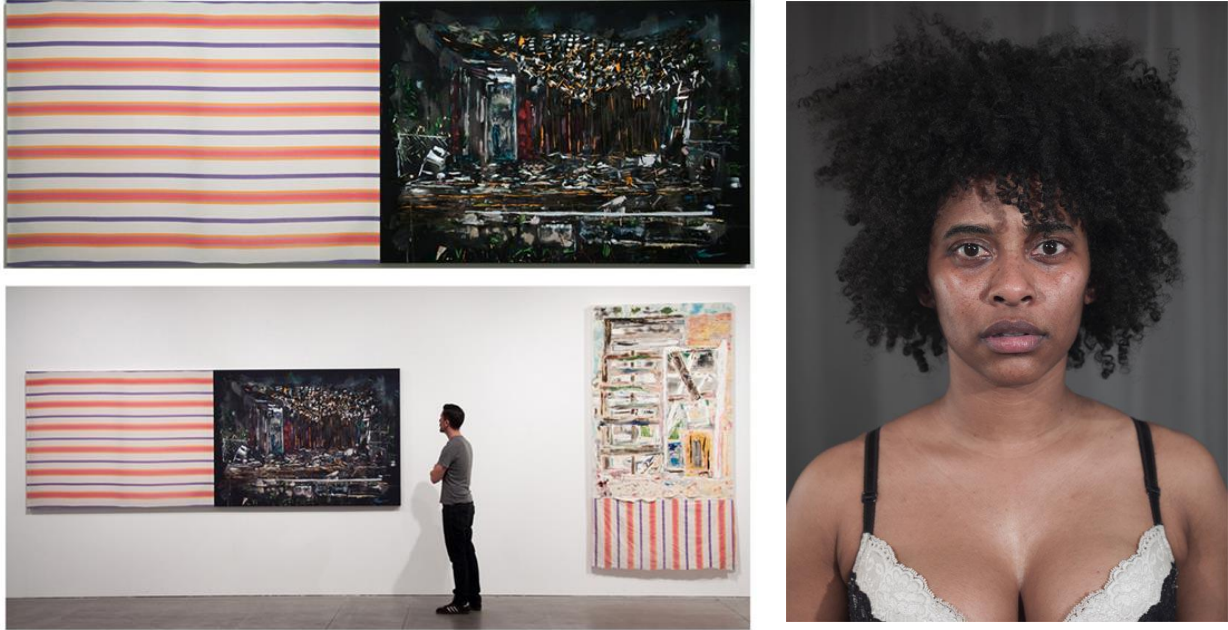


Tameka Norris  
14 February – 29 March 2014  
Private View Thursday 13 February, 6 - 8 PM



Post Katrina 6 ( Diptych), 2009, 120 x 40 inches, stretched bedsheet, oil paint (left)  
Untitled ( self portrait), 2012, 34.5 x 48.5 inches, photograph (right)

Ronchini Gallery is pleased to present Tameka Norris' first European solo exhibition in collaboration with ARTNESIA.

Working across a wide range of media, including performance, video, photography, and installation, Norris' practice addresses issues of space and the body. Norris lives and works in New Orleans.

In new large-scale paintings, the artist continues her [Post-Katrina](#) series, which she began in 2009, depicting houses in Gulfport and Biloxi - Norris' childhood home - and shotgun houses in New Orleans. The works are built up mark by mark using oil paint on stretched bed-sheets in a colourful and impressionistic style. Norris began the series whilst living in Los Angeles as a student but travelled to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast of Mississippi to take photographs for use as reference material. Though she experienced Katrina from the safety of the UCLA campus, she used her family's personal circumstance as a point of departure for the work. Now that Norris has moved back to New Orleans and her studio and home is a shotgun house in the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward – an area famously devastated by Hurricane Katrina - her relationship to the site has changed. Her work investigates what is happening socially, physically and emotionally as the site undergoes gentrification. As the city changes as buildings are torn down and reconstructed, Norris' previous references no longer exist, forcing Norris to draw on her memory, creating a more autobiographical reflection.

In a video performance work the artist recreates Michelangelo Pistoletto's sculpture [Venus of the Rags](#), 1967 – 1974. Norris appears as the classical statue of the Roman goddess of fertility, positioned with her back to the viewer in front of a large pile of her own brightly coloured, discarded clothes heaped on the floor. Out of camera shot, an accented male voice directs the artist 'move your body, a little more to left'. Venus serves as an iconic motif of the canon of Western art and invokes Italy's cultural past in an ironic way. By

inserting herself – a black woman – into the dialogue about painting she forces a critique about the presence of the black body in the history of painting. After watching the video, Norris became disillusioned with the two tattoos she has on her shoulder blades and has decided to have them gradually removed as a way of becoming more like the timeless model of Venus. In doing so, the artist herself has become a reductive sculpture in an ongoing work.

Norris is producing a feature length film to be shown at a biennial in the USA in autumn 2014. The film is in a documentary style with some scripted narrative and is about Norris' life as an artist. Elements of what happens at the Ronchini Gallery exhibition will translate into this film and vice versa. Included in the Ronchini Gallery exhibition will be a video component in the form of a confessional monologue relating to the feature film.

She received her undergraduate degree at the University of California, Los Angeles before graduating with her MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2012. Her work can be seen in [Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art](#) at The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, from 14 November 2013 – 9 March 2014. This includes a performance co-organised with Performa 13, New York's celebrated performance-art biennial. The exhibition chronicles the emergence and development of black performance art over three generations and was previously shown at the [Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston in 2012](#).

For Norris' Senior Scholarship exhibition at UCLA she transposed the language and aesthetic of hip hop onto the backdrop of her college campus. In the video [Licker, 2010](#), Norris, in a bikini and fur coat raps, 'I'm that black Cindy Sherman and that little Kara Walker, Basquiat resurrected from the dead...' In her [2012 video series](#) she tracked her progression through the Yale School of Art in a savvy update on Alex Bag's classic *Untitled Fall'95*. In another gesture of appropriation, Norris pairs Janis Joplin and Drake for *Mercedes Benz-Successful*, 2011.

In 2013, her work was the subject of a solo exhibition at [Contemporary Art Center, New Orleans : Tameka Norris - Family Values](#). The artist has participated in numerous important group exhibitions including *Radical Presence*, Contemporary Art Museum, Houston (2012); *Gifted and Talented*, Third Streaming Gallery, New York (2012); *Prospect.2 Biennial*, New Orleans (2011); *QueerSexing*, Human Resources, Los Angeles (2011); *Prospect.1.5 Biennial*, Good Children Gallery, New Orleans (2010); *Open Projector Night*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2009); *True Diva Biennale*, Skowhegan, Maine (2009); and *Dissent! 1968 to Now*, Laband Gallery, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles (2008).

**ARTNESIA** is an arts projects initiative set up in 2010 by Jason Lee and Carlo Berardi. Its main activities are curatorial projects around the globe, artists' residencies and representations as well as book publishing. Artnesia's activities started with *Heavenly Creatures*, a group exhibition in partnership with Jack Wills at the Aubin Gallery, followed by *Confessions of Dangerous Minds*, a comprehensive survey of Contemporary Art from Turkey at Saatchi Gallery, London, in 2011. They presented *TIME, after TIME: Parallels Between Young American Artists and Italian Masters (2012)* and *Rebecca Ward: cow tipping (2013)* both at Ronchini Gallery.

**Ronchini Gallery** is a contemporary art gallery founded by Lorenzo Ronchini in 1992 in Umbria, Italy, which relocated to Mayfair, London in February 2012. The gallery aesthetic is defined by Minimalism, Spatialism, Conceptualism and Arte Povera and it retains an unblinking future-focus on progressive movements whilst remembering the past. Its exhibitions have explored pioneering movements across a broad spectrum of contemporary artistic practice. Working with acclaimed curators and scholars from across the world, the gallery provides a rigorous context in which its artists can be viewed. The gallery has

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**RONCHINI**GALLERY

recently begun working with an international group of younger artists including Adrien Broom, Jacob Hashimoto, Adeline de Monseignat, Berndnaut Smilde and Rebecca Ward. It aims to discover and rediscover exceptional artists and through its secondary market programme Ronchini Gallery's objective is to inspire the next generation of young artists. Paterfamilias Adriano Ronchini was an early supporter of artists such as Alighiero Boetti, Daniel Buren, Joseph Kosuth, Frank Stella and Michelangelo Pistoletto and collected their work throughout the seventies; Ronchini Gallery evolved from these years of private collecting. The gallery maintains a successful publishing arm, which produces exhibition catalogues, monographs, critical texts and artist's books.

**Exhibition Facts:** Tameka Norris

**Exhibition Dates:** 14 February – 29 March 2014

**Opening Reception:** Thursday 13 February, 6 – 8pm

**Opening Hours:** Monday – Friday 10am – 6pm; Saturday 11am – 5pm

**Location:** 22 Dering Street, London, W1S 1AN

**Tel:** +44 (0)20 7629 9188

**Website:** [www.ronchinigallery.com](http://www.ronchinigallery.com)

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