

IONE & MANN

PRESS RELEASE – December 2023

Hold Me Now

Curated by Huma Kabakci

Artists: Shannon Bono, Yulia Iosilzon and Vanessa da Silva

Exhibition Dates: 1 December 2023 - 27 January 2024 | Curator's Tour: 16 December 12 noon



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“ Only by multiplying our circles of care - in the first instance, by expanding our notion of kinship- will we achieve the psychic infrastructures necessary to build a caring society that has universal care as its ideal.”

The Care Collective, The Care Manifesto (pg 33)

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IONE & MANN presents “**Hold Me Now**”, a group exhibition curated by **Huma Kabakci** with artists **Shannon Bono, Yulia Iosilzon** and **Vanessa da Silva** exploring the urgency of care-politics, healing and togetherness. In a post-Covid and capitalist world where carelessness reigns, and humanity is missing, we need embracing, touching and healing.

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Over the past few decades, a majority of us have experienced living in a social system where we have been encouraged and accustomed to feel and act as hyper-individualised, competitive subjects who primarily look out for themselves. In reality, to thrive, we need caring communities where we can be interdependent and conditions that enable us to act collaboratively to create communities where we can nurture our interdependencies. In the context of care and the need for collectivity, the “holding” in the exhibition title symbolises caring and nurturing relationships, and the urgency of physical touch and love is emphasised with “now”. The act of “holding” often implies a sense of vulnerability or dependence, highlighting interdependence and mutual vulnerability, emphasising the importance of care, compassion, and empathy in shaping socio-political relationships and policies. How can we live in the present in a society where there is no security, a sense of comfort or care? Has the notion of touching and holding become a luxury?

Responding to the exhibition, the artists have created visual narratives that highlight the experiences of those needing care and basic needs of a physical touch and affection. Whilst **Bono**’s practice embodies an afrocentrist consciousness, sharing muted narratives and projecting the black women’s lived experience through her lens, in her paintings, she focuses on embracing the self and self-love. There are layers upon layers of paints, use of stencilling and recurring symbols in Bono’s mystical paintings. **Iosilzon** however, often cites children’s illustration and theatre as sources of inspiration, encouraging her lyrical works to be understood as scenes within a comic strip or through storytelling. She repeats symbols and motifs throughout her paintings, sculptures, and installations, building an iconographic arsenal to comment on social and political issues, in this case, to the urgency of care and collectivity. The fluid forms of her wall ceramics interact and interdependently form relationships with her paintings. By interweaving the individual with the political in her artistic practice, **da Silva** investigates the different histories and cultures in developing her identity by blurring the boundaries of gender, form, and the traditional understanding of an interaction with an artwork. From her series of wearable sculptures initially made to fit in other parts of the body titled “Uombee,” she invites the audience to interact with the works carefully, emphasising the inextricable link between body and movement. This connection between body and sculpture opens the artwork to another realm, directly referencing Maurice Merleau-Ponty by emphasising how we first experience our world through our bodies.

Integrating these different artistic approaches and thoughts, “Hold Me Now” aims to evoke a sense of intimacy and connection. Using various media and layering, the exhibition explores the meaningful and empathetic relationships between individuals and the challenges that societal boundaries may hinder such relations.

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ARTIST STATEMENTS:

Shannon Bono (b.1995, London) received her MA in Art & Science from Central Saint Martin’s University and her Associate Fellowship in higher education from the University of the Arts London. Shannon’s paintings embody an afrocentrist consciousness, sharing muted narratives and projecting the black women’s lived experience through her own lens. She is invested in producing layered, figurative, compositions embedded with symbolism that centralise black womanhood as a source of knowledge and understanding. Enamoured by African spirituality, Christian iconography and renaissance art she employs its purpose of cultural impact for an improved society within her works. Shannon explores the internal body as well as the external, by merging the design of notable fabrics from Africa with biological structures, chemical processes and more recently the unseen world displaying divination for the foundations of her storytelling. Bono uses the anatomy as a second canvas in the foreground, she views

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the body as a powerful signifier that provokes dialogue, playing with pose, gesture and the gaze to challenge reality.

Yulia Iosilzon (b. 1992) lives and works in London. She holds an MA in Fine Art from the Royal College of Art, London (2019) and a BA in Fine Art from the Slade School of Fine Art, London (2017). Yulia works in painting and ceramics. Her figurative paintings on stretched transparent fabric are portals into vivid dreamlike worlds with roots in both ancient mythologies and contemporary social concerns. Yulia's works hint at unfolding narratives of human-animal metamorphosis. Her visual references are wide ranging; as well as exploring the Jewish iconography of her heritage, Yulia also draws on imagery from childhood cartoons and representations of paradise. The works establish internal rhythms through the inclusion of repeated details or iterative patterns such as waving hair or the undulating bodies of snakes. Expressive human faces emerge from landscapes or peek through swathes of vegetation, shifting through registers of emotional resonance as a tool for connecting with the viewer. Although on the surface Yulia's works have a cheery cartoonish appeal, they also often harbour a subtle air of menace. With their smooth, gleaming surfaces, they offer reflections on humankind and express concern over the products of our time such as over-consumption, over-pollution, and social instability. From crisis to paradise, banal to profound, Yulia's practice is concerned with the narratives we share to make sense of the world around us.

Vanessa da Silva (b. 1976 São Paulo) has lived in London since the early 2000s. Her work explores nationality, identity, migration and displacement, reflecting her own experiences as a Latin American immigrant to the UK. Working across sculpture, textiles, installation and performance, da Silva's practice interrogates ideas of both cultural and transactional exchange, as well as notions of trade and value. Interweaving the personal with the political, she investigates the amalgamation of different histories and cultures in the development of her identity. Da Silva's intuitive approach to composition results in organic forms that make reference to the inner architecture of the body. Although abstract, her work explores elements of figuration via the choreography of human behaviour, in particular the way we travel through the world. Many of da Silva's sculptures are interactive, emphasising the inextricable link between body and movement.

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ABOUT:

Huma Kabakcı (b. London, 1990) is a Turkish-British curator and former founding director of Open Space, living and working in London. Kabakcı worked at the Drawing Room as a Development Manager between 2021-2022 and continues with fundraising and strategic advising working freelance. She graduated with her BA in Advertising and Marketing at the London College of Communication and completed her MA & MPhil degrees in Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art, London.

Kabakcı has worked at commercial galleries, biennials, museums and auction houses, both in the UK and Turkey, in many different capacities. Kabakcı manages a private family art collection comprising over 900 works of Turkish, Central Asian and European contemporary art. Open Space has collaborated with institutions such as Block Universe Performance Festival, Delfina Foundation, Fiorucci Art Trust, Flat Time House and IKSIV (Istanbul Biennial Foundation).

Kabakcı's curatorial interest lies in creating immersive experiences and a wider dialogue in collaboration with multidisciplinary practitioners. Her key areas of interest and knowledge focus on diaspora, gender & identity politics, food as a medium and hospitality.

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IONE & MANN is a London-based contemporary art gallery established in 2015.

Independent and female-owned, artist-focused and not driven by trends, the gallery is dedicated to thoughtfully curated exhibitions and championing early to mid-career artists.

IONE & MANN favours a slower, more considered approach to presenting, experiencing and engaging with art and artists, one that allows for long term relationships and ongoing dialogues between gallery, collectors and artists.

Founding Director: Alkistis Koukoulou [alkistis@ioneandmann.com]



Hold Me Now | 1 December 2023– 27 December 2024

Curated by Huma Kabacki

Shannon Bono • Yulia Iosilzon • Vanessa da Silva

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1st Floor, 6 Conduit Street, London W1S 2XE

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Friday 11 am - 6 pm, Saturday 12-4 pm and by appointment.

For additional information, images, or any other queries please contact us at: info@ioneandmann.com

Website: www.ioneandmann.com | Instagram: @ioneandmann

The gallery will be closed between 20 December 2023 and 3 January 2024

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