

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Yinka Shonibare, MBE, *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters (Asia)*, 2008, 81.5 x 58 x 2.5 inches

James Cohan Gallery Shanghai: September 2008

James Cohan Gallery announces the upcoming program for the gallery and its artists in Shanghai this September.

Yinka Shonibare, MBE at James Cohan Gallery Shanghai

September 11 - November 8, 2008
Opening September 11, 6-8 pm

James Cohan Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of work by Yinka Shonibare, MBE. This will be the second exhibition in the gallery's Shanghai space since its opening in July 2008. In this exhibition, Shonibare's photographs and sculptures dating from 2005 through 2008 address the colonialist impulse and the struggles with power and identity that result from it.

On View will be the recent photographic series, *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters*, 2008. The five richly-hued photographs are based on Francisco Goya y Luciente's etching of the same name. Shonibare has reworked Goya's original warning against irrational behavior and expanded its reach, depicting figures who together represent five of the world's continents. Each figure is outfitted in Victorian-style garments made from what we have come to recognize as African textiles—in fact, cloth that was originally imported by the Dutch to Africa but which has become so closely associated with the continent that it is assumed to be indigenous. Accompanying the photos will be *Immanuel Kant* (2008), sculpted after the Age of Enlightenment philosopher and presented with amputated legs—a fictional disability suggesting that intelligence can be a hindrance when it creates a damaging thirst for conquest.

Earlier works by Shonibare will include *Eleanor Hewitt* (2005), a sculpture of the American collector born in the 19th century who is playfully perched atop stilts to indicate her elevated taste and adventurous spirit, as well as several of Shonibare's *Toy*

Paintings from his 2005 series. Also shown will be the film *Odile and Odette* (2005), in which two ballerinas—one black, one white—dance the Swan Lake roles, separated by a mirror to indicate the interplay between reality and reflection, conscious and unconscious.

Yinka Shonibare, MBE (b.1962) is a painter, photographer, filmmaker, and installation artist whose work is influenced by the culture of Nigeria, where he grew up, and England, where he studied and now lives. Shonibare's recent solo exhibitions include *The Hayward Flag Project* (2007, The Hayward Gallery, London), *Le jardin d'amour* (2007, Musée de quai Branly, Paris), and *Scratch the Surface* (2007, National Portrait Gallery, London). He is the subject of a mid-career retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, Australia (September 2008), which will travel to the Brooklyn Museum in 2009. The artist was shortlisted for the prestigious Turner Prize in 2004, and he was awarded the title of Member of the British Empire in 2005. His work was included in the African pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. The artist's proposal for the Fourth Plinth in London's Trafalgar Square was recently selected as one of two public works to be realized on the site.

James Cohan Gallery at SHContemporary 08, Booth A23

September 10-13

Opening September 9, 2 pm

James Cohan Gallery is pleased to announce its participation in ShContemporary 08, the Asia Pacific contemporary art fair taking place in Shanghai, China, from September 10 – 13, 2008. Returning for a second year to the Shanghai Exhibition Center, the fair will feature more than one hundred art galleries representing more than twenty countries. The fair will run concurrent to the the 7th Shanghai Biennale, which will be on view from September 9 -November 16, 2008, at the Shanghai Art Museum.

In the ShContemporary 08 booth, James Cohan Gallery will featuring works by a wide range of international artists including Nam June Paik, Hiraki Sawa, Yinka Shonibare, MBE, Bill Viola, and Wim Wenders. On view will be a new video work from Viola's latest *Transfiguration* series, which premiered at last year's Venice Biennale with *Ocean Without a Shore* (2007). Also included will be *Gertrude Stein*, Paik's 1990 robot that is a shamanistic and witty portrait of the famous writer with gramophone horns for arms, records for breasts and a chiffon floral skirt that craftily obscures a video womb. The videos playing on the screens include images of Picasso's famous painting of the writer thus referring to her position as champion of modern art. The photographic work of Wim Wenders will be represented by two of his large-scale iconic images, *Beetle Cemetery*

and *Bamboo Forest*, from his book of travels, [Pictures from the Surface of the Earth](#). Also on view will be the photograph by Yinka Shonibare, MBE, *La Méduse* (2008), which recalls the French ship that wrecked off of the coast of Senegal in 1819 as it was on its way to retake possession of the African land from the British. Shonibare's ship is depicted in the moment just before its demise, and the artist uses the frigate's precarious state to hint at the world's present vulnerabilities.

Hiraki Sawa at SHContemporary 08 *Best of Discovery*

James Cohan Gallery is pleased to announce Hiraki Sawa's inclusion in *Best of Discovery*, a curated section within ShContemporary 08 that will feature more than thirty emerging artists from the Asia Pacific region. *Best of Discovery* will be on view from September 10 – 13, 2008. Sawa, a video artist, is creating a new three-panel work which will address the concept of "home" and the physical and mental habitation of space.

Known for his poetic dreamscapes, Sawa will interweave disparate elements—a clock that shines like a lamp, a birdcage, a dune landscape—and populate them with animated figures and creatures. Seemingly impossible dichotomies such as absence and presence, or belonging and homelessness, will be captured through such juxtapositions, questioning how "home" may be defined in a densely populated metropolis. Sawa makes visible the realm of our imaginations, allowing us to travel the world without physically relocating. By taking us on an exploration of these interior landscapes, the artist reminds us that the human mind is a limitless terrain of discovery.

Hiraki Sawa (1977) graduated in 2003 with an M.A. from the Slade School of Fine Art in London. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the UCLA Hammer Museum of Art (2005; Los Angeles), the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (2005, Washington, D.C.), The Hayward Gallery (2005; London), the Firstsite Contemporary Art Centre (2006 Essex, UK) and the National Gallery of Victoria (2006, Melbourne, Australia). The artist lives and works in London.

To contact James Cohan Gallery Shanghai director, Arthur Solway, please write to asolway@jamescohan.com or telephone +86 21 54660825

For further information, please contact Jane Cohan at jane@jamescohan.com or telephone 1-212-714-9500.