

Zanele Muholi  
*Awe Maaah!*  
 September 10 - October 16, 2021



Yancey Richardson Gallery is pleased to present *Awe Maaah!*, an exhibition of new paintings and photographs by South African artist and visual activist Zanele Muholi. Internationally acclaimed as a photographer, this is the first large-scale exhibition of Muholi's paintings and the artist's fourth solo show with the gallery. The exhibition brings together seven self-portraits carried out as acrylic on canvas paintings, redolent with the artist's exploration of gender and the isolation, intimacy, and confinement brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Alongside these will be a presentation of new photographs from *Somnyama Ngonyama*, 'Hail the Dark Lioness,' (2012-present), Muholi's ongoing series of photographic self-portraits.

The newly produced paintings in *Awe Maaah!* further the alternative languages of thinking and image making present in Muholi's longstanding visual activism, referencing earlier works such as the Blood Mandalas and menstrual blood paintings. Like many, the COVID-19 pandemic and government mandated stay-at-home orders challenged Muholi's traditional means of catalyzing their photographic practice. Painting emerged as both a practical response and a contemplative exercise during this time of fear and isolation.

As in *Somnyama Ngonyama*, in Muholi's paintings the artist is both participant and image maker. This position foregrounds ideas around self-representation, black queer visibility, and the personal archive.

Muholi uses their paintings as an expansion of their photography. Costumery and vibrant color are tools to consider the multiplicity of gender and representation, and mythologize personal and historical narratives. In *Zibuyile*, 2021, Muholi addresses the Zulu custom of dowry in which the bride is treated as an asset to be paid for in cows. In others, Muholi explores and inhabits different gender roles. In *Phiwokakhe*, 2021, the artist is depicted as a traditionally masculine figure whose presence is directed outward, confident and assured of their place in the world. In others, such as *Itha*, 2021, the figure exudes a vulnerability and sense of introspection traditionally associated with femininity. Muholi remarks:

*"I'm very conscious of the process of making and hope that this connects to the politics of seeing and the politics of acting through seeing. These works ask me what it means to be present. I want people to see themselves differently through them too...We are in changing times, the world will have to start afresh, so these become a visual memoir so that those who come after us – seeing when and where these were produced – can get answers about how we lived, what we thought about and our circumstances."*

Zanele Muholi was born and currently resides in Durban, South Africa. Their work has been exhibited at the 2020 Biennale of Sydney; the 58th International Venice Biennale; Documenta 13; the South African Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale; and the 29th São Paulo Biennale. In 2020, the Tate Modern mounted a major mid-career survey which will travel to Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin; Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris and Bildmuseet, Sweden. Solo exhibitions have taken place at the Tate Modern, London; Sprengel Museum, Hannover; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kulturhistorisk Museum, Oslo; Schwules Museum, Berlin; Casa Africa, Las Palmas and Brooklyn Museum, New York. They received an Infinity Award from the International Center of Photography in

2016, a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2016, an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society in 2018, and the Spectrum International Prize for Photography in 2021. Their work is included in the collections of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; the Brooklyn Museum; the High Museum of Art; the Carnegie Museum of Art; the Guggenheim Museum; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Tate Modern, London; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Art Institute of Chicago; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, among many others.

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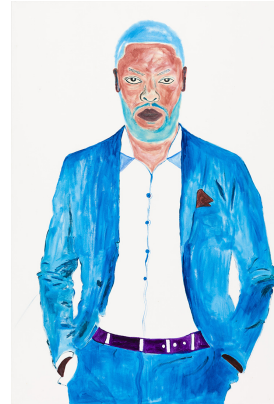
Image: *Somile*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 70 7/8 x 47 1/4 inches.

## Zanele Muholi

### *Awe Maaah!*

September 10 – October 16, 2021

1. Zanele Muholi  
*Phiwokakhe*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
70 7/8 x 47 1/4 inches  
*Sold*



2. Zanele Muholi  
*Phelela*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
70 7/8 x 47 1/4 inches  
*Sold*



3. Zanele Muholi  
*Phupho*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
70 3/4 x 47 1/4 inches  
*Sold*

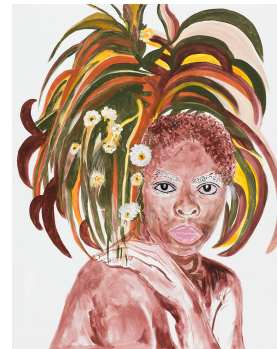


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4. Zanele Muholi  
*Somile*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
70 3/4 x 47 1/4 inches  
*Sold*



5. Zanele Muholi  
*Itha*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
59 x 47 3/8 inches  
*Sold*



6. Zanele Muholi  
*Zibuyile*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
71 x 71 inches  
*Sold*



7. Zanele Muholi  
*Tholakele*, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
59 1/8 x 47 3/4 inches  
*Sold*



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8. Zanele Muholi  
*Zimpaphe I, Parktown, 2019*  
32 3/8 x 23 5/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
*Sold out*



9. Zanele Muholi  
*Loba V, Paris, 2019*  
20 5/8 x 15 7/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
*Sold out*



10. Zanele Muholi  
*Wenzeni II, City Lodge Hotel, Johannesburg, 2019*  
28 3/8 x 30 3/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
*Sold out*



11. Zanele Muholi  
*Wenzeni I, City Lodge Hotel, OR Tambo airport, Johannesburg, 2019*  
27 3/8 x 30 3/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
\$21,000



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12. Zanele Muholi  
*Vika II, The Decks, Cape Town, 2019*  
24 5/8 x 18 1/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
\$18,000



13. Zanele Muholi  
*Thathu I, The Sails, Durban, 2019*  
32 x 23 1/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
*Sold out*



14. Zanele Muholi  
*Tshatha, Swakopmund, Namibia, 2019*  
32 1/8 x 21 7/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
*Sold out*



15. Zanele Muholi  
*Yikho II, Sheraton Hotel, 2019*  
24 5/8 x 19 7/8 inches  
Gelatin Silver Print  
Edition of 8  
\$18,000



*All prices include framing.*