

Media Release: 17 September 2019
PRESS PREVIEW Friday 18 October 2019
EXHIBITION 19 October 2019 – 23 February 2020

BALTIC

Joy Labinjo: *Our histories cling to us*



Joy Labinjo, *Lost in thought*, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Tiwani Contemporary; Joy Labinjo, *Everything will be alright*, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Tiwani Contemporary

BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead is pleased to present a new exhibition by Joy Labinjo; an artist trained in Newcastle upon Tyne who now works from her studio in London. Labinjo's paintings feature portraits of relatives, friends and people discovered in family photograph albums. For her first major institutional solo presentation at BALTIC, the artist has made a new body of work specially for the exhibition including large-scale oil on canvas paintings and works on paper.

Taking over BALTIC's Ground Floor gallery, *Our histories cling to us* will feature work which draws on Labinjo's personal experiences of growing up Black, British and Nigerian in the UK. Exploring memory and ideas of belonging, her paintings depict intimate scenes of contemporary family life, encouraging us to reflect on our own histories and traditions. Formal occasions such as family weddings and parties are presented alongside more casual moments around the home; a conversation in the kitchen, family members lounging on the sofa.

Labinjo creates her compositions by fusing different photographs together, collaging interiors, figures and plants, to create new narratives. In addition to using family albums as her primary source material, Labinjo also locates images on Instagram and Flickr and takes her own photographs which include street scenes and shop windows. She combines these elements with patterns inspired by wallpaper, fashion and African wax print designs. Labinjo builds her compositions instinctively, using bold blocks of colour to frame figures and objects giving them freshness and vigour.

Labinjo graduated from Newcastle University with a BA in Fine Art and was awarded the prestigious Woon Foundation Painting & Sculpture Prize by Northumbria University and BALTIC in 2017; this allowed her to spend a year as the Woon Fellow based in the Woon Tai Jee Studio, BALTIC 39, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Notes to Editors

Press Contacts

Sutton
Fiona Russell, fiona@suttoncomms.com

About Joy Labinjo

Joy Labinjo (b. 1994, Dagenham) was awarded the Woon Art Prize in 2017. Recent and forthcoming exhibitions include: BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle upon Tyne (2019), Bloc Projects, Sheffield (2019), Gallery North, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (2018); Cafe Gallery Projects, London, UK (2018); Tiwani Contemporary, London, (2018); Bonington Gallery, Nottingham, UK (2018); Goldtapped, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (2018); Morley Gallery, London, UK (2018); BALTIC 39, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (2017); Hoxton Arches, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (2017); The Holy Biscuit, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (2017); FishBowl space, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK (2015); XL Gallery, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK (2013).

About BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art

BALTIC is a major international centre for contemporary art situated on the south bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, England and has welcomed over eight million visitors since opening to the public in July 2002. BALTIC presents a distinctive and ambitious programme of exhibitions and events, and is a world leader in the presentation and commissioning of contemporary visual art.

Housed in a landmark ex-industrial building, BALTIC consists of 2,600 square metres of art space, making it the UK's largest dedicated contemporary art institution. BALTIC has gained an international reputation for its commissioning of cutting-edge temporary exhibitions. It has presented the work of over 460 artists of 60 nationalities in 220 exhibitions to date.

www.baltic.art
[#balticgateshead](https://twitter.com/balticgateshead)

  
balticgateshead

 Supported by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

 **Gateshead**
Council