

# Wilde

## PRESS RELEASE

Laura Thiong-Toye

*Deuxième service*

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WILDE | GENEVA

These various series of paintings in ink and acrylic on paper use still life as a pretext for playing with shapes, colors and motifs. In an aesthetic close to collage, the paintings move away from traditional “still life” to be more broadly inspired by the Pattern & Decoration movement of the 80s.

Laura Thiong-Toye likes to play with contrasts, both pictorial and in subject matter: flat tints are counterbalanced by superimposed patterns and textures, luminous ink washes with the more frank tones of acrylics, oriental influences rub shoulders with medieval paintings, the static interior of a living room contrasts with windy settings, Swiss landscape painters converse with grandmother’s tablecloth tiles...

These paintings on paper, some of which are mounted on wood, were conceived as a tribute to her two grandmothers. They recount various memories of Sunday teas, discussions about painting, walks, flowers and the colors they loved so much. They also evoke the absence, the preservation of these memories and this inherited legacy.

The paintings “plante n°1 à n°7” are a series conceived as a herbarium. It catalogs and collects plants that have been found, sketched on walks, invented or taken from existing paintings.

For her exhibition at Salle Crosnier in 2023, Jérémie Gafas wrote in an introductory text: “Laura Thiong-Toye’s work is perhaps above all a playground. Disparate, sometimes antagonistic images - selected from everyday life, books or databases - seem to meet merrily, as if on an island where almost anything goes. An island reminiscent of Reunion Island (where the artist’s family hails from), where popular Hinduism from South India, European Christianity, Malagasy and East African beliefs and religious currents from China, Muslim India, the Comoros and Mayotte cohabit. The wide variety of métissages experienced on Reunion Island - acculturation, analogy (correspondence), reinterpretation (manipulation of symbolic materials) - is thus reflected in painting.

More than mere métissage, they suggest the idea of “creolization” - as defined by Edouard Glissant - insofar as the result of bringing elements into contact offers a new, unpredictable expression. It’s also interesting to note that the processes used by the artist are those of hip-hop: sampling (selecting, but also repeating, reappropriating), rap (in the sense of conversation), scratch mixing (superimposing heterogeneous sound elements). The space of the painting thus offers the possibility of bringing together elements from different socio-cultural categories that would never have come together elsewhere. This work of recontextualization reminds us that we exist above all through the relationships we forge with others, which are constantly replayed.

Genève  
Blvd Georges Favon, 19  
CH – 1204 Genève  
+41 22 310 00 13  
geneve@wildegallery.ch

Basel  
Angensteinerstr. 37  
CH – 4052 Basel  
+41 61 311 70 51  
basel@wildegallery.ch

Zurich  
Wilde Private  
Waldmannstr. 6  
CH – 8001 Zurich  
zurich@wildegallery.ch

[www.wildegallery.ch](http://www.wildegallery.ch)