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Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum: It Will End in Tears

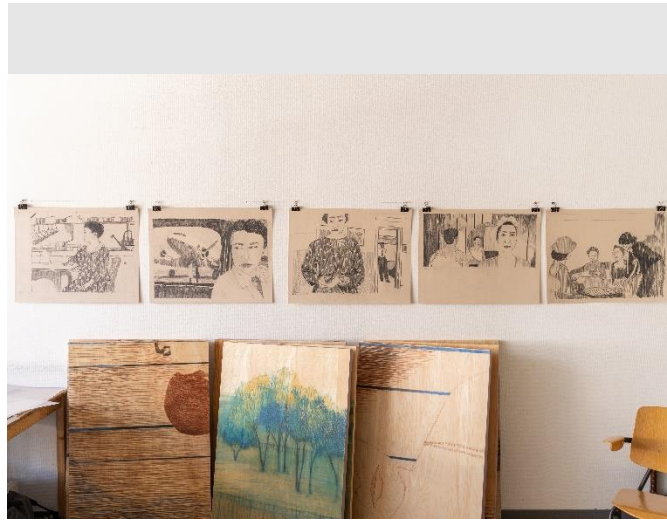
The Curve, Barbican Centre

Until 5 January 2025

Press Preview: Tuesday 17 September, 10am – 1pm

#PamelaPhatsimoSunstrum @barbicancentre

This exhibition has been commissioned by the Barbican, London with the generous support of Mr Harry G. David and Goodman Gallery.



L: Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum in her studio, The Hague, Netherlands, 2024, courtesy the artist and Goodman Gallery, photo: Lotte van Uitterst

R: Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum's studio, The Hague, Netherlands, 2024, courtesy the artist and Goodman Gallery, photo: Lotte van Uitterst

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum transforms The Curve with a large-scale installation filling the length of the Barbican's cornerless gallery in her first solo exhibition at a major UK institution. Expanding her ongoing interest in narrative world-building, Sunstrum has produced a series of drawings, paintings and installation to tell the story of a brand new character in the artist's ever-growing cast of alter-egos.

The expansive installation, designed uniquely for The Curve in collaboration with Remco Osório Lobato, draws visitors into the everyday of a rural life in an imagined twentieth-century colonial outpost, based loosely on the hometown of Sunstrum's grandmother in Botswana. Resembling an interconnected map of film sets, visitors can piece together a drama in parts as they move through domestic space, colonial bureaucracies, and travel waiting rooms – immersed in the world created by the artist and blurring the boundaries between spectatorship and participation.

This new body of work takes inspiration from crime fiction novels and mid-century genres such as film noir, challenging the femme fatale archetype which uses reductive and often misogynistic tropes to represent women across literature, art and cinema. Through the new series, Sunstrum draws from her experience living in different parts of Africa, South Asia and North America to examine the notions of home, hybrid identities and wholeness.

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum said: “*I learned that The Curve originally served as a sound barrier: a buffer to contain all manner of performative noise emanating from the adjacent Barbican concert Hall. I became fascinated by this liminal zone: a space that encases not only the spectacle, but also the secrets of the spectacle’s tricks and devices. I have always been a bit obsessed by such liminal spaces— the in-between, the not-quite-one-nor-the-other. For me, liminality offers a powerful symbol and speaks to cycles of survival tactics, longing, desire, and the pursuit of home and wholeness...that even when squeezed between two barriers, history still persists.*”

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum (b. 1980, Botswana) is a Netherlands-based multidisciplinary artist. Notable projects include *You’ll be sorry*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg (2023); *The Pavilion* (2023), produced in collaboration with Remco Osório, at Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE; Liverpool Biennial, Bloomberg (2023); 15th Sharjah Art Biennale (SB15), Sjarjah, UAE (2023); *I have withheld much more than I have written*, Galerie Lelong, New York, USA (2022); *Greater Toronto Art 2021 (GTA21)*, MOCA Toronto, Canada (2021); *Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York City (2021); *WITNESS: Afro Perspectives from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection*, El Espacio 23, Miami, Florida (2021).

ENDS

Notes to Editors

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Press images available online

Further information and images can be found [here](#). Please [contact the press team](#) for any requests.

Barbican press room

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team’s contact details are listed on our [website](#).

Public Information

Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre

Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8DS

www.barbican.org.uk

Opening Hours

The Curve is open 11am - 7pm

Refer to the website for Bank Holiday hours.

Tickets

Entry to The Curve is free.

About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [the BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Britten Sinfonia](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), [Darbar Festival](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [Human Rights Watch Film Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Entertainment](#).

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Barbican Art Gallery and The Curve

Our visual arts programme embraces art, architecture, design, fashion and film. Many of our exhibitions explore the interconnections between disciplines, periods and cultures, and aim to imagine the world in new ways. Designers, artists and architects are our collaborators in this process.

We invest in the artists of today and tomorrow; The Curve is one of the few galleries in London devoted to the commissioning of new work. Through our activities we aim to inspire more people to discover and love the arts. Entrance to The Curve is free. Through Young Barbican we offer £5 tickets to 14 – 25 year olds for our paid exhibitions, children under 14 attend for free.

Our exhibitions are complemented by comprehensively researched catalogues and a full range of public events. In partnership with renowned museums and art galleries, many of our exhibitions travel to reach both national and international audiences.

The Barbican believes in creating space for people and ideas to connect through its international arts programme, community events and learning activity. To keep its programme accessible to everyone, and to keep investing in the artists it works with, the Barbican needs to raise more than 60% of its income through ticket sales, commercial activities and fundraising every year. Donations can be made here:

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