

ART: Escape into Balinese artist Sinta Tantra's tropical paradise

ART | 20 HOURS AGO | BY [HARRIET THORPE](#) | PHOTOGRAPHY: [LUCA PIFFARETTI](#)

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Balinese British artist Sinta Tantra opened a new exhibition in London just before the lockdown. Here, we take a photographic tour through the show at Kristin Hjellegjerde gallery filled with Tantra's trademark tropical colour scheme, that she wraps around city streets and plazas from Sharjah to Seoul in her public art, as well as in her studio practice



Sinta Tantra's 'Modern Times' exhibition at Kristin Hjellegjerde gallery in London, currently closed

Artist Sinta Tantra's new exhibition 'Modern Times' at Kristin Hjellegjerde gallery in London brings together [painting](#), murals, [textiles](#) and film into a poetic installation and comment on the globalisation of modernity. New paintings are framed by the mid-century gallery space (Andrew Logan's former home and studio), pink-coloured vinyl and the sound of bird-song emerging from a tree.

The title of the show, 'Modern Times', takes its title from a Charlie Chaplin film from 1936. Set in the Great Depression, the film follows a factory-working protagonist who struggles with a 'modern' life defined by machines and consumption. Providing another take on globalization, black and white footage of Chaplin's 1932 visit to Bali plays in the gallery space.



Here Bali is seen in a pre-modern, pre-westernised era – and a golden age. 'Last summer, I conducted a series of film interviews with my elderly father who grew up in a remote village in Bali, Indonesia, during the 1940s. Both Chaplin and my father seemed to have experienced a 'golden age' of Bali – a world untainted by machines and modernity – where days were spent preparing offerings to the Gods, ritual ceremonies, music and dancing,' says Tantra.

The juxtaposition represents her interest in finding the intersection between modernity, her Balinese heritage and her own globalized identity as an 'international artist'. Her work uses the language of modernism – geometric shapes also found in the work of Alexander Calder and Buckminster Fuller, and media from textiles to murals in the style of the Bauhaus. Yet her palette full of pinks, greens and yellows injects the Tropics into this language.

The exhibition, curated by Guillaume Vandame, is an installation of layers – film, plants, colours, architecture, sound and sculpture, all diffused in a pink glow from the vinyl across the industrial windows. It reflects the complexity of Tantra's globalised modernism: 'I wanted to cut through the vast architectural volume of the space and somehow inject the spirit of escapism or stepping into another world – part nostalgic, part historical, real and imagined,' she says. ✨



Gambin I, 2019, brass and glass



Installation view



Installation view

INFORMATION

sintatantra.com

kristinhjellegjerde.com

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