

Truth About Me

Curated by Mashonda Tifrere
16 March – 17 April 2021
Urban Zen, 705 Greenwich Street

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Mashonda Tifrere and Donna Karan to present monthlong art exhibition of work by 20 female and nonbinary artists

Curated by Mashonda Tifrere and taking place at Donna Karan's 5,000-square-foot West Village loft space (Urban Zen), Truth About Me will benefit Tifrere's women-in-the-arts advocacy organization, ArtLeadHer

New York, NY — Spring 2021 – Female artist advocacy organization ArtLeadHer is pleased to collaborate with fashion icon and philanthropist Donna Karan for an art exhibition and month of virtual cultural programming. Curated by ArtLeadHer founder Mashonda Tifrere, *Truth About Me* will present a varied-media selection of work from 19 emerging and mid-career artists who explore themes of personal identity and the human condition. The 20th artist on view in the space will be Amani Lewis, who will have their own focus gallery for a five-work solo presentation entitled *Midnight*.



Lauren Pearce, *Blues in my Bedroom* (2021) • Tawny Chatmon, *Cylvia, In Honor of Her Grandmother* (2021)
• Chantel Walkes, *Kumiko* (2020) • Installation view of exhibition in the Urban Zen space.

Of the exhibition's inspiration, curator Mashonda Tifrere states:

“We are all products of a program that was projected onto us at birth and during childhood, and whether or not our inherent beliefs are formed by nature, nurture, or somewhere in between, it is inevitable that we will all lose some portion of our truth along the way.” She continues: “Through intimate portraits and abstract art surveying personal truths of emotional intelligence, the artists examine a journey back to their truest expressions of self, while imploring viewers to turn their gaze inwards to seek the parts of themselves they've hidden.”

The exhibition venue, Urban Zen, was formerly home to the art studio of Donna Karan's late husband Stephan Weiss, and has since been repurposed into a cultural venue

honoring his legacy. Built around 1899, the space's ground floor occupies approximately 5,000 square feet in the heart of the West Village.

In alignment with ArtLeadHer's practice of exhibiting emerging female artists alongside established names, *Truth About Me* will feature artists at diverse moments in their careers, from first-ever exhibitors to artists who have shown with major museums. The artists include: Lindsay Adams, Yulia Bas, Adrienne Brown, Tawny Chatmon, Penda Diakit , Kameisha Garbadawala, Julia Greyson, Jazmine Hayes, Latoya Hobbs, Monica Ikegwu, Shantell Martin, Alexis McGriggs, Ambrose Murray, Dawn Okoro, Lauren Pearce, REWA, Lanecia Rouse Tinsley, Chantel Walkes, and Jade Yasmeen. ArtLeadHer operates in a traditional gallery structure, giving 60% of proceeds from sold works to the artist.

Both Donna Karan and ArtLeadHer founder Mashonda Tifrere have a history of using their public platforms to foster cultural initiatives within and beyond the arts. Tifrere, through ArtLeadHer, looks to increase representation of women in the visual arts by presenting a forum for emerging female artists to exhibit work among established industry names— then by channeling resources to provide structured visual arts education opportunities for underserved girls in New York City and Newark, New Jersey. Donna Karan, with her Urban Zen Foundation, aims to support preservation of culture around the world, bringing care back to healthcare, wellness, and education.

Said Donna Karan of the partnership: "When I look at Mashonda and all that she is doing with ArtLeadHer, she's connecting the dots between women, art and our community. She brings together the most beautiful artists, highlights their talent and soul. She's raising awareness and inspiring change, and that truly expresses what Urban Zen is about – Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, Community and positive Change."

Karan and Tifrere met in the summer of 2017 when Tifrere walked into Karan's Urban Zen store in Sag Harbor. Karan happened to be in the store at the time. The two had an immediate connection from the moment of their first exchange, and soon began to see how they could collaborate to affect change in the creative space and beyond.

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