



Saint Takyi, *From the river whose fish we do not eat*, 2026. Oil on linen, 50 cm x 61 cm.

Courtesy of the Artist and Elizabeth Xi Bauer, London.

Ivan Moraes, *Untitled (Candomblé Ritual)*, 1960. Tempera on canvas, 35 cm x 45 cm. Courtesy of Galeria MaPa, São Paulo, Brazil, and the estate of Ivan Moraes.

## Saint Takyi & Ivan Moraes: *Two Shores*

6<sup>th</sup> February – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Elizabeth Xi Bauer, Deptford

Private View: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Elizabeth Xi Bauer is pleased to present *Two Shores*, a new exhibition at its Deptford space, bringing together works by the late **Ivan Moraes** and emerging talent **Saint Takyi**. This exhibition marks the gallery's first presentation of work by either artist, and the first time their practices are shown in dialogue. Placing Moraes' historical perspective alongside Takyi's contemporary vision highlights the enduring influence of spirituality and identity as driving conceptual catalysts.

Opening a vital dialogue on duality and ambiguity, the exhibition explores African-origin cultural expression as a site of encounter, transformation, and syncretic identity. Through portraiture and layered visual languages, Ivan Moraes and Saint Takyi draw on Christian, Candomblé, and Asante traditions: Moraes embeds Afro-Brazilian ritual aesthetics within everyday scenes, while Takyi weaves Christian heritage and Asante mythologies into dreamlike narratives that probe the fluidity of identity.

Working in oil on canvas, **Saint Takyi** constructs dimorphic figures that blend child and adult traits, exploring duplexity, mythology, and identity. Their practice fuses worldbuilding and anthropological photography into dreamlike narratives. Using blue as a foundational element, a hue rare in nature and rich with symbolic resonance, Takyi creates ephemeral humanoid forms that channel memory and ancestry, often using themselves as the sitter. Beginning with a fascination for portraiture, they employ painting, sculpture, drawing, and writing as 'time stamps' of their evolving expression. For this exhibition, Takyi presents a series of five new works, including a diptych inspired by the biblical story of Cain and Abel. These paintings draw upon the artist's own layered heritage and upbringing,

"I really love the idea of creating and imagining a new history. In this [series of work], I am focusing more on duality, and I am investigating the idea of alternative pasts and presents," the

artist explains. “I am interested in personifying my duality in heritage, in my own spirituality and religion. I’m researching mythology and creating my own ones from borrowed stories, much like my own identity, which is borrowed from different places.”

**Ivan Moraes** developed a distinctive visual language rooted in the everyday spirituality of Afro-Brazilian life in Bahia, particularly through intimate portraits of women and scenes of religiosity unfolding beyond formal places of worship. Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1936, Moraes first pursued higher education in Social Service before dedicating himself entirely to painting, a practice he had nurtured since childhood. The works presented in *Two Shores*, drawn from the 1960s and 70s, reflect Moraes’ sustained engagement with Bahian cultural traditions and the richly layered iconography of Afro-Brazilian identity. An important work in the exhibition, *Untitled (Candomblé ritual)* (1960), exemplifies his ability to merge vivid colour, detail and a sense of the sacred, capturing the dynamism of ritual life with both tenderness and precision.

Moraes’ treatment of lace is one of the most distinctive aspects of his practice, revealing both his technical mastery and his sensitivity to the cultural symbolism of the traditional *Baiana* dress. Working in tempera, he built luminous layers of white upon white, allowing tonal shifts to articulate the intricate embroidery, pleats and textures of the traditional garments. Rather than depicting lace as a static decorative detail, Moraes animated it as the fabric ripples, gathers and unfurls across the surface of the canvas. This attention elevates the lace from costume to cultural icon: an embodiment of history, ritual and syncretism. Reinforcing the strength and grace of his subjects, Moraes transforms lace into a language of reverence, celebrating the resilience of Afro-Brazilian womanhood.

Marcelo Pallotta, founder of Galeria MaPa in São Paulo, first encountered Ivan Moraes’ work on the cover of Sergio Mendes & Brasil '66’s 1969 album *Ye-Me-Le*. Pallotta was drawn to Moraes’ portrayal of an ancestral figure, both maternal and childlike, reflecting African heritage with depth and nuance. Moraes was commissioned for the cover as the band began incorporating Afro-Brazilian influences into its music, including vibrant percussion, Bahian folklore and rhythms inspired by Candomblé, echoing the spiritual traditions rooted in Brazil’s African diaspora. The album title, *Ye-Me-Le* (or *Yê-melê*), comes from a ceremonial chant in Afro-Brazilian religious practice, meaning “Sea Wave”, symbolising movement, resilience and cultural continuity.

Language throughout *Two Shores* strikes a balance between celebration and historical accuracy, situating beauty and resilience within the complexity of lived experience. By bringing together artists who pay homage to a variety of ancestral knowledges in their work, this exhibition celebrates multiculturalism at a time when heated discourses about notions of belonging threaten the fabric of society.

This exhibition is curated by Maria do Carmo M. P. de Pontes.

## Notes to Editors

**Saint Takyi** (born 1997 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands). Lives and works in Milton Keynes, U.K.

Saint Takyi graduated from the Royal College of Art, London, with a Master's in Painting in 2024, supported by the Sir Frank Bowling Scholarship. In 2018, Takyi graduated with a Bachelors in Graphic Design from the University of Derby. During their studies, Takyi undertook an Erasmus exchange at the PXL MAD School of Art in Belgium.

Saint Takyi also works as an educator, committed to community engagement around identity and connection. The artist is currently undertaking a PGCE in Design and Technology.

Winner of the 2024 Ingram Art Prize, Takyi's artwork, *Emerging Past* (2024) is included in The Ingram Collection of Modern British and Contemporary Art, UK. Founded in 2002, The Ingram Collection is one of the largest and most significant publicly accessible collections of modern British art in the UK. In 2016, the Ingram Art Prize was established to celebrate and support the work and early careers of UK art school graduates.

Takyi's works have been exhibited across the United Kingdom, including MK Gallery, Milton Keynes; Studio 3 Gallery, University of Kent, Canterbury; The Fitzrovia Gallery, London; Fleet Studios, London, and Twilight Contemporary, London.

Working alongside curators Jarelle Francis and Louis Chapple, Takyi's works were exhibited in *Come by Here* at studio/chapple, London, in collaboration with RCA BLK in 2024.

Recently exhibiting in *Subvert Your Gaze to Meet Mine* at Twilight Contemporary, Takyi's works were shown in a group exhibition which explored the speculative and liberation-focused framework put forward in Lola Olufemi's publication *Experiments in Imagining Otherwise* (2021).

*Two Shores* is Saint Takyi's first exhibition with Elizabeth Xi Bauer.

#### **Ivan Moraes** (1936 - 2003, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Ivan Moraes trained initially in Social Services before dedicating himself fully to painting. He studied at the Instituto Municipal de Belas Artes, Brazil from 1953 and later at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Moraes' first solo exhibition took place at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro in 1960. Across subsequent decades, Moraes exhibited widely in Brazil, including solo shows at Galeria Copacabana Palace, Rio de Janeiro (1965–1970); Galeria de Arte Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro (1971–1972); Galeria Marte-21, Rio de Janeiro (1975); Galeria Nouvelle Dezon, Rio de Janeiro (1977, 1980) and Galeria de Arte Jean-Jacques, Rio de Janeiro (1982).

Early recognition included an honourable mention at the group exhibition held at the Salão do Clube Militar, Rio de Janeiro, in 1954, followed by participation in the National Salon of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro (1960–1963), the II Paris Biennale, France (1961), and the São Paulo Biennial (1963). His work was also included in the Primitive painter's exhibition, at the National Museum of Fine Arts, New York in 1966.

Moraes' work was used by music group *Brasil '66* featuring singer Sérgio Mendes, in 1966, for the record cover art, *Ye-Me-Le*.

Moraes' work is held in the permanent collections of Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Brazil, and Pinacoteca de São Paulo, Brazil.

In 2025, *Bahia of Gold and White* at Cobogó Gallery, London was the first time Moraes' works have been exhibited since his passing and the first time exhibited in the UK. The same year his works were presented at Frieze Masters by Galeria MaPa, São Paulo.

*Two Shores* presents Moraes' work for the first time with Elizabeth Xi Bauer Gallery.

Saint Takyi & Ivan Moraes: *Two Shores* will run from 6<sup>th</sup> February – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2026, at Elizabeth Xi Bauer's Deptford location, open Wednesday through to Saturday, 12 – 6 pm or by appointment. A Private View will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 6 – 8 pm

Gallery locations:

Fuel Tank, 8-12 Creekside, London, SE8 3DX

20-22 Exmouth Market, London, EC1R 4QE

For further information, press inquiries, or to schedule a visit, contact Paige Ashley at [paige@lizxib.com](mailto:paige@lizxib.com)

A Dropbox with additional press material can be found here:

[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/vneve12rtce0vzvoxrcmz/AGfbF7qfzcYj40awkcA\\_XJs?rlkey=405go0hvmq5610g8lm3kxtdzn&st=5vs3rc8s&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/vneve12rtce0vzvoxrcmz/AGfbF7qfzcYj40awkcA_XJs?rlkey=405go0hvmq5610g8lm3kxtdzn&st=5vs3rc8s&dl=0)

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