



## PRESS RELEASE

21 September 2022

### *Bitter Nostalgia*

30 November 2022 – 26 January 2023

Ground Floor, Gallery 4 at Saatchi Gallery

UK based Gallery BEERS London is pleased to present *Bitter Nostalgia*, with artists Hyangmok Baik and Adébayo Bolaji, at Saatchi Gallery, opening on 30 November through to 26 January 2023. Public admission to the exhibition on the Ground Floor of the Gallery will be free.

The pairing of South Korean painter Hyangmok Baik (b. 1990) and British-Nigerian Adébayo Bolaji (b. 1983) offers a celebration of nostalgic themes as critical, thoughtful, and challenging. Both artists transcend factuality to incorporate concepts of memory, emotion, the past, and our processes of recollection as individuals and as the greater public.

By definition, nostalgia is a term with arguably pejorative connotations. To view the world through 'rose-coloured glasses' suggests an inability to remain critical or unbiased. Further, we've become trained sceptics; our cynicism is applauded, whereas unbridled optimism or joy is seen as somehow lacking in critical-thinking or judiciousness. How does this reflect in the ways in which we record our past and personal histories?

It is often seen as the artist's duty to record a more empathetic view of our life and times. But at what point do we become wary of such 'sentimentalized' versions of history? The musician sings; the author writes; the poet records in verse and line. But a painter's duty is to recollect and record their emotional connectivity to a personal as well as a public sphere. Perhaps painting itself is a sort of 'act of defiance', whereby the mechanics of creation arise from an action and reaction to so-called cold factuality.

As a global community, we seem keen to shutout recent recollections of a pandemic, global warming, the LGBTQIA+ or BLM movements and/or reactionary groups, gun control, the death of HM the Queen, and various uprisings or other global catastrophes. Is it natural to want to recollect our pasts as inherently good? Or rather, to find and celebrate the goodness without reverting to schmaltziness?

Both Baik and Bolaji aim to celebrate activism and our historicity through a critical lens and exuberant palette. Each artist handles these themes in related, albeit distinct methods, and this exhibition endeavours to explore this further.

**Further information** on the exhibition and/or either of the artists kindly contact Kurt Beers or send an email to [kurt@beerslondon.com](mailto:kurt@beerslondon.com) or phone +44(0)2075029078.

A Private View of the Exhibition, kindly supported by **GUCCI**, will take place on Wednesday 30 November between 18h30 – 20h30.

Further information on the exhibition and/or either of the artists kindly contact **Kurt Beers** or send an email to [kurt@beerslondon.com](mailto:kurt@beerslondon.com) or phone +44(0)2075029078.

HYANGMOK BAIK (b. 1990, South Korea) lives and works in Seoul, South Korea. He graduated in 2019 with a MA in Fine Art from Hongik University. Solo exhibitions include: *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, OTI Hong Kong (2022); *The Garden of Eden*, OTI LA, Los Angeles (2021); *Forgotten by Us*, BEERS London, London (2021); *Imagine Utopia*, Gallery Stan, Seoul, South Korea (2020); *Wanderlust*, Gallery Marron, Seoul, South Korea (2019); solo show at Gallery Meme, Seoul, South Korea (2018) and; a solo show at Gana Art Space, Seoul, South Korea (2016). Group exhibitions and fairs include: *Art Busan*, Gallery Stan, Busan, South Korea (2022); *Yeonhee Art Fair*, Seoul, South Korea (2019); *KIAF*, South Korea (2019); *Yohood*, Shanghai, China (2019); Gallery Ili, Seoul, South Korea (2019); *Art Busan*, Busan, Korea (2019); *Mercielbiss*, Busan, Korea 92019); *Stan Art Center*, Seoul, South Korea (2019); *Chiyoda*, Tokyo, Japan (2019).

ADEBAYO BOLAJI (b. 1983, London) lives and works in London and graduated from the Central School of Speech and Drama. Solo exhibitions include: *In Pursuit of Flow*, UH Arts, Hertfordshire (2021); *The Power & The Pause*, BEERS London, London (2021); *Between Two Worlds*, Galerie Kremers, Berlin (2020); *Topia: A Reinvention of the Self*, Serena Morton Gallery, London (2019); *Babel*, Galerie Proarta, Zurich (2019) and *Rituals of Colour*, Public Gallery, London (2018). Group Exhibitions include: *Hues*, Hannah Traore Gallery, New York (2022); *Optimistic: The Power of Now*, Serena Morton Gallery, London (2018) and *New Contemporary V Old*, Galerie Proarta, Zurich (2017). Fairs include: *Untitled Miami*, BEERS London (2021); *Future Fairs Online*, BEERS London (2020) and; *art KARLSRUHE*, Galerie Proarta (2020). Bolaji is a multidisciplinary artist who has also trained as a Lawyer, Actor and Writer who has had prominent speaking engagements with Penn State University as well as Mall Galleries. Additionally, Bolaji belongs to the prominent Soho House Collection as well as the Hogans & Lovells Collection.

#### ABOUT BEERS LONDON

BEERS London opened in the summer of 2012 and has since forged an international reputation as one of London's leading spaces for cutting-edge contemporary art. The gallery maintains an active, forward-thinking programme, exhibiting artists at various career stages. While primarily focused on painting, the gallery frequently exhibits sculpture, photography, textile, and ceramics. Gallery Director Kurt Beers has written two books: *100 Painters of Tomorrow* released in 2014, followed by the award-winning *100 Sculptors of Tomorrow* in 2019, both published by Thames & Hudson. Together, Beers and Thames & Hudson are preparing for a third book in the series: *100 Photographers of Tomorrow*.