

COAT OF MANY COLOURS: A Solo Exhibition by Kwaku Yaro

Exhibition dates 27 May–5 July, 2025 (Viewing by appointment only)
Please contact visit@70sqm.com or WeChat: _70squaremetres
Venue 70 Square Metres, G/F, 41 Hengshan Road, Shanghai, China

SHANGHAI—70 Square Metres is thrilled to present *Coat of Many Colours*: A Solo Exhibition by Kwaku Yaro. The third artist in our residency programme hails from Ghana and is a self-taught mixed-media artist. He possesses an extraordinary alchemist's touch, transforming the mundane into the magnificent. During his three-month residency in Shanghai, Yaro bestowed new life into discarded materials: repurposing takeaway bags from Chinese restaurants, iconic 'Ghana Must Go' bags, and humble burlap into striking artistic statements. These elements find new form layered upon African nylon mats and Chinese rattan summer mats, weaving cultural narratives of Ghanaian heritage from his homeland with subtle Chinese motifs, including delicate bamboo references. The resulting body of work radiates a vibrant energy, commanding attention while inviting contemplation.

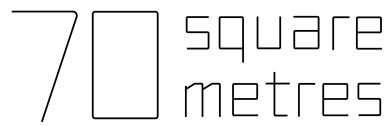
At the heart of Yaro's work are the intimate portraits of his inner circle. His deep connection with each subject helps him bring them to life in his creations. These figures are seen adorned in spectacular and elaborate costumes crafted from the aforementioned reclaimed materials. This radical transformation challenges fundamental assumptions about conventional value and artistic mediums. Yaro pushes boundaries with his choice of canvas—often repurposed sleep and prayer mats, which are deeply personal objects reimagined as the foundation of his art. His technique, which nods to the pointillism of Sami Benti, creates a distinctive visual language that invites viewers to reconsider the boundaries of tradition and innovation.

Taking its title from Dolly Parton's celebrated song, the exhibition *Coat of Many Colours* invites viewers to witness the extraordinary metamorphosis of the ordinary, as Kwaku Yaro guides us through a compelling narrative of cultural exchange and sustainable artistry.

About the Artist

Kwaku Yaro is a self-taught contemporary artist from Labadi, Accra. His work transforms everyday materials like polypropylene into reflections on social, religious, and economic themes. Using pointillism, each spot in his art represents the people of his community.

Yaro's practice is inspired by artists like Georges Seurat, Sami Benti, El Anatsui, and Ibrahim Mahama. His research goes beyond the five senses, emphasising meticulous detail. He is a member of the Artemartis collective in Accra.



About 70 Square Metres

70 Square Metres is a new gallery space in Shanghai by gallerist Pearl Lam that houses artist residency programmes and provides an opportunity for emerging non-residency artists to exhibit their work. Located in the historic former French Concession, the new space represents Lam's ongoing dedication to nurturing creativity and promoting underrepresented voices while fostering cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. The residency programme underscores the gallerist's ongoing commitment to strengthening connections between the East and West, as well as other areas of the world such as Africa. Lam believes that art transcends borders with its power to communicate with people of all cultures and nations.

Pearl Lam, Founder of 70 Square Metres, says, "By welcoming artists from various countries, disciplines, and stages in their careers, we create a vibrant environment where ideas and different perspectives flourish. This initiative not only enriches our community but also contributes to the broader cultural landscape. We provide residents with the time, space, and resources they need to dive deeply into their work, explore new mediums, and create innovative and expressive works."

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Press Enquiries

Asia:

Charmaine Chan / Associate Director, PR & Marketing
charmaine@pearllamgalleries.com

China:

Liesl Cheng / Director, 70 Square Metres
liesl@70sqm.com

UK, USA and Rest of the World:

Benji Prescott / Scott & Co
benji@scott-andco.com