

The Soloviev Foundation Gallery Presents
Between Distance and Desire: African Diasporic Perspectives



Top left: Africa, Bamana, Male *ciwara* headdress (19th century). Photo: Tim Nighswander/Imaging4Art.
Top right: Edson Chagas, *DENIS M. MPONGWÉ, TIPO PASSE* (2019). Photo: Edson Chagas and APALAZZOGALLERY.

Bottom left: Eblin Grueso, *El Bato* (2018). Photo: Eblin Grueso.
Bottom right: Africa, Dan, Mask (19th – 20th century). Photo: Tim Nighswander/Imaging4Art.

High resolution images are available [here](#).

NEW YORK (APRIL X, 2025): **The Soloviev Foundation Gallery** is pleased to announce *Between Distance and Desire: African Diasporic Perspectives*, curated by Tumelo Mosaka and opening May 1, 2025. Located on the ground floor of the Soloviev Group's iconic tower at 9 West 57th Street, the gallery will feature eight contemporary artists alongside works from the

Foundation's collection in an exhibition that challenges the colonial frameworks that have historically shaped views of African art. By revisiting these complex histories, the artists and curator utilize modes of play and fantasy to offer alternative perspectives about the past, present, and future of Black aesthetics. *Between Distance and Desire* rethinks traditional African art within today's global political and cultural context.

"The Soloviev Foundation Gallery is dedicated to fostering dialogue that challenges historical narratives and encourages a deeper understanding of global artistic practices, particularly those rooted in the African diaspora with this exhibit," said **Stefan Soloviev**, principal of The Soloviev Foundation and chairman of the Soloviev Group.

The contemporary works included in the exhibition pursue a range of formal strategies, from figurative painting and assemblage to monumental sculpture and performance. By blending materials and references from various geographies and temporalities, these works create a paradoxical space of syncretic grandeur. They invite dialogue between African masks and the social issues facing the continent today, from urbanization and environmental crises to gender inequality and neocolonialism. These articulations revisualize Africa's agency within the contemporary world.

These artworks, together with curatorial interventions, depart from conventional displays of traditional African sculpture. For example, a group of masks is presented as a collective ensemble, enabling a conversation among the works themselves and with the viewer in an open-ended fashion. The show also features a group of objects within the shipping crates in which they are stored and transported, highlighting an often-overlooked aspect of African art history: the lives of objects when they are not displayed or actively engaged.

Between Distance and Desire celebrates the creativity and criticality of the African diaspora and seeks to instigate new conversations about the past, present, and future of African art.

Participating artists include **Edson Chagas, Kim Dacres, Vanessa German, Eblin Grueso, Emmanuel Massillon, Zizipho Poswa, Robert Pruitt, and Nyugen E. Smith**. The exhibition also features objects from The Soloviev Foundation collection made by the **Bamana, Baule, Dan, Djimini, Dogon, Ekoi, Fang, Guro, Kota, Lega, Luba, Songye, and We-Wobe** peoples.

Tumelo Mosaka is an independent curator and the Mellon Arts Project Director with the African American and Diaspora Studies at Columbia University. Mosaka has worked within and outside museums exploring global transnational artistic practices, especially from Africa, the Caribbean, and North America.

The Soloviev Foundation is pleased to share its collection with the public through guided tours and exhibition viewing hours. Guests are encouraged to visit the gallery's website to reserve a time. *Between Distance and Desire* will be on view until December 31, 2025.

ABOUT THE SOLOVIEV FOUNDATION

The Soloviev Foundation is the charitable giving arm of the Soloviev Group, dedicated to supporting the efforts of those working across humanitarian, environmental, and educational causes. The Foundation's gifts go to both large, long-established institutions addressing global crises and concerns, and smaller, hyperlocal organizations serving the populations in need within their communities. For more information, visit solovievfoundation.org.