



Visesio Siasau

'Uli 'i he 'Uli – Black On Black

orexart

Visesio Siasau won The Wallace Arts Trust Paramount Award (2015) including a trip to New York and a six month residency at the ISCP. To quote the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where he was invited to show and discuss his work, *'Tongan artist-philosopher Visesio Siasau has built a career exploring the notion of the void and its conceptual expression in art.'*

His recent works are geometric, minimalist, black on black paintings that aim to trigger simultaneous connections between the mind, matter, and heart. Their inky blackness alludes to ancient systems and interpretations of creativity. The 'void' is a place of mystery, where time and human connections are meaningless, where everything, including man and his fragment of invented time, is part of all else. Siasau's use of an abstract image focuses the viewer's attention on the painting's surface. A pattern fills the canvas, emphasising its flatness but the result does not deny an illusion of depth.

'In my view as a Tongan, The Tongan Cosmogony amalgamates the art and science of our cosmogenesis, of our Tongan universe, this is known as vāvā tapu or sacred space.

The formless space of darkness that is signified by the colour black, within this space is the energy, vibration and unlimited potential of chaos and harmony. 'Uli i he 'uli, the black on black paintings are created from intangible knowledge of the vāvā tapu.

'Uli expresses the mnemonics of my consciousness which stems from the knowledge of relatedness, a product of metaphorical association that is imbued within Tongan language, signs and symbols.

This painting series emerges from the wider context of my international research as a continuation of rigorous research into ancient Tongan knowledge.

My work is an intersection of traditional materials and ideologies with contemporary technologies and philosophies, that become the dynamic system of my art practice.

This new series, 'Uli i he 'Uli, or Black on Black, consists of eight black oil on canvas works of two metres square. The concept for this work is a continuum of the series developed whilst on The James Wallace Art Award 2016 residency in New York. I was inspired by great modernists artists such as Anish Kapoor, Mark Rothko, Piet Mondrian and Marcel DuChamp and Ad Rheinhardt. I investigate comparisons between western modernists to indigenous modernists.

I use the colour black as a metaphor for space, the unconsciousness in 'Uli or the void that has unlimited potential energy, and for forces that act as a vibrating vortex ready to be activated.'

- Visesio Siasau, June 2017



Black On Black - taha (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - ua (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - tolu (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - fa (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - nima (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - ono (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - fitu (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000



Black On Black - valu (2017) oil & acrylic on canvas 2000 x 2000mm \$9,000
Mateaki (2016) natural dyes, clay, candle nuts & Chinese ink on tapa 4.3 x 4.3m \$25,000



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