

Yinka Shonibare Inspired by HK Homeless

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Yinka Shonibare "Dreaming Rich" exhibition at Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong.
(Courtesy Yinka Shonibare and Pearl Lam Galleries)

British-Nigerian artist **Yinka Shonibare** has unveiled a new show informed by Hong Kong's colonial history and its homeless people. Titled "Dreaming Rich," the exhibition includes a large sculpture, works on paper, and an installation of Shonibare's toy paintings at **Pearl Lam Galleries** Hong Kong through January 9.

The artist continues his exploration of post-colonialism and commodity culture, but this time takes cues from the city's unique colonial history.

The centerpiece of the show is "Cake Man" a life-size sculpture of an aristocrat dressed in elaborate Victorian dress made of Shonibare's trademark batik fabric. A tower of decadent cakes is balanced precariously on the man's bent back, alluding to the hardships of a labor class on which the creation of vast amounts of wealth relies. Meanwhile a globe displaying financial data has replaced the figure's head as a commentary on the excess of anonymous financiers — particularly those responsible for the 2008 global financial crisis.



Yinka Shonibare, "Hong Kong Toy Painting"

Five new large-scale collage works are also on show. Shonibare's research team extensively interviewed Hong Kong's homeless for the creation of these works, asking "What would you do if you had more money?" The responses are included in the collage work as written text scrawled over clippings from the Financial Times, batik fabric flowers, luxury magazine covers, gold leaf, and images of Hong Kong's skyscrapers, creating a poignant juxtaposition of the worlds of wealth and of poverty.

The "Hong Kong Toy Painting" wall installation that measures six meters wide contains 27 round canvases, each attached to a circumference of toys collected from this city. The work showcases the contemporary worship of commodities in a Shonibare's signature colorful and exuberant style.

Yinka Shonibare first solo exhibition in Hong Kong, "Dreaming Rich," is at Pearl Lam Galleries Hong Kong until January 9, 2014, www.pearllam.com

