



## PRESS RELEASE

17 February 2021

kó is pleased to participate in **SOUTH SOUTH VEZA**, the new art platform that focuses on art from the Global South, featuring a solo presentation of visual artist **Peju Alatise**, 24 February-7 March 2021.

SOUTH SOUTH is a gallery-led online community, anthology, live resource and aggregator dedicated to art from the Global South and its diaspora. The first activation is SOUTH SOUTH VEZA, an online event that includes leading galleries across five continents. From Guatemala City to Cairo, Lagos to Los Angeles, Bogotá to Seoul, over 50 galleries will present major works spanning emerging, contemporary, and twentieth century masters.

**Peju Alatise** (b. 1975, Nigeria) is an interdisciplinary artist, architect and author of two novels. She started her professional career as an architect working in an architectural firm alongside running a private art studio. Today, she is one of the leading contemporary artists on the African continent. Her works challenge the status quo of the African society and also of global affairs. She has been consistent with her experimentation with materials and techniques as a medium to analyse various socio-political issues. Peju has also been an influential voice on the Child Not Bride campaign in Nigeria, with her work regularly feeding into this discourse.

This presentation features five recent sculptures that are a continuation of Alatise's exploration in the fantasy world of young girls. Her artworks continue to serve as a platform to advocate for young black girls in her country and community. The figures in Alatise's sculptures are in a dream-like state, with the ability to fly and whimsically interact in synchronized movement with the birds and butterflies around them. Alatise formed the figures after inviting local children to pose for them, careful in their precision of a realistic representation. The figures are then built in clay and cast in fiberglass. While many of the artist's past works have alluded to the pursuit of children's autonomy from the oppression of the present, notably her installation *Flying Girls* for the Nigerian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2017, these works suggest a happier fantasy. These young girls are depicted being lifted up in their own imagination, as being lighter than air. In these works, the young girls are the superheroes of their own narratives.

SOUTH SOUTH will also include a unique live vernissage selling event for select artworks on 23 February 2021 (1 PM GMT), which will raise funds for three non-profit partners: Casa do Povo (Brazil), Green Papaya Projects (Philippines) and Raw Material



Company (Senegal), as well as a timed auction. The Online Viewing Rooms for all participating galleries, including Peju Alatise's presentation, will open on 24 February 2021. The gallery presentations will be accompanied by dedicated curated programmes by esteemed curators Elvira Dyangani Ose, Rodrigo Moura, Paula Nascimento and Suzana Sousa. The SOUTH SOUTH platform was conceived by Liza Essers, owner of Goodman Gallery, as a response to the global pandemic.

kó is an art space based in Lagos, Nigeria, that is dedicated to promoting modern and contemporary art. kó has a dual focus in championing Nigeria's leading artists from the modern period and celebrating emerging and established contemporary artists across Africa and the Diaspora.

For more information, please email us at [info@ko-artspace.com](mailto:info@ko-artspace.com), or visit our website at [www.ko-artspace.com](http://www.ko-artspace.com).

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Peju Alatise is a fellow at the National Museum of African Art, part of the Smithsonian Institution. Her work has been collected by the Smithsonian Institute. She is the 2017 winner of the FNB Art Prize in Johannesburg. Her work was exhibited at Venice Biennale's 57th edition, themed *Viva Arte Viva (Long Live Art)* in the Nigerian pavilion. Her work was exhibited at the 2018 EVA biennial in Ireland. Peju Alatise's is a regular feature at 1:54 Art fair in New York, Marrakech and London. Her participation in the Venice Biennale Architecture 2021 was a direct invitation from the Biennale Curator Mr. Hashim Sarkis.

Other selected recent past exhibitions were held at the 2014 Casablanca Biennale in Morocco; Cooper Gallery for African and African American Art Harvard University (2017); *Resignification of Black body* at Museo Bardini, Florence (2016); *Familiar boundaries - Infinite possibilities* at August Wilson Centre, Pittsburgh, USA (2018-2019); EVA Ireland Biennial (2018); *Manifesta 12, Resignification of Black bodies*, Palermo, Italy (2018); *Péju Alatise 'Memoirs of the forgotten'* Sulger Buel Gallery, London (2019); and *Intricacies: Fragment & Meaning* at Aicon Gallery, New York (2019). Peju Alatise is the founder of the ANAI Foundation - a non-profit foundation dedicated to the development of visual arts in Nigeria, and the first purpose built artist's residency with a well-equipped ceramic studio, which offers sponsored training programs for ceramic artists. Her debut novel *Orita Meta*, chronicling the interwoven path of three women, was nominated for the ANA/Flora Nwapa Prize for Women's Writing in 2006.