

Media Contact

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TESSA WHITEHEAD OPENS HER FIRST SOLO SHOW AT TERN WITH  
“CARRY”

*“Motherhood changes the perspective and the identity and it becomes a space for investigation of femininity in its totality”*

TERN proudly announces our upcoming exhibition, **Carry**, by Bahamian multi-media artist Tessa Whitehead . Known for her prolific large-scale oil paintings, Whitehead’s practice centers the landscape as a metaphor for her interpersonal relationships. Our first solo exhibition by Whitehead, **Carry** explores themes of motherhood, femininity, and the landscape through oil paintings and mixed media drawings. On view for the public in the gallery from April 4th to May 4th, 2024, the celebration will be held on April 25th from 7 pm to 9 pm, sponsored by Youngs Fine Wine.

In this new body of work, Whitehead explores weight in relation to motherhood with the mother as the “carrier”. Although weight is often associated with heaviness, motherhood in its totality is not burdensome, but ever-present and mundane in this framework of womanhood. Whitehead likens this weight to notions of holding, carrying, and the active work that women do. She translates this into family portraits often intertwined into the landscape or by rendering the landscape itself as the portrait. Here, the landscape acts as a mirror and translator. Consistently weaving the fabric of femininity into the work, the physicality of motherhood appears as the density of leaves and the overlapping of branches. Shadows and glistening lights pull the audience into the omnipresence of the mother in proximity to the child, and the entangled identities of both arise as the subject of the work.

Whitehead suggests that these considerations are not sacrificial or miserable, but a surrender to the role of carrier in service of the new life. For more information on this exhibition, email Amanda at [amanda@terngallery.com](mailto:amanda@terngallery.com).

## About

Tessa Whitehead (b. 1985, Nassau, The Bahamas) is a multimedia artist working primarily in painting. Whitehead received her BA in Fine arts from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (2007) and her MFA from The Slade School of Fine Art, UCL, London (2009). Her painting practice is rooted in ancestral landscapes and Caribbean surrealism which mirrors and translates her interpersonal relationships and experiences. Often set in the backdrop of the lush and foreboding Bahamian bush, Whitehead's paintings illustrate the often opaque "knowings" of traversing Caribbean landscapes. The "knowings" are rooted in intuition/magic and Whitehead's engagement with femininity. At times her work unearths archetypes of the wild women; a pointed deconstruction of an idyllic tropical façade. Although known for her large-scale figurative paintings, her practice incorporates a variety of mediums, including, drawing, performance, analogue photography, film, and sculpture.

## Image Credits

### **Carrier, 2024**

Tessa Whitehead

Oil on canvas

40 x 30in

### **Shadow of something, 2024**

Tessa Whitehead

Oil on canvas

70 x 30in

### **Presenting baby to landscape, 2023**

Tessa Whitehead

Ink and graphite on paper

23 x 17in