



BEHOLDING BLACK MIRRORS: A Solo Exhibition by Keabetswe Seema

Exhibition Dates June 12, 2026–July 31, 2026 (Viewing by appointment only)
Please contact visit@70sqm.com or WeChat: _70squaremetres
Venue 70 Square Metres, G/F, 41 Hengshan Road, Shanghai, China



L: Keabetswe Seema b. 1999, **Behold: Silence as a Declaration of War**, 2026, Mixed media collage, peephole acrylic sheet, sound, 44 x 50 x 42 cm (17 1/4 x 19 5/8 x 16 1/2 in.)
R: Keabetswe Seema b. 1999, **Behold: Malice at the Palace Part II**, 2026, Mixed media collage, peephole acrylic sheet, sound, 44 x 50 x 42 cm (17 1/4 x 19 5/8 x 16 1/2 in.)

Shanghai—70 Square Metres is pleased to present *Beholding Black Mirrors*, an exhibition by South African artist Keabetswe Seema. This body of mixed-media collage and diorama works examines the historical and contemporary positioning of the Black female body within institutions of power, domestic space, and cultural production.

Using collage as both method and metaphor, Seema fragments and reassembles archival, digital, and personal imagery to construct staged interiors that collapse temporal and geographic boundaries. Through reflective black acrylic sheet, painted surfaces, sound, and layered cutouts, the works function as spatial “black mirrors”—reflective devices that implicate the viewer while recentring Black womanhood as the generative core of history, memory, and futurity.

The exhibition engages three intersecting sites: the sacred, the political, and the domestic. Works such as *Behold: Silence as a Declaration of War* and *Behold: Malice at the Palace Part II* interrogate the performance of power within ecclesiastical and colonial architectures, exposing how exclusion operates through spectacle and omission.

Seema's dioramas materialise seeing as an intimate, negotiated act rather than passive reception. By requiring the viewer to physically align their gaze with the aperture, the peephole structure collapses distance, drawing the viewer into speculative, sound-filled imagined worlds. Inside these enclosed, theatrically staged scenes, the Black matriarchal family acts as a conduit through which strangeness is translated and multiple realities unfold at the threshold of visibility.

Formally, the works engage Afro-surrealism and Afro-futurism through absurdity, fantasy, and dreamlike states across the past, present, and future. Reflective surfaces and peephole structures position the viewer as both witness and participant—much like modern-day screens. Across the series, the artist asserts a lineage that extends from matriarchal structures in South Africa to contemporary diasporic practice in China, proposing the home, the studio, and the archive as interconnected spaces of Black feminist authorship.

Beholding Black Mirrors stands as both a powerful indictment of marginalisation and a profound act of reclamation. It voices a resolute demand for Black women to be seen, recognised and defined on their own terms. An explorer of identity, gender and cross-cultural belonging, Keabetswe Seema invites audiences to confront hidden narratives, reflect on systemic structures, and embrace the complexity of Black female existence through her evocative visual language.

About Keabetswe Seema

Keabetswe Seema (b. 1999) was born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa. The artist explores themes of Afro-surrealism, spirituality, and the matriarchal family as well as the politics of the black female body and identity using various art forms such as monotypes, photography, collage, sculpture, sound, and mixed media. Seema graduated with distinction from the University of Pretoria with a BA (Fine Arts) in 2023. She won the Tilga Art Fund 4th prize in 2025 and the Blessing Ngobeni Art Prize in 2024, which resulted in a solo exhibition, *Let the Fire Lead You Home*, at Everard Read. Seema was a Cassirer Welz Finalist in 2024 and was a part of the Cubicle series at Everard Read Cape Town in 2025 with the exhibition *A Deposit from Heaven*. Residencies include the Wereld x Rosemary Hill Residency (2025) and Blessing Ngobeni Art Residency (2024).

About 70 Square Metres

70 Square Metres is a gallery space established in 2024 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 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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