

La Petite Maison and Pearl Lam Galleries present restaurant exhibition *Blooming Shields* during Art Basel Hong Kong

Ayobola Kekere-Ekun's showcase celebrates the shared joys of food, art, and culture

Exhibition dates 17 March–16 April, 2025

Venue La Petite Maison, H Queen's, 23–29 Stanley Street, Central, Hong Kong



1. AYOBOLA KEKERE-EKUN b. 1993, *Ajah in Disguise IV*, 2024, Mixed media (paper and acrylic on canvas), 60 x 60 cm (23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in.);
2. *Jardin de Fleurs*; 3. AYOBOLA KEKERE-EKUN b. 1993, *Ajah in Disguise IX*, 2025, Mixed media (paper and acrylic on canvas),
60 x 60 cm (23 5/8 x 23 5/8 in.); 4. *Rum Baba, Strawberry and Coconut Cream*

Hong Kong—French Riviera-inspired La Petite Maison (LPM) is partnering with renowned Pearl Lam Galleries for a restaurant exhibition, *Blooming Shields*, showcasing Nigerian artist Ayobola Kekere-Ekun during Art Basel Hong Kong. Celebrating shared joys of food, art, and culture, the exhibition will run for a month during Hong Kong's Art Basel from 17 March–16 April at LPM's Mediterranean-style rendezvous at H Queen's, Central.

Kekere-Ekun's bespoke exhibition employs her signature mixed media quilling technique and playful use of colour. Titled *Blooming Shields*, the works portray nature as a protector, contrasting vulnerable things like flowers and butterflies as shields. The artworks are from her series *The Real Housewives of Old Oyo*, a vibrant dialogue between traditional mythology and the politics of gender, power, and representation in contemporary Nigeria.

To complement the exhibition, LPM has crafted a limited-time cocktail and dessert pairing inspired by the artworks. The dessert, Rum Baba, Strawberry and Coconut Cream, priced at HK\$138, embodies the zestful spirit of the exhibition through its colourful presentation and creative inspiration. Plated with bright strawberry coulis and dollops of whipped cream, it echoes Kekere-Ekun's dynamic African hues, while capturing the artistic essence of LPM's celebration of "joie de vivre".

Inspired by the vivid artwork displayed in the restaurant, LPM has designed a themed cocktail called Jardin de Fleurs. Priced at HK\$128, this bespoke concoction features a lively blend of rose wine, elderflower liqueur, champagne cordial, and vodka, all complemented by peach & jasmine soda. Crowned with bergamot and raspberry foam, the cocktail begins with a delightful fizz, gradually revealing a harmonious symphony of floral aromas and fruity flavours. The presentation evokes the inspirational journey behind the exhibition, resonating deeply with its delicate yet insightful exploration of gender and nature.

LPM's partnership with Pearl Lam Galleries aligns with a "deep-rooted passion for art and creativity ingrained in the brand's DNA," said Nicolas Budzynski, CEO of La Petit Maison. "Our first collaboration with Pearl Lam at Art Basel Miami Beach was a huge success, and we're excited to bring something equally special to our guests in Hong Kong. This latest initiative allows us to extend the creativity we harness in our food and drinks, intersecting art and culture with the restaurant experience as Hong Kong celebrates art during Art Basel."

Pearl Lam, Founder of Pearl Lam Galleries, adds, "Marrying art and hospitality highlights how both play a central role in creating memorable experiences and meaningful connections. I want to thank La Petite Maison for once again providing a platform to bridge cultures during Art Month with *Blooming Shields*. This collaboration celebrates our shared passion for enriching the cultural landscape of Hong Kong, which is my root."

LPM's passion for intersecting art and culture with the dining experience extends from its Belle Epoque-inspired artworks that grace the restaurant walls to its "Recipes for Our Friends" cocktail menu—a tribute to the artist, writer and bon vivant Jean Cocteau. Renowned for its bright and imaginative dishes made from immaculate Mediterranean ingredients, LPM recalls the laid-back glamour of the Côte d'Azur through its commitment to quality, consistency and the signature French "joie de vivre".

About Ayobola Kekere-Ekun

Born in 1993 in Lagos, Ayobola Kekere-Ekun obtained a BA (Hons) in visual arts from the University of Lagos, Akoka, Nigeria in 2013. She then graduated with an MA (Hons) in graphic design at the same university in 2016. Currently, she is pursuing a PhD in art and design at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Kekere-Ekun works predominantly with a technique known as quilling, in which strips of paper are individually shaped to create forms. Her work is heavily informed by personal experiences and observations. She is particularly interested in subjects connected to gender, mythology, memory, and trauma. The artist's first solo exhibition, *Resilient Lines* (2019) at Rele Gallery, was supported by a grant awarded by the Dean Collection, a contemporary art collection created by Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz (Kasseem Dean). Alongside various solo and group exhibitions, Kekere-Ekun has had works presented in important global art fairs including Latitudes Art Fair Johannesburg, Arte Fiera, Bologna, and SCOPE Miami Beach. Kekere-Ekun was also a recipient of the ABSA L'Atelier Award in 2021.

About La Petite Maison (LPM)

La Petite Maison (LPM) was founded in London in 2007. With ten internationally acclaimed restaurants in locations including Dubai, Miami and Hong Kong, LPM has brought the essence of the Côte d'Azur to the global dining scene. The French Riviera-inspired restaurants are known for their light, imaginative menus using Mediterranean ingredients, laid-back and friendly service style, open and airy dining rooms with striking art and Belle Epoque influences. There is a joie de vivre to be found in LPM that is hard to find elsewhere.





About Pearl Lam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia's contemporary art scene. Founded in 2005, the gallery plays a vital role in stimulating international dialogue and cross-cultural exchange between the East and West.

Following a rigorous programme, Pearl Lam Galleries presents museum-quality exhibitions that re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice in Asia, and globally. With a thoughtfully balanced roster of Chinese and international artists, the gallery is strategic in its curation, positioning itself as an educator.

The gallery maintains a space in Hong Kong and Shanghai. With a team of international expert gallerists, Pearl Lam Galleries' reach is global, having presentations at major international art fairs including Art Cologne, Art Basel, Frieze Masters, and West Bund Art and Design. For more information, please visit Pearl Lam Galleries at booth 1D12 at Art Basel Hong Kong and www.pearllam.com.

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