

At Fruitmarket – Portia Zvavahera – Zvakazarurwa

On Saturday an exhibition of the work of Zimbabwean artist, Portia Zvavahera, opens at Fruitmarket – the first opportunity for Scottish audiences to view her work.

Ms Zvavahera's paintings combine printmaking, batik and painting techniques to weave new worlds from her dreams.

Born in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1985, Portia Zvavahera is emerging as one of the outstanding artists of her generation. She has developed a painting practice that combines a unique combination of techniques to construct a visually beguiling personal cosmology featuring figures, creatures, shapes and shadows. Working in a studio in her home in Harare, she weaves together dreams, fantasy and stories of herself and her family into densely patterned, intensely coloured, mesmerising paintings.

The exhibition title Zvakazarurwa, means 'revelations' in Shona and includes both new and recent paintings that together reveal the depth and richness of Zvavahera's practice. The focus is on the theme of dreams, fantasy and figuration, and especially Zvavahera's innovative amalgamation of printmaking and painting techniques to register her personal visions of creatures and contexts. She creates monumental mindscapes that form ambitious decorative schema of imagined worlds and patterned palimpsests.

The exhibition draws on her earlier engagement with eros,

intimacy and female experience, in a few key works from 2012. But the bulk of the exhibition focuses on the period from 2020 to the present when the work becomes flatter, more richly patterned and oneiric. New works have been created especially for the exhibition, and these are shown to build on recent works with shared characteristics: they emerge from dreams; they are figurative, registering a world of feminine experience and fantasy; they combine paint and print, drawing and painting; they use repetition and pattern; they involve massed central forms over extended colour fields.

Fruitmarket Director, Fiona Bradley said: "We are immensely fortunate to be able to bring this materially extraordinary, conceptually rich work to Scotland. The paintings have an immediate, visceral appeal that stays with you over time, unfurling in your mind's eye as you take the artist's singular vision with you out of the gallery and into the world."

- **Portia Zvavahera Zvakazarurwa**
- *01.03.25–25.05.25.*
- *Free. Open daily 11am–6pm.*
- *Fruitmarket, 45 Market Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1DF*
- www.fruitmarket.co.uk



All photos Neil Hanna





