



## **Rugiyatou Ylva Jallow**

*"Days of Daydreams"*

F2T Gallery | Via Statuto 13, 20121 Milano

Opening April 14th 2023, 6-9pm

April 15th – June 24th, 2023

F2T Gallery is proud to announce "*Days of Daydreams*", a solo show by Swedish-Gambian artist Rugiyatou Ylva Jallow.

Following the Merriam-Webster vocabulary, the meaning of "*daydream*" is explained as: "*a pleasant visionary usually wishful creation of the imagination*", in this sense, the artist opens a dialogue between herself and her personal history to a more universal storytelling about the women, their roots, and races trying to free them upon a series of portraits caught in a dreamlike atmosphere capable of escaping reality.

In order to better understand her personal body of work, it is necessary to introduce to the viewer the intimate story of the woman and artist: Rugiyatou Ylva Jallow (b.1990, in Stockholm). Raised by her Gambian father and stepmother who have imparted West African values and culture while living her whole life in Sweden. The artist credits her Swedish mother and grandmother as the early artistic influences in her life, inspiring her to start painting at an early age.

Her upbringing became her inspiration to portray black subjectivity and explore her half-Swedish and half-Gambian identity. In that sense, all of her pieces are about her story of what it means to be a mixed human being and the struggle to feel a sense of belonging and identifying with race, Caucasian or Black.

This duality is clearly represented in her artistic practice, especially in the alternating shades of the skin color of her subjects, which can be read as quite directly autobiographical. Her technique about mixed skin with the thread, is as a visual representation of equality and connection across races.

As the threads represent the flow of life and the connection between races and the cropped hands represent her ancestors or ones of any mixed woman; Jallow creates a deep parallelism between art, life, and the matter of being a daydreamer through suspended female subjects, lost in their private world, protected by the presence of hands from the gaze of others.

Escaping from reality, she has wanted to create a series of pieces that represented women simply involved in a daydream, following a sense of freedom. Her portraits trap the artist's emotionality while the figures express the internal and external struggle of being a mixed woman, trying to reconcile the dichotomies of bridging multiple cultures.

*“Our skin does not define us. My paintings will take you to a world of questioning and pride. I have been drawn to African culture and black history since I was a child as my father constantly spoke of the pride he has in his Gambian heritage. Growing up in Sweden with a Swedish mother also had a big impact on me, especially the love I have for nature and my strong belief in women's empowerment. I use acrylic, oil paint, and threads to capture the beauty in mixed women and use surrealism as a tool to create bold and daring pieces. My work questions what it means to have a darker complexion. It allows you to enter a range of emotions and bring you the idea that our skin does not define us.”*

Rugiyatou Ylva Jallow

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Gallery hours | Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 7pm

F2T Gallery, Via Statuto 13, 20121 Milan

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