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London Gallery Weekend 2022 // Feature

London Gallery Weekend: Best shows for... discovering the hot new name

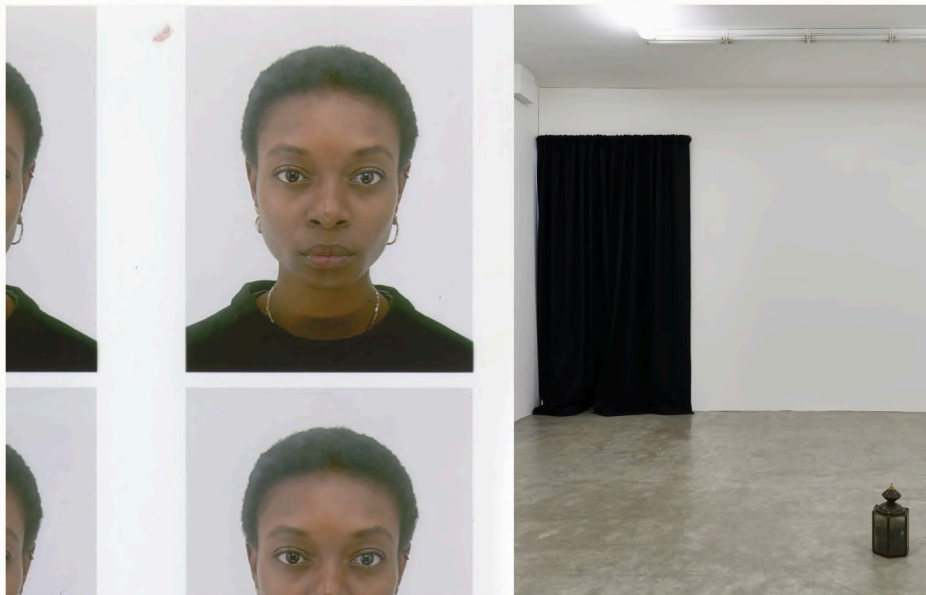
From the smell of Blackness to Tamil folklore-inspired ceramics—we pick out four exhibitions by the most exciting emerging artists

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Check out The Art Newspaper's guide to [London Gallery Weekend 2022](#) for recommendations on the best exhibitions to see during the three-day event, top trends and commentary

An unseasonably warm May and an even warmer market for work by artists under 35 greets visitors to the second edition of London Gallery Weekend. Fittingly then, the event features plenty of exciting emerging artists, many of whom are staging their most ambitious shows to date in hopes of catching the eyes of collectors and curators looking to discover new names. To help finetune your search for the next big thing, we've chosen four young(ish) artists whose exhibitions are ones not to miss.



Rhea Dillon portrait; installation view of *The Sombre Majesty* (or, on being the pronounced dead), at Soft Opening, London. Courtesy of Soft Opening, London

Rhea Dillon: The Sombre Majesty (or, on being the pronounced dead) [↗](#)

Until 11 June, Soft Opening, 6 Minerva Street, E2 9EH

A strange, unplaceable smell, containing notes of hair gel, pimento and skin oil, wafts through the second solo show of Rhea Dillon at Soft Opening. This scent—dispersed from a lantern top inspired by the artist's recent trip to Ghana—has been specially developed by Dillon as part of her ongoing artistic investigation into the ontology of race (in other words, the set of theories and stereotypes that are thought of when the words Black or Blackness are used). By creating a composite of identifiable smells that she describes as "typically Black" or having associations with Black culture, Dillon has formed something new and incomprehensible, revealing to us the "inability to pinpoint what race really is", she says.

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Dillon says she was inspired, in part, to create the work following a racially charged comment by the celebrity fashion reporter Giuliana Rancic, who in 2015 described the Black actress Zendaya as looking like she "smelled like patchouli and weed oil" due to her dreadlocks. The show also contains an overturned wooden cabinet, identical to one owned by the artist's grandmother, who belongs to the Windrush Generation that emigrated from the Caribbean to Britain in the 1960s. Inside, it is filled with broken cut crystal glassware shipped from Marseille, drawing comparisons between the transportation of goods across trade routes and the passage of souls from one life to another.