

THE GALLERY OF EVERYTHING



Press Release: *The Divine Theatre of Seyni Awa Camara*

The Gallery of **Everything**, London
6th October to 17th November 2024

The Gallery of **Everything** is pleased to announce *The Divine Theatre of Seyni Awa Camara*, the first UK solo exhibition of **Seyni Awa Camara**.

Born in 1945 in Bignona, Senegal, **Seyni Awa Camara** is an octogenarian sculptor, whose mystical healing figures speak of motherhood, magic and the forest spirits who inform her daily practice.

Born into a family of artisans and vessel makers, **Camara** was introduced to the use of clay by her mother. Yet even as a child, her approach to the material was individuated, and strongly guided by a connection to the divine. Although she originally concealed her figurative practice, her activities became known locally; with the support of anthropologist Michèle Odey -Finzi, **Camara** was brought to the attention of an engaged audience.

Looming figures, many taller than their viewer and others the size of children, occupy the gallery's two floors. Caught out of the corner of one's eye, each is acutely evocative of a stranger in the room; clustered together, the experience is of encountering a silent crowd.

The sculptures' magic - with which they are inextricably infused by their maker - is palpable, visually as well as experientially. Repeated motifs of motherhood, tiny creatures clinging to a central totemic trunk, lend an aura of potent protection; meanwhile, traces of the sculptures' firing and glazing, in the artist's yard in Bignona, describe an almost elemental birth - fitting, for objects that seem so autonomous that they could have formed themselves.

Camara's inclusion in Jean Hubert Martin's *Les Magiciens de la Terre (Magicians of the Earth)* (1989) at Centre Pompidou, Paris, brought international acclaim. Subsequent exhibitions include *Plateau dell'Umanit  (Plateau of Humankind)*, curated by Harald Szeemann at the 49th Venice Biennale (2001), *100% Africa* at Guggenheim Bilbao (2007) and *Art/Afrique, Le Nouvel Atelier (Art/Africa, The New Studio)* at Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris (2017).

Her terracotta oeuvre features in numerous museum collections, notably Tate Modern, London, Mus e du quai Branly, Paris, and the National Museum, Oslo.

For further information about the exhibition, please contact Sakhshi Mahajan at ge@gallevery.com or +44 20 7486 8908.