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NADA (Curated Spotlight) | Booth 3.02

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Monsieur Zohore: Bon Voyage

November 30 – December 1, 2022



Jupiter is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Ivorian-American artist **Monsieur Zohore** in NADA Miami's Curated Spotlight. Titled *Bon Voyage*, the paintings and sculptures comprising the exhibition pose an incisive, facetious, and potentially even flippant critique of resort culture as it represents the epitome of relaxation and luxury despite being riddled with strife and trauma.

Pop culture and art history collide in Zohore's practice as he draws upon varied source material—from *Spring Breakers* (2012) and the 1994 adventure thriller *The River Wild* to the seascapes of J. M. W. Turner, *The Raft of the Medusa* (1819) by Théodore Géricault, and Christina Sharpe's *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*—to create a potent visual language with which to convey necessary truths about society's darker ills.

Using found objects and images to engender such juxtapositions, Zohore transposes photos onto Bounty paper towels with an inkjet printer before affixing them to his canvases which are similarly covered with a thick layer of paper towels to create a textured and absorptive surface. Doused with fabric dye and bleach, the resulting works reflect a mess of culture and history that is both created and cleaned up at the same time. In two works, for example, Prince Andrew, Jeffrey Epstein, and paintings by Gauguin, amongst other maritime officials and nautical motifs commingle in one such "mess" and reflect, in Zohore's words, the kinds of "men [who] get on boats, go places, and ruin peoples lives."

Fred Wilson (2022) highlights the longtime objectification of certain individuals by such practices. Conflating the artist Fred Wilson—most known for institutional critique—with the Wilson volleyball stained with a bloody handprint face from the 2000 movie *Cast Away*, this work compels a consideration of the ways in which people become objects, and objects people. Forced out of its labor as a volleyball, Wilson is personified and re-ascribed a new position as a companion. Zohore's *Fred Wilson* visualizes this metamorphosis and, with the addition of a black teardrop featuring two protuberant eyes, further personifies mourning—for those marginalized via their labor as objects and images.

Much like his paintings, Zohore's sculptures are grounded in assemblage and the configuration of readymades. A slushy machine adorned with a red (quasi-MAGA) hat offers up a slime-green colored cocktail in a humorous and somewhat nauseating allusion to people stranded on cruise ships during the pandemic with COVID-19—sick and yet still drinking on their failed, and now nightmarish, vacation. A mini freezer with a clear glass door houses two snowbirds, or rather ice sculptures in the shape of pigeons, and suggests that in this very moment the art world is no different than the resort cruisers of Zohore's critique, who descend on a new locale and disrupt its natural ecosystem.

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Bon Voyage as a theme and conceptual conceit thus draws upon the culture of cruise ships to allegorize post-colonial chattel slavery and provides a tool with which to address the history of people who were taken captive, corralled onto boats, and sent somewhere else against their will. By reimagining that fateful journey through the lens of pseudo-pastoral middle class luxury vacations, Zohore leans into the perversion at the core of these counterposed realities, and forces viewers do the same.

About the Artist

Monsieur Zohore's (b. 1993, Potomac, MD) practice is invested in the consumption and digestion of culture through the conflation of domestic quotidian labor and art production. Through performance, video, installation, and sculpture, his practices explore queer history alongside his Ivorian-American heritage through a multi-faceted lens of humor, economics, art history, and labor. Monsieur Zohore received an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2020 and a BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York in 2015.

Zohore has exhibited his works at venues such as The Phillips Collection (D.C), Jule Collins Smith Museum (Auburn), Art021 (Shanghai), Paris Internationale (Paris), Art Athina (Athens), Sculpture Center (New York), The Clarington Art Center (Canada), Pace (New York), Spurs (Beijing), Tick Tack (Belgium), The Baker Museum (Florida), Socrates Sculpture Park (New York), The Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore), Von Ammon Co (D.C.), The Washington Project for the Arts (D.C), and The Columbus Museum (Ohio). His work is in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; The Bunker Collection, West Palm Beach, FL; Brookfield Collection, New York, NY; The Roux Collection Panama; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (promised gift) and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (promised gift).

Monsieur Zohore lives and works in Richmond, VA, New York, NY, and Abidjan, CIV, and is the Assistant Professor of Painting and Printmaking at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Caption: Monsieur Zohore Hurricane Maya and Mia (Do White Still Look The Same If They're Twins), 2022 Fan, beads, braiding hair 26 by 19 by 19 in. 66 by 48.26 by 48.26 cm.

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