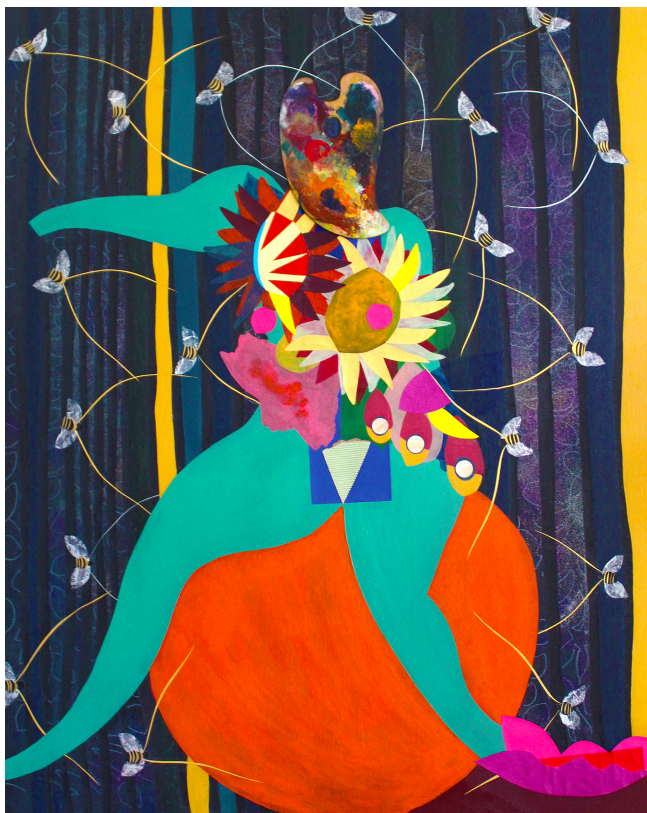


Ed Cross Fine Art is delighted to present its first solo exhibition with Tiffanie Delune, *Seeds of Light*, curated by Katherine Finerty: 6 – 25 March 2020, The Gramophone Works, 326 Kensal Road, London W10 5BZ.

Tiffanie Delune and Katherine Finerty will be in conversation at the gallery from 7pm on Thursday March 19th. Arrivals and refreshments from 6pm; admission free, RSVP emily@edcrossfineart.com.

Seeds of Light introduces a world full of radiant bright colours and evocative abstract shapes teeming with hidden personal memories, mutable senses of cultural belonging, and spiritually charged visions of hope. The materials and ideas brought to life by Delune's work are at once delicate yet resilient – sewing thread confidently weaves the outlines of dreams, whilst tenderly recycled garbage bags activate charming yet dark childhood stories, remembered with nostalgic mirth. Despite the deeply personal nature of Delune's work, each painting serves as a jumping off point, a portal to induce individual interpretation amidst a collective journey. In this world the protective power of painting facilitates a dual movement both inwards and outwards, from deeply buried seeds to swiftly unfolding rays, beaming with aspiration.

This solo presentation brings together a standalone self-portrait, *The Bees*, alongside three new bodies of works: *Childhood Memories*, *Spirituality*, and a special new commission for the Alexandra Cohen Hospital for Women and Newborns in New York. The *Childhood Memories* series comprises six sizeable works expanding upon Delune's focus from the past two years on exploring themes of stolen innocence and displaced domesticity. 'I sublimate traumatic childhood memories, my postcolonial mixed-race background, and the epiphanies of adulthood,' the artist reflects, 'by personifying them as magical creatures in colourful exotic flora, playing with angles, flatness, and depths.' This emancipatory process enables Delune to find beauty and belonging grounded within a complicated family history and collective memory, animating the ashes of a childhood gone by as both a liminal space and tactile surface to forever rise from. Through sanguine eyes a father stealing food and Christmas trees for his family becomes an act of ingenious magic – children piling into the one bed in their mother's pied-à-terre becomes an intimate adventure. Trauma transforms into triumph. A melancholy ballad segues into a jazzy love song.



Tiffanie Delune, *The Bees*, 2020. Acrylic, Mixed Papers, Cardboard, Wooden Painting Palette and Glitter on Stretched Cotton Canvas, 150 x 120 cm.

Delune further seizes upon this newfound multimedia expression of personal metamorphoses through her *Spirituality* series, featuring nine square paintings at a uniquely smaller scale. These intimate works maintain determined and controlled compositions, whilst bursting with colour and movement in order to physically manifest spiritual musings. Light breaks through form, enabling a supernatural inner world to radiate through a physical and bodily outer world. *The Sun Doesn't Burn The Special Ones*, for example, focuses on one subject, or rather, a current moment in the artist's creative trajectory. This personal reflection of emboldening oneself for a period of prolific transition encapsulates a 'main sequence stage of life', as when the Sun maintains a stable balance of nuclear fusion's outward pressure and gravity's inward force. Yet this moment of 'getting ready' channels not only a physical equilibrium, but also personal focus, passion, and humility. Similar to her seminal self-portrait, *The Bees*, it portrays a mental and spiritual pose for bodily mindfulness, with the central figure securely at peace, radiating a consistent inner power despite the mysterious – beautiful or threatening – manifestations surrounding it.

These works powerfully exemplify how Delune's mixed cultural heritage influences her practice: linear and architectural compositions summoned by a Belgian sensibility, fluid sensuous forms inspired by a free-spirited French perspective, and sumptuous agitated colours shaped by fantasies of her Congolese Motherland – all in an enduring diasporic and aesthetic flux. Moreover, the ever-present duality in Delune's work conjures the practice of the recently rediscovered Swedish painter and mystic Hilma af Klint (1862 – 1944), and her modernist search for new, complex forms to communicate a spiritual conception of the world around and inside us. Klint's fixation with reciprocities (in / out, up / down, male / female, good / evil, earthly / esoteric) uncannily mirrors Delune's recurring interest in energy, magnetism, and dualities, such as the inner child versus ongoing self, and external relationships versus internal self-conception. These dynamic allusions can also be found in the abstract emotional explosions characterising the artist's eleven new works specially made for the New York-Presbyterian Alexandra Cohen Hospital for Women and Newborns. As in the Spirituality series, these works weave tales of self-reflection and physical mindfulness alongside future contemplation. Their playful, blooming shapes channel the goddesses on divining tarot cards, metaphysical animals symbolising monthly horoscopes, and the lunar effect on fertility and conception. Their rainbow spectrums summon abstract dreamscapes accompanied by holistic colour therapy. Joyous yellows are balanced by sensuous blues, resonating in a harmony of love, sexuality, and rebirth defining a universal story of womanhood.

Delune's reverence of women, childhood, and spirituality in these three series are ultimately communicated through a visual language of radical femininity. Her tender-meets-tough use of glitter, pink, hearts, and thread fearlessly challenges oppressive notions of gender inequality by elevating and celebrating mediums associated with the women's arts and crafts movement. These materials take on a rejuvenated power, activated by Delune's poignant reliance on craft as an aesthetic tool to explore cultural heritage, personal identity, and spiritual connection. This style of storytelling suggests unity through creativity, bestowing the tactile textures of her deeply poetic paintings, lovingly bestowed with titles full of evocative wordplay, with a suggestion of portraiture that represent us all. They give life to the air we breathe in deeply, the colours we dream in vividly, and the ideas we trust in implicitly. They plant burgeoning seeds of light that grow into rays of hope before our very eyes.

— Text by Katherine Finerty

Tiffanie Delune (b. 1988, Paris, France, lives and works in London) is a French Belgo-Congolese multi-media artist whose practice weds personal history with an extraordinary sensibility for design. Shape, colour, and graphic configurations inspired by Matisse cut-outs and African textiles collide with the sharp lines of mid-century European architecture. Delune's three heritages are recurring threads explored individually and in tandem, made manifest through fearlessly personal expressions echoed in the artist's own life. Themes of family, identity, womanhood, and sexuality suffuse Delune's vibrant paintings, and materials employed range from acrylic to pastel, shells to stockings, and pencils to pearls. Delune's recent transition from creative production to fine art in 2018 has found her exhibiting her powerful paintings around the world. Recent solo shows include *Metamorphosis* at Someth1ng Gallery, London (2019) and *Coloriosity* at 16/16, Lagos (2018). Other highlights include works featured in 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, Somerset House, London (2019) and PIASA's Contemporary African Art Auction, Paris (2019); participation in *Portraits of Animals* at H Factor and an artist's residency at 16/16, Lagos (2018), and her current contribution to *Art On A Postcard* celebrating International Women's Day at AllBright Mayfair, London and online at Paddle8 (2020).

Ed Cross Fine Art is based in London and was established in 2009, although Cross has been a 'pioneer' in the field of Contemporary African Art since 2006. The gallery works with leading emerging curators and represents international artists, in particular those of African descent, whose practices engage in significant global conversations today.

Katherine Finerty (b. New York City, lives and works in London) is an independent curator focusing on socially engaged practices, translocal identity politics, and contemporary African art. She is currently an Assistant Curator at The Showroom, and holds an MA in Curating from the Royal College of Art and studied History of Art at Cornell and Cambridge Universities.

This exhibition is made possible with the generous support of Resolution Property.