Exhibition Programme

As part of the *Radiant* exhibition programme, there will be a series of events and workshops in partnership with different organisations to aid our community in the cultivation of joy.

On Friday 29th November, the curator Abigail Fakoya and artist and creative producer Adanna Nwankwo will host an interactive workshop called **Freedom is Like...** that centres the cultivation of love and joy as a daily practice in the afternoon, followed by a spoken word, open mic and performance event in the evening designed to facilitate a safe space for freedom of expression.

On the morning of Saturday 30th November, Radiant will host the London chapter of **Black Girls in Art Spaces**, a global community with chapters all over the world, dedicated to championing Black artistry and Black stories while providing communal care through the Arts for Black women.

Followed by a tour and talk in the evening with the curator and artists in partnership with **Casual Readers Club**; a storytelling platform and an irl reading community of over 2500 readers because reading is a communal practice. Celebrating storytelling in all its forms from book club discussions to theatre trips, film previews to salon-style discussions and communal reading sessions with a particular focus on Black, Brown and traditionally excluded creators.

- ENDS -

Notes for editors, not for publication

Exhibition Title: Radiant
Dates: Exhibition dates: 28th November - 1st December 2024
Opening Reception: 28th November 2024
Press View: 28th November | 4 - 6pm
Address: Copeland Gallery,
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About Copeland Gallery

Located minutes from Peckham Rye Station at the heart of Copeland Park, Copeland Gallery is a landmark within Peckham's cultural quarter. Providing a supportive platform for emerging artists since 2013, the gallery has played a key role in the rise of Peckham's art scene, housing hundreds of exhibitions, fashion shows, and workshops. Global brands, cutting edge artists, large filming productions as well as student exhibitions have all graced Copeland Gallery's walls.

About AMANDLA

AMANDLA is a bold, unique, and progressive South African wine brand and a totally authentic black-and-female run business. AMANDLA stands for a modern inclusive lifestyle, and intends to break down social barriers. The AMANDLA wines are available via Waitrose, Tesco and Sainsbury's.

About Abigail Fakoya

Abigail Fakoya is an Independent Curator, Writer and Visual Artist whose ongoing research explores the resilience of Black Woman Joy. Her artistic and curatorial practice centres exploration, play and cultivating joy in a social, political and economic climate in which even writing about joy seems almost counterintuitive. She is also the founder of the Mojun Art Space, a platform dedicated to the intentional cultivation of joy in creative practice and the amplification of the voices of underrepresented artists in the art industry.