



SAMUEL FOSSO, "70s LIFESTYLE SERIES," SM 30, 1975-78.  
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# BLACK IS...

A portfolio of paintings and photos by  
leading Black artists.

*Curated by* EKOW ESHUN

*The portfolio of paintings and photographs presented here is a small selection of works by artists from across the African Diaspora. In a small way, the images are representative of a current period of extraordinary flourishing in Black visual art and culture—a period characterized by Oscar-winning moviemakers like Steve McQueen and Booker Prize-winning writers such as Bernardine Evaristo and Marlon James, and represented here by gifted artists including Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, Amoako Boafo, and Lina Iris Viktor.*

*Their thrilling imagery opens space for the infinite interpretations we might bring to how it feels to live and thrive as a Black person today. For the poet Audre Lorde, to be Black meant to come from “the earth’s inside.” Lorde wrote that Black is coal. It is a diamond, tempered in fire and made more brilliant than the sun. As the group Sault put it in the song “Black Is” ...*

*Black is shiny and new  
Black is older than earth  
All at the same damn time  
Black is sweet  
Black is ours  
Black is love*



KYLE WEEKS, "THE PRINCE."



HASSAN HAJJAJ, "JOE CASELY-HAYFORD."

FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHY BY ©HASSAN HAJJAJ, 2012/1433. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, THE CASELY-HAYFORD FAMILY, AND EKOW ESHUN. @HASSANHAJJAJ\_LARACHE ON INSTAGRAM.



KWESI BOTCHWAY, "AMOAKO BOAFO," 2020.  
ACRYLIC AND OIL ON CANVAS. ALL IMAGES COPYRIGHT OF THE ARTIST. COURTESY  
OF GALLERY 1957.



LYNETTE YIADOM-BOAKYE, "THE MATTERS," 2016. OIL ON LINEN. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST,  
CORVI-MORA, LONDON, AND JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY, NEW YORK.



AMOAKO BOAFO, "GREEN BERET," 2020.  
© AMOAKO BOAFO/LICENSED BY ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK.



GIRMA BERTA, "ASMARA XII," 2018.  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND ADDIS FINE ART.



LINA IRIS VIKTOR, "ELEVENTH," 2018.  
 PURE 24-KARAT GOLD, ACRYLIC, INK, COPOLYMER RESIN, PRINT ON  
 MATTE CANVAS. © 2018. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST. [SALON94.COM](http://SALON94.COM)



TOYIN OJIH ODUTOLA, "AN UNLEARNING," 2020.  
 © TOYIN OJIH ODUTOLA. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND  
[JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY](http://JACKSHAINMANGALLERY.COM), NEW YORK.



ARTHUR TIMOTHY, "ADELINE AND BANKOLE TIMOTHY," 2019. OIL ON CANVAS. PRIVATE COLLECTION (EXHIBITED AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, SUMMER EXHIBITION 2019).



WOLE LAGUNJU, "WHEN THE GODS COME DOWN," 2020. OIL ON CANVAS. COURTESY OF ED CROSS FINE ART.



SILVIA ROSI, "SELF PORTRAIT AS MY MOTHER," 2019.



REGINALD SYLVESTER II, "SWING LOW," 2020.  
ACRYLIC, THREAD, AND STICKS ON CANVAS. © REGINALD SYLVESTER II. PRIVATE COLLECTION,  
TENNESSEE. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND MAXIMILLIAN WILLIAM, LONDON.





DENZIL FORRESTER, "ALL HANDS ON DECK," 2003.  
OIL ON LINEN. COPYRIGHT DENZIL FORRESTER. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST  
AND STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY, LONDON.



SOLA OLULODE, "LAYING IN THE GRASS II," 2020.  
INK, OIL, OIL PASTEL, OIL BAR, AND WAX ON CANVAS.  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.