

# DANIEL CREWS-CHUBB

SHANGO

11 FEBRUARY – 25 FEBRUARY 2016

VIGO 21 DERING STREET LONDON W1S 1AL

Vigo Gallery is pleased to host *Shango* Daniel Crews-Chubb's first UK exhibition. Crews-Chubb makes bold and vibrant works that employ a traditional, expressionistic, painterly language whilst remaining utterly contemporary. He is one of a number of young painters whose work evades the distinctions between abstraction and figuration.

These paintings wrestle with the artist's primary influences – primitive art, ancient ritual and amateur anthropology. They embody a search for the authentic, the raw and the unrefined, subtly influenced by the repetitive nature of image-led, consumer culture, Modernist painting and the history of mark-making from cave painting to abstract and neo expressionism.

They are dominated by a repeated, archetypal motif; a couple of bold and naively rendered figures, locked in ambiguous relationship; unclear as to whether they are in harmony or conflict. Articulated in strong, loose, expressionistic brush strokes, the figures are at once tribal and cartoon like.

Crews-Chubb identifies imagery that repeats historically and anthropologically from antiquity to the present day. He will choose a motif or physical stance that is replicated in various formats and timelines and allow it to become an ambiguous motif within his work amalgamating the various sources. For example, one of his *characters* is Bumba, an African god of creation said to have vomited to create the Universe who sticks his hand in others mouths to further induce creativity. This is married with very similar imagery from ancient Mayan sculpture and the Voynich manuscript an early 15<sup>th</sup> Century German manuscript written in a seemingly unrecorded language. The postures of his characters are also often inspired by today's on-line pop-culture. *Belfie*, for example, derives from the contemporary obsession with sharing images of oneself- in this case ones bottom.

Crews-Chubb's latest God to enter into his paintings is Shango, the Yoruba god of thunder, drumming and dance. We find this character integrated into his visual vocabulary and more familiar motifs in *Voynich, Belfie and the Acrobats (pink and black with yellow feet)*, 2016.

The repetition of the figurative motif becomes a vehicle for exploring the act of painting itself, in a manner similar, perhaps, to that of Georg Baselitz, or De Kooning's *Woman* series. In this joyful exploration, Crews-Chubb makes common cause with the celebration of child-like creativity that inspired Karel Appel and Asger Jorn and the strand of contemporary painting that has flowed on from them.

Crews-Chubb utilizes a repertoire of seemingly casual marks that are, in fact, worked and reworked to create hard won, layered paintings that only achieve their final form when he arrives at a sense of balance or rightness that lets him stop. He uses oils, acrylics, spray paint, sand, charcoal and pastel, with abandon on rough, stretched and re-stretched canvases, that he often scrapes back and over paints. Even in their stasis, the works carry within them the dynamism of their production.

Crews-Chubb studied at Chelsea School of Art, and Turps Art School. In October 2015, he had his first, major, solo show at Galerist, Istanbul, followed by a solo in December in Miami. This is his first UK solo show.

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