

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY
NEW YORK | ASPEN

CHIDINMA NNOLI

When will my feet catch fire?

On View September 8, 2022 – October 8, 2022

509 W 24th Street, New York, NY 10011



The pains of growing, 2022, oil and acrylic on canvas, 62 x 54 inches.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *When will my feet catch fire?*, a solo presentation of five new paintings and a sculptural work by Lagos, Nigeria-based artist Chidinma Nnoli. The works on view explore various modes of processing trauma and healing, and delve into the ways in which stigma, dissociation, and dominant societal narratives limit discourses around traumatic events. For Nnoli, the works pose the question: “When will the things I am going through be ‘big’ enough for me to speak about?”

Nnoli situates seemingly silent feminine figures within otherworldly, sparsely populated terrains. Deploying a thick, pastel-hued impasto, Nnoli creates landscapes that are as fleshy and tangible as they are ethereal and mysterious. The balance between the earthly and the celestial continues in Nnoli’s debut

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sculptural work *Is there a God beyond the sky?* in which a pair of hands reach upwards from a brick-like, earthy base.

The exhibition's title is derived from *Lavender, lavender, when will my feet catch fire?* a poem Nnoli wrote in 2017. Since 2020, Nnoli's work has referenced her poetry, much of it written in late adolescence, with each series in her oeuvre referencing a separate poem.

This latest body of work marks a transition in Nnoli's compositions, away from interior spaces, familial subjects, and Romanesque architecture, and towards obliquely evocative landscapes centered on iterations of a feminine figure. In this way, the new paintings insist on the importance—the human value—of a single subject's embodied experience and spiritual existence. Philosophically and spiritually, *When will my feet catch fire?* explores the emotions—liberating as well as daunting—born of claiming one's independence.

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About Chidinma Nnoli

Chidinma Nnoli (b. 1998, Nigeria) is a visual artist with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Benin. In 2020, she was selected for the Rele Arts Foundation Young Contemporaries exhibition. Select group exhibitions include *The Invincible Hands* (2021), Shyllon Museum, Lagos, *Orita Meta* (2021), Rele Gallery, Los Angeles, and *In Situ* (2021), Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York.

Nnoli held her debut solo exhibition *To Wander Untamed* in 2020 at Rele gallery, Lagos and had a solo presentation at the Armory Show in 2021. Her works have been featured in *Hyperallergic*, *The New York Times*, *Colossal*, and *Vogue*. She currently lives and works in Lagos.

About Marianne Boesky Gallery

Since its inception in 1996, Marianne Boesky Gallery has represented and supported the work of emerging and established contemporary international artists of all media. In its first decade, the gallery was instrumental in launching the careers of major artists through an innovative exhibition program; and in 2016, the gallery expanded its flagship location to its adjacent space on West 24th Street. The gallery actively represents many significant international artists, including Ghada Amer, Sanford Biggers, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Donald Moffett, and Frank Stella. To learn more, visit marianneboeskygallery.com.

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