

PRESS RELEASE

FEATHER BOA TAKES A SIDE BAR

RINELLA ALFONSO

13 April – 25 May 2024

Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to announce *Feather boa takes a side bar*, Rinella Alfonso's second solo exhibition at the gallery.

In her paintings, Alfonso creates mystical worlds by placing everyday objects in stark fantasy environments. These objects are often regarded as disposable and worthless, yet bear meaning in Alfonso's memories of people and places, as well as they hold great significance in the interconnectivity of people in Curaçao and the Caribbean. Themes such as nostalgia and connection are embedded in her work.



Alfonso's fantasy-like paintings border on the subconscious. They seem to sprout from - at times nightmarish - dreams filled with memories of objects and places yet demonstrate a profound sensitivity to her lived surroundings.

In her latest work, she expands her focus from objects that represent memories of her childhood in Curaçao, to those that symbolise local beliefs and sayings, rituals, and superstitions. As an example, the blue painting representing two mops and a broom, contains two separate yet similar sayings. The presence of two mops in one room stands for bad luck, whereas sweeping someone's foot with a broom is condemning the person to a life without marriage.

In this exhibition, Alfonso effortlessly combines depictions of mass-production with the natural world, with broken, plastic chairs entering a dialogue with symbolic snakes and ritualistic bones. Although the works initially come from a personal motif, their dark quality is evidence of the artist's receptiveness to the world around her.

By mixing airbrush techniques with delicate transparency and colours that seem to glow in the dark, the paintings gain a ghostly quality. By isolating and thus intensifying their presence, the lifeless objects become active agents in her ongoing stories, further emphasised by their titles: A broken comb lays to rest, footsteps contain memories, and a single chair is a chair left behind. Furthermore, by experimenting and re-using elements from older paintings into newer ones, she creates a storyline for her quintessential practice, with everyday objects appearing and reappearing like characters in a surrealist narrative.

Rinella Alfonso studied at Instituto Buena Vista in Curaçao and Fine Arts at Royal Academy of Art, The Hague (NL), before becoming a resident at De Ateliers in Amsterdam in 2019. In 2021 she received the Royal Prize for Painting, for which she was also nominated a year before. Alfonso has exhibited both internationally and nationally. Recent solo exhibitions include Paul Soto, New York, USA (2023), Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam, NL (2022), Paul Soto, Los Angeles, USA (2022), and Project Native Informant, London, UK (2022).