

# Atong Atem

## *Everything in Remission*

Gertrude Contemporary  
Saturday 12 February – Sunday 27 March 2022

Atong Atem's solo exhibition *Everything in Remission* centres on two large scale panoramic collage works; one in vibrant colour, the other a slightly inverted black and white copy of the first. The central pieces have been 10 years in development, from the earliest incorporated photographic works to the new works made for this exhibition. Alongside these works are three portraits of Atem's parents and two self-portraits by the artist.

The panoramic photographs depict new, old and unseen works interlayered to create a vast, large-scale wallpaper with references to architecture, relationships, textures and found photographs. The collage work is both biographical and fantasy. It is a visual narrative presented in the style of stream of consciousness writing.

Atem made this work as a way to honour mental clarity, lucidity and depression in remission. As Atem describes, 'I am a deeply overwhelmed and emotionally sensitive person who often forgets that there are times of stillness and calm; moments where I feel at one with whatever reasons I chose to be here in the first place.'

'I refer to relationships and the act of creating as means for self-care. I refer to colour and grandiosity as tools for participating in life. The works embrace the effort of making, the tangibility of emotions and the three-dimensionality of the journey to feeling okay with oneself,' says Atem.

The inversion and colour work, and the soft sculptural elements, speak to the ongoing labour of seeking in the artist's practice.

Atong Atem is an Ethiopian born, South Sudanese artist and writer living in Narm/Melbourne. Atem has exhibited her work across Australia, including Monash University Museum of Art, Gertrude Contemporary, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art and internationally at Red Hook Labs in New York, Vogue Fashion Fair in Milan and Unseen Amsterdam art fair.

Atem was the recipient of the inaugural National Gallery of Victoria and MECCA M-Power scholarship in 2017, participated in the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) Triennial (2020-2021) and exhibited a major body of work at the Immigration Museum, Melbourne as part of the inaugural PHOTO 2020 International Festival of Photography.

## List of works

1. Atong Atem  
*Wundut, Mandut, 2022*  
Giclee Print stained dark oak frame  
100cm x 150cm

2. Atong Atem  
*Infrared Mandut, Wundut, 2022*  
Giclee Print stained dark oak frame  
100cm x 100cm

3. Atong Atem  
*Everything in Remission 2022*  
Wallpaper Colour Print  
600cm x 200cm

4. Atong Atem  
*Sometimes in Retrograde, 2022*  
Wallpaper Black and White Print  
600cm x 200cm

5. Atong Atem  
*Mandut, Wundut 1, 2022*  
Giclee Print stained dark oak frame  
100cm x 150cm

All works courtesy of the artist and MARS Gallery.

