

## Cassi Namoda: a Gentil Rain is Dying

it was the kind of moon  
that I would want to  
send back to my ancestors  
and gift to my descendants  
so they know that I too,  
have been bruised...by beauty.

-Sanober Khan (*Turquoise Silence*)

Like a collection of free verse poems, Cassi Namoda's newest body of paintings encapsulates the artists' most heartfelt thoughts and emotions about women's changing realities. Her stunningly original paintings fuses elements of memories, archival documents, and folklore into lyrical reflections on cosmic, natural, and human cycles.

In this exhibition Namoda plays with the burden of representation, of histories, of culture, and of traditions while simultaneously creating and hinting at new relationships, different values, and changing paradigms. Presented as stories within stories, her paintings build in momentum and assemble themselves into a mosaic that delicately holds the fragility of women's lives as well as its undeniable beauty and power.

The artists' beloved Mozambique is the setting for these magical moments, natural sights, and everyday people that awake a sense of wonder and wistfulness. With rich metaphors and eloquent imagery, her dedication to simplicity, strangeness, and symbolism unfolds in different moods and vivid tones.

This exhibition sees the debuts of three beautiful nocturnal paintings. As Thoreau once said, "the night is a different country" and the shifts in perception that occur in a moonlit landscape are inevitably influenced by the cultural ideas that surround concepts of the moon. A reliable marker of phases of the human condition on earth, the moon is also a symbol of the highest vibration of Universal compassion, or the Divine feminine. Stirred by the Moon's mystique and the Lunar Gestational Cycle, Cassi Namoda reflects on the haunting beauty of a moon rise and its awesome power over the tides, the rains, the waters, and the seasons but in her paintings, the goddess of the night represents an

energy that is not necessarily engendered, instead it symbolizes an energetic signature of that which nurtures all life.

Within this enchanted landscape, Namoda enlivens quintessential representations of traditional village life with her signature style, simple lines and intense colors. We see an older woman who perfectly balances a large bag on her head, counting pennies; three young men wear traditional blankets with pride or as protection; a vitiligo woman becomes the unusual subject of a portrait that offers a vivid sense of a real person's presence; a young mother nursing two babies at the same time, meets our gawking with a steady gaze; children delight in jump rope, that universal childhood game; long forgotten monuments, abandoned but not hidden, tower over a gathering of women and children. She gives her interpretations a feminine touch since it is women that she attends too and honors, and it is their power that she celebrates.

Thus the artists' stylization of the rhythms of everyday life assumes a radical depth, offering a particular language for reading an imagining this world through mother nature, matriarchs, and women: they carry the traits of divine power and convey universality through their most regional and cultural aspects. Returning to the ever changing but predictable phases of the Moon, offers Cassi Namoda a yardstick to measure the passage of time and is essentially the nature of a person, which waxes and wanes, changes and remains constant.