

# Welancora

Press Release

## ***Oasa DuVerney: A World To Live In***

Opening Reception: Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

June 4- August 6, 2022

33 Herkimer Street

Brooklyn, New York 11216

917-848-4627

Welancoragallery.com

Masks are required to enter the gallery



*In a world where some people and places have been deemed not worthy of protection, the figures in these works are rendered with the care, compassion and understanding that the Black body deserves but isn't always afforded.*

--- Oasa DuVerney, 2022

(BROOKLYN, NEW YORK - MAY 23, 2022) Welancora is delighted to present ***A World To Live In***, an exhibition of new work by **Oasa DuVerney** at its 33 Herkimer Street location. The exhibition will be on view from June 4 through August 6, 2022. This is the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery.

Through a new series of graphite drawings on hand cut paper, *A World To Live In*, reimagines elements from both the natural and urban landscape as active sites in building solidarity for Black liberation.

In *BLACK POWER WAVE: Weaving Helleborine* (2022), a double portrait of DuVerney's daughter is depicted with the figures facing one another, as they seem to watch each other and talk amongst themselves, while engaging in the cathartic process of weaving Helleborine orchids through their braided hair. The two figures are cushioned and protected by a Black Power Wave. The orchids used in this drawing and the others in the show, (Helleborine, Coral Root, Dragons Mouth, Lady Slipper and Snakemouth) all native to the New York City region, are symbolic of Black womanhood; mischaracterized as difficult, exotic and not belonging but in fact are still here. DuVerney's signature black graphite, ocean waves appear in the work as an allegorical exploration of the ways in which Black power and Black bodies resonate in contemporary society. They express a gathering of energy; a forward momentum of an accumulating force released in a moment of catharsis, finding its strength in communal movement. DuVerney explains: "In a world where some people and places have been deemed not worthy of protection, the figures in these works are rendered with the care, compassion and understanding that the Black body deserves but isn't always afforded."

In *The Front* (2022), the front steps of the brick and limestone apartment building where the DuVerney family resides represent the fulcrum of community in the Black urban landscape; and, a place of transition between the external and internal world. DuVerney reimagines the stoop as a site for both struggle and harmony, safety and precarity. A socio-political critique of community power hierarchies is addressed in *A Growing Veil*, (2022), in which chain link fencing appears in the work as a symbol of urban gatekeeping and acts as a framework and accomplice to the wildly colorful orchids in protecting the figures from an exploitive gaze.

#### About the Artist

Oasa DuVerney was born in Queens, New York, in 1979 and lives and works in New York. She received a B.F.A. from SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology and an M.F.A. from CUNY, Hunter College. Oasa is a visiting faculty member, Department of Art at Brooklyn College and a visiting faculty member, Department of Art at Cornell University College of Architecture, Art and Planning. Selected exhibitions, residencies and media include: (2021) Brooklyn Hi-Art Machine: Paradise Is One's Own Place, **Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn, NY**; (2021) Jon Gray of Ghetto Gastro Selects, **Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, NY, NY**; (2020) 2020 Women To Watch, **National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC**; (2020) Twenty Twenty, **Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT**; **BLACK POWER WAVE, BRIC, Brooklyn, NY** (2019); Something To Say, **Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn NY** (2018); The Window and the Breaking of the Window, **Studio Museum in Harlem, NYC** (2016); The Brooklyn Biennial II, **BRIC, Brooklyn, NY** (2016); Through A Glass Darkly, **Postmasters Gallery, NYC** (2012); **Rush Philanthropic Foundation Artist Residency** (2016), **Smack Mellon Studio Artist Residency** (2014-2015); **LMCC Workspace Residency** (2012-2013); **The Guardian UK, UK** (2019, 2015), **The Independent, UK** (2016), **Hyperallergic** (2015, 2016, 2021), **Palestine News Network** (2013), and **The New York Times** (2020, 2012, 2011).

**Press Contact:** [pr@welancoragallery.com](mailto:pr@welancoragallery.com)  
917-848-4627

**Gallery Hours:** Tuesday-Saturday 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

#### **Caption and Courtesy Information:**

*BLACK POWER WAVE: Weaving Helleborine*, 2022, graphite and acrylic paint on hand cut cotton rag paper, 48 x 66 inches

Photo: Adam Reich