

THE
MONACO
PROJECT
FOR THE
ARTS

UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE
OF HIS SERENE HIGHNESS
PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO

THE PROJECT 2014

MICKALENE THOMAS

Femme au divan II



FROM SATURDAY 5 JULY TO SUNDAY 31 AUGUST 2014
OPEN EVERY DAY FROM 13.00 TO 19.00 - FREE ENTRANCE

ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE D'ARTS PLASTIQUES DE LA VILLE DE MONACO
1 avenue des Pins, Monaco-Ville

Press contact - Vanessa Erbaggio - vanessa@mpamonaco.com



PAVILLON
BOSIO ART &
SCÉNOGRAPHIE

ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE
D'ARTS PLASTIQUES
DE LA VILLE DE MONACO

GALERIE NATHALIE OBADIA

PARIS - BRUXELLES

THE PROJECT

The Monaco Project for the Arts is pleased to present *Femme au divan II*, a solo exhibition by Mickalene Thomas

For Mickalene Thomas' exhibition *Femme au divan II* at the Pavillon Bosio at the École Supérieure d'Arts Plastiques in Monaco, the artist will present a collection of paintings, a series of photographs and a video. With her unbounded experimentation and vivid imagination, Thomas evolves splendid images of black women through an astounding array of artistic and material forms, as well as through the lens of myriad art historical, cultural, and social references. Her art is an aesthetic of complex intersectionality and seemingly incommensurable juxtapositions that is deeply influenced by the legacy of painting in the canon of Western art, ranging from nineteenth century European artists such as Ingres, Courbet and Manet, to twentieth century European and American artists, including Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, and later David Hockney.

Thomas is deeply committed to reimagining black female subjectivity in art, which she envisages by imbuing her models with a sense of magical realism enabled through her precise formal manner and aimed at countering problematic historical representations of black women. Her paintings are embellished with sparkling strass and enamel paint that glimmer when touched by light. The women's Afro hairstyles simultaneously structure and defy the frame in unexpected ways, while the use of transparent acrylic renders the forms abstract when applied flat. Thomas evolves a pictorial treatment that effortlessly melds dynamic and diverse compositional elements: the patterns on flowery, retro clothing, leather furniture, wicker and bamboo, resist-dyed African fabrics, painted wood panels, embroidered rugs, indoor plants, texturized Scandinavian lampshades, and crocheted cushions. Yet her control of rhythm, form, colour and motif succeeds in constructing a coalesced space - one in which we immediately realize the potential of being and form in new and unanticipated ways.

Born in Camden (New Jersey) in 1971, Mickalene Thomas lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Trained at Southern Cross University (Lismore, Australia, 1998), a Fine Arts graduate in painting at the Pratt Institute (Brooklyn, 2000) and with a Master's degree in the Fine Arts at the Yale University School of Arts (New Haven, 2002), Mickalene Thomas is one of the best known artists on the contemporary scene in the United States. She has recently had a number of important solo exhibitions, notably at The Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston (2012), the Santa Monica Museum of Art in California (2012), and the Brooklyn Museum in New York (2012), and she has produced specific projects for the *On-Site*, P.S.1/MoMA in New York (*Le Déjeuner Sur l'Herbe: Les Trois Femmes Noires*, 2010) and Better Days (Volkshaus Art Basel, 2013 and very soon in Berlin in 2014).

Her work can be found in leading private and public collections, such as the Art Institute of Chicago, the Brooklyn Museum, the Guggenheim Museum New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, MOMA PS1, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal, Canada, the Rubell Family Collection, the Sender Collection, and the Taschen Collection.

Mickalene Thomas has been represented by the Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels since 2013. The preview of her first solo exhibition in France at the Galerie Nathalie Obadia in Paris will take place on 11 September 2014.

The Monaco Project for the Arts

The Monaco Project for the Arts (MPA) is a non-profit organization placed under the High Patronage of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco.

It was founded in 2008 by Mrs Rita Rovelli Caltagirone, with the help of Mr Georges Marsan, Mayor of Monaco, and Mrs Isabelle Lombardot, Director of École Supérieure d'Arts Plastiques de la Ville de Monaco (ESAP).

MPA has two main missions : supporting the School and promoting partnerships and activities between culture, art and education in the Principality and abroad.

MPA provides young artists with scholarships, it awards prizes and travel bursaries, produces exhibitions for the alumni to introduce them to the art market - **MPA ALUMNI** - and organizes student and artist residencies and internships worldwide.

Thanks to its Members and their networks, MPA creates opportunities for students to interact with today's great artists and to collaborate with major international public and private cultural institutions. MPA Members are not only patrons but also enjoy a genuine cultural preparation throughout the year. A sustained program allows Members to meet artists, collectors, curators and professionals from museums and public and private institutions through monthly conferences, screenings, visits to museums and private collections, and yearly cultural trips. Every summer, in École Supérieure d'Arts Plastiques de la Ville de Monaco premises, MPA organizes an exhibition entitled **THE PROJECT**, where internationally renowned artists such as Jean-Michel Othoniel, Carsten Höller, Joana Vasconcelos, Yan-Pei Ming, Gavin Turk and Mickalene Thomas are invited to design an in situ project in collaboration with the art students. This exhibition is open to the public and has become a major and established appointment on the European art scene and the cultural calendar of the Principality.

École Supérieure d'Arts Plastiques de la Ville de Monaco

Located in the prestigious historical Monaco, École Supérieure d'Arts Plastiques de la Ville de Monaco is a higher education and research institution that offers a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degree.

The curriculum includes studies in all disciplines of fine arts and investigates the fields of stage and exhibition design.

The international student body of ESAP benefits from Workshops in Research and Creation (ARC) collaborative teaching method. The School offers a five-year course focusing primarily on studio art, drawing, stage and exhibition design, graphic design, photography, painting, ceramics and installation cross-disciplinary teaching.

Students participate in productions with Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo, Le Printemps des Arts, and collaborate with major Universities and Art Academies throughout Europe.

The academic resources of this historical and renowned institution are further implemented by artists' lectures, publications, conferences and symposiums.

École Supérieure d'Arts Plastiques de la Ville de Monaco is under the administrative supervision of the Mayor and the City Hall Council of Monaco, and under the direction of Mrs Isabelle Lombardot.