



## I WISH I COULD BE THE MOONLIGHT

### A SOLO EXHIBITION BY STEPHEN PRICE

Douala, Cameroon – Jan. 24

Bwo Gallery is thrilled to announce the opening of "I Wish I Could Be The Moonlight," a solo exhibition featuring new paintings by the Ghanaian-Italian artist, Stephen Price. The exhibition will take place at Bwo Gallery in Douala, Cameroon, opening on 25 January and on view through 10 February..



In "I Wish I Could Be The Moonlight," Price explores a unique blue period, drawing inspiration from literary, cinematic, and art historical sources. His paintings feature melanin-rich figures immersed in nocturnal surrealism, offering viewers a contemplative experience. The genesis of these moonlit works can be traced back to the poem "Silent Night" by Filipino poet Alon Calinao Dy and the film "Moonlight" by American director Barry Jenkins.

The exhibition title, borrowed from Dy's poem, encapsulates the artist's desire to illuminate the darkest hours of life with the radiant glow of moonlight. Price's connection to the film "Moonlight" further deepens his exploration, capturing moments of vulnerability, quietude, and tenderness of his subjects. The moonlit scenes, accentuated by a charcoal-textured aesthetic, transport viewers to a mystical realm, free from the harsh realities of the world.

Implementing a mixed media technique that includes charcoal, pastels, oil, and acrylic on canvas, Price masterfully creates contemplative portraits. The exhibition showcases a series of portraits set against abstract or natural environments, suspended in time and exuding a sense of serenity. Noteworthy are the initial miniature portraits in works like "Beyond" and "Oh Gently Passing Night #2," highlighting Price's abstract qualities and focus on light and atmosphere.



Price's romanticization of this enchanted world extends beyond mere replication, incorporating influences from 19th-century master paintings. His contemporary take on John William Waterhouse's "The Lady of Shalott" in "The Path" exemplifies this fusion of influences, offering a serene reinterpretation illuminated by moonlight.

"I Wish I Could Be The Moonlight" is not only a visual feast but also symbolizes a pivotal moment for Stephen Price's artistic journey. Paintings like "The Letter #2" may echo the significance that "Summer Night. Inger On The Beach" held for Edvard Munch, signifying a moment of liberation and acceptance of a newfound artistic voice. Price's expressive strokes, often depicting Black figures in a state of nudity, serve as a powerful means of conveying a spectrum of emotions.

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## ABOUT

### Stephen Price

Born in Palermo (Italy) to Ghanaian parents, Stephen Price (b. 1995) moved to the United Kingdom with his family in 2014 and attended the University of Northampton where he obtained a BFA in Painting and Drawing. Drawing inspiration from the notion of temporality, Price's paintings offer a poetic encounter and marriage between abstraction and figuration in which charcoal black figures appear as the main subjects.

Using a mixed media technique consisting of charcoal, pastels, oil, and acrylic on canvas, Price paints intimate portraits of Black subjects in abstract or enchanted natural environments seemingly suspended in time. His visual language pushes beyond pure replication of photographic images and deviates from physical realities by pairing the real with his imagination and memories. By applying the skin with the depth of charcoal and thick expressive brushstrokes of acrylic and oil, he creates a physicality of texture that is both rough and soft.

### Bwo

Bwo is an art gallery based in Douala, Cameroon dedicated to the promotion of contemporary art by emerging, mid-career and established artists from Africa and its diasporas. As a young gallery, Bwo wants to harness the power of contemporary art to create a multiplicity of dialogues prioritizing cross-cultural exchanges between Cameroon and the rest of the world. The gallery has a dynamic program consisting of solo and group exhibitions which feature promising and leading artists with unique voices.

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