

Oreka James

If the Other Does Not See Me, I do See Myself

Opening Reception
Friday | 16 February | 6-9p

16 February – 24 March 2018



ltd los angeles is pleased to present *If the Other Does Not See Me, I do See Myself*, Toronto-based Oreka James' first solo exhibition ever. James will exhibit five new unstretched painted canvases and two earlier stretched works.

Oreka James' practice deals with the complexities surrounding the construction of Blackness and the surveillance of Black bodies. *If the Other Does Not See Me, I do See Myself*, is an intimate exploration of redirecting a gaze that aims solely to Other the autonomy of Black bodies. These paintings reveal black figures who remain headless, rejecting the onlooker and maintaining their privacy. She intentionally objectifies the bodies by removing their faces, thus concealing the identity. A stripping of Blackness is done in the places where black paint is absent to implicate the viewers projected whitewashing. Normalizing the notion of Black, James repeats the stark black paint. To remedy the imposed Otherness via her storytelling, James dismisses the hyper-sexualization and aggression posed on black bodies by placing their figures in quotidian environments that are fragmented, orchestrating an intricate and multi-faceted narrative.

She is informed by the misrepresentation of Blackness. She too would like to know what the alternative looks like.

Oreka James received her BFA from the Ontario College of Art and Design University, Toronto, ON, 2016. She was the artist in residence at Emilia Amalia at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, ON, 2017 and the artist in residence at Work In Progress at Northern Contemporary, Toronto, ON, 2016. In 2016, James won the Mercedes Benz Financial Services Award. Selected exhibitions include ltd los angeles, Cooper Cole, Katzman Contemporary, Will's Gallery, Northern Contemporary and YTB Gallery. She lives and works in Toronto, ON.