

Richard Ayodeji Ikhide: *Incroci del Passato (Crossroads of the Past)*

Exhibition: 1 November–13 December 2025

Victoria Miro Venice, San Marco 1994, 30124 Venice, Italy



Richard Ayodeji Ikhide, *Carry Forth*, 2025
Tempera on panel
40.5 x 30.5 cm
16 x 12 in
© Richard Ayodeji Ikhide
Courtesy the artist

Victoria Miro is delighted to present *Incroci del Passato (Crossroads of the Past)* by London-based Nigerian artist Richard Ayodeji Ikhide. During a residency with the gallery in Venice in spring 2025, Ikhide began a series of tempera paintings which he later completed upon return to London. The exhibition is accompanied by new text by Minna Moore Ede.

‘Reclaiming elements of early Italian painting, Ikhide draws authority from the historical tradition, but he also expands it. Infusing it with his own unique mythology, he recodes its values and makes it his own.’ – Minna Moore Ede

Working in egg tempera on panel for the first time, Ikhide seeks to bridge artistic traditions ranging from the devotional paintings of the Italian Renaissance to the ritual objects and ancestral knowledge of his Nigerian heritage. In these new works, archetypal figures emerge – parents, children, seekers, holy families – each inhabiting charged symbolic landscapes where the sacred, the ancestral and the personal intersect.

Ikhide began experimenting with the medium while studying depictions of hermit saints and early tempera works by Italian painters such as Carlo Crivelli. A period of seclusion away from his own family shaped a series of deeply personal works that explore the balance between devotion and self-discovery. *Patri* portrays a male figure mixing pigments in solitude, a reference to St Jerome but also of the artist’s early days in Venice, alone and experimenting with tempera under

the gaze of an ancestral presence. Its counterpart, *Matri*, situates a female figure in the wilderness alongside effigies and a dolmen – at once portal, womb and tomb – signifying feminine power as a threshold to life and the generative power of the maternal.

The recurring boy figure in *Assurance*, *Manifest*, and *Carry Forth* embodies the quest for both self and ancestral knowledge: carrying vessels, confronting the viewer or meditating among effigies, he traverses landscapes of growth, death and rebirth. His journey recalls the structure of the hero's journey, not only as an outward passage into otherworldly realities but also an inward descent into the unconscious, where he confronts challenges that lead to greater awareness. Images of vessels, references to Nok terracotta found in the southwestern part of Nigeria, represent the family unit or the importance of masculine and feminine energies being in balance. 'I imagine the vessel's presence as a source of strength, giving the protagonist the assurance to step out into the wider world or go forth on his journey with the knowledge of ancestry and culture informing who they are,' Ikhide says.

This meditation on sacred objects evolved alongside the artist's rigorous exploration of egg tempera. Tempera's precise, linear mark-making, in which colour is built up through layers of translucent strokes, as well as its luminous quality, allowed Ikhide to translate the graphic quality of his pen-and-ink works into a medium whose longevity echoes the artist's own concern with ancestry and continuity. For Ikhide, these figures and spaces in *Incroci del Passato (Crossroads of the Past)* are not prescriptions but open sites of interpretation – personal mythologies that resonate with wider traditions of initiation and ritual, asking how individuals engage with their past to carry their knowledge into the present.

About the artist

Richard Ayodeji Ikhide was born in Lagos, Nigeria in 1991 and currently lives and works in London, UK. He is a graduate of the Royal Drawing School.

Ikhide's work is the subject of a solo exhibition, *Tales from Future Past*, at CPM Gallery, Baltimore (27 September–15 November 2025). In 2022, he presented *Acts of Creation* with Victoria Miro Projects. Other notable solo presentations include *Emiomo*, Candice Madey, New York (2022); *Immateria*, Galerie Bernhard, Zurich (2022); *MythMaking*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles (2021); *Future Past*, V.O Curations, London (2021); and *Osmosis*, Zabłudowicz Collection, London (2019).

In addition, his work has been included in several group exhibitions including *Prospect and Refuge*, Sim Smith, London (2022); *ASSEMBLE*, V.O Curations, London (2021); *No horizon, no edge to liquid*, Zabłudowicz Collection, London (2020); *For the Many, Not the Few*, Guts Gallery, Online; Bloomberg New Contemporaries, South London Gallery, London (2018); and *Best of The Drawing Year 2018*, Christie's, London (2017).

His work has been acquired by the Royal Collection Trust.

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