

Andrew Pierre Hart

The Listening Sweet II Ghana

Thursday 24th October 2024 – 11th January 2025

Gallery I, Accra



Andrew Pierre Hart, *The Listening Sweet II Ghana*, 2024, Oil on canvas, 200 x 125cm.
Image courtesy of the artist and Gallery 1957.

“Human beings are magical. Bios and Logos. Words made flesh, muscle and bone animated by hope and desire, belief materialized in deeds, deeds which crystallize our actualities. . . . And the maps of spring always have to be redrawn again, in undared forms.”

- Sylvia Wynter, “The Pope Must Have Been Drunk, The King of Castile a Madman: Culture as Actuality, and the Caribbean Rethinking Modernity” (1995)

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Gallery

London-born Barbadian artist Andrew Pierre Hart debuts his first solo exhibition at Gallery 1957, presenting new paintings, murals and sculptures entitled *The Listening Sweet II Ghana*. The exhibition follows a two-month residency with the Gallery in Accra and each artwork is infused with the multiple layers that have been part of Hart's experience.

The interdisciplinary artist whose practice centres experimentation and improvisation continually draws inspiration from the cross-modality of painting and sound. This new body of work builds on the undulating forms and figures existing within his sonic mythology and expands their lore with site-specific murals that respond to the people and spaces in which the works were created.

The larger-than-life characters are from Hart's ongoing series of work where *Sonara* and *blacqousti*, two sonorous deities, beckon audiences on a journey to heal, calling on to humankind to listen. Hart's characters pose questions of what it means to listen and to hear, both to the rhythms of the earth and to your fellow human being.

The colour palette that bursts from the canvases is inspired by Ghana's national pride, as signified in a celebration of an all-encompassing national flag. Eternally vibrating with undertones of resistance and overtures of celebration, these colours are flown in the nation's stylistic sensibilities, intermittent protests in an election year, and in the everydayness of being.

Drums are absent in Hart's work yet are omnipresent in his works – his canvases and the sprawling murals which surround them are similar to a tamalin drum, a square drum that is made in the same way as a stretched painting canvas. Part of the work finds itself caught up in what the artist considers the serious issues of Galamsey illegal mining and the grassroots protests which erupted during the time of his residency in Accra. Hart attended a protest in support of the #StopGalamsey rallies and it is in this the full awareness of the embedding of the drum in all facets of Ghanaian culture - from protest songs to old warrior songs and hymns - that the incessant drumbeat finds its way into the forms and materiality of his site-specific context.

The Listening Sweet II Ghana knits together many conceptual parts. Interspersed within the gallery space are robust and rhythmic musical instruments sculpted from wood, reflected in the instruments being played by the musicians within the paintings. Acting as conduit between the paintings and the sculptures, Hart conceives his murals as one-off, freestyle improvs, rendered in pen straight onto a wall without pre-sketches. These vehement bursts of lines and monochromatic space bend and warp the white cube of the gallery, causing interference that is at once melodious and disruptive.

The murals can be seen in many ways as visualisations of sound and rhythm, of graphic scores and cartography, bubbling into the nucleus part of DNA patterns. As a musical aficionado, Hart exposes digital coding and drum patterns while making strong reference to Gurunsi hand painted villages in the northern regions of Ghana.

The most prominent ingredient in Hart's creative lexicon is a flavourful freedom of movement. For Hart, the space between the diasporas of London, Barbados and Accra are connected like the dots in the past, present and future. These knots of histories and relational narratives emerge in disparate ways throughout this effervescent body of work, invoking audiences to slip in and out of time.

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About the Artist

Andrew Pierre Hart

(b. London. Lives and works in London)

Andrew Pierre Hart lives and works in London. He describes his work as focussed on ‘the symbiotic relationship between sound and painting’, while also incorporating aspects of sculpture, mural-making, installation, language, performance and film. Hart spent the first part of his career as a DJ and musician running the record label Deepart, which specialised in electronic music and Detroit-style techno. Musical techniques such as improvisation, ‘rhythmic research’ and an interest in the way sound resonates in space now infuse his multidisciplinary art practice. Recent figurative paintings have drawn on Western art historical precedents while also representing real and mythic figures that relate to diasporic experiences in London. His abstract tapestry-like compositions draw on sources as diverse as the hand-painted murals of the Gurunsi people in Burkina Faso, Nigeria; Yoruba divination codes; graphic musical scores; and digital coding.

Hart graduated from an MA at the Royal College of Art in 2019, where he is now Associate Lecturer in painting. Prior to this, he obtained a BA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Arts in 2017. His recent solo and duo exhibitions have included *The Listening Sweet – 3 – Lagos*, Tiwani Contemporary, Lagos, Nigeria (2023); *Andrew Pierre Hart & Alexandria Smith: When Cosmologies Meet*, Tiwani Contemporary, London UK (2022); *The Listening Sweet*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK (2021); *Charmaine Watkiss & Andrew Pierre Hart: The Abstract Truth of Things*, Tiwani Contemporary, London UK (2020). He has featured in group exhibitions including *Last of the Stone Age Sessions*, Tommy Simoons, Antwerp/Brussels (2023); *Corpo e Mente*, LVH, Palazzo Barbaro, Venice, Italy (2022); *Secret of Lightness*, Parafin, London (2022), *ICF’s Diaspora Pavilion 2: London, Block 336*, London (2022), *Mixing It Up: Painting Today*, Southbank Centre, London (2021); and *Collective Intimacies* at Theaster Gates Black Image Corporation, 180 The Strand, London (2019). He is the recipient of awards including the ArtAngel ‘Thinking Time’ Award (2020) and the Tiffany & Co. x Outset Studiomaakers Prize (2019).

About Gallery 1957

Gallery 1957 is a contemporary art gallery with spaces across Accra, Ghana and London, UK.

It dedicates its programme to spearheading international exchanges between art practices from these communities and the rest of the world, presenting artists who interrogate concepts of belonging and identity, cultural exchange, and social history beyond Western narratives.

Launched by Marwan Zakhem in 2016 on Ghanaian Independence Day, Gallery 1957 has since expanded across three gallery spaces in Accra. Originally set up to promote Ghana and West Africa’s presence in the arts scene, it now encompasses the Global South and its diaspora. Gallery 1957’s London space opened in October 2020, providing a further platform for artists to build dialogues with its growing network of international collaborators.

Gallery 1957 presents exhibitions, installations, and performances by celebrated artists, fostering connections between local and international audiences. The Gallery’s global gallery partnerships and ongoing artist residency program have attracted numerous international artists and arts professionals to Ghana. The Gallery’s annual Cultural Week in September serves as a platform for encouraging deeper engagement with Ghana’s vibrant contemporary art scene.

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In 2021, Gallery 1957 launched the Yaa Asantewaa Art Prize for female Ghanaian artists, the first ever dedicated art prize of its kind. The prize aims to further strengthen the gallery's commitment to supporting and promoting emerging and established artists.

Gallery 1957's work expands beyond the gallery walls through a public programme that includes local and international art fairs, talks, off-site projects, and site-specific installations as well as the publication of books and catalogues – continuously supporting cultural initiatives in Ghana, Africa and beyond.

Artist: Andrew Pierre Hart

Title: The Listening Sweet II Ghana

Dates: 24th October 2024 – 11th January 2025

Opening Reception: Thursday 24th October 6pm-9pm

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