

ICA London – New Solo Exhibition by Tanoa Sasraku

Tanoa Sasraku: *Morale Patch*

7 October 2025 – 11 January 2026

Lower Galleries, Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London



Tanoa Sasraku, *Morale Patch* [detail], 2025. Found object: acrylic and crude oil.

This autumn, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London will present *Morale Patch*, an exhibition of new work by Tanoa Sasraku (b. 1995, Plymouth). Through works on paper, found objects, and sculpture, Sasraku will examine the seductive and destructive power of oil – its ties to war and national identity – through a meditation on emblems and mementos.

Morale Patch will expand the artist's material and process-led practice, as Sasraku turns her attention to oil: its materiality, fetishisation, and its role in geopolitics, nationalism, and the economy. As attuned to natural processes and conditions as she is to the nuanced historical contexts of her subjects, Sasraku's work across sculpture, printmaking, and installation, remains porous to the circumstances of its display. Her works on paper will gradually fade over time, while the national and military symbols they depict shift in meaning depending on audience perception and the volatility of geopolitical context. Sasraku's interest lies in how complex events, individual and national glory, and militaristic rationale can be pinned to everyday symbols and souvenirs, and how materials themselves carry narrative and emotional weight.

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For this new commission, Sasraku has collected a series of acrylic paperweights produced by oil companies, each encasing a small amount of crude oil sourced from extraction sites around the globe. In the exhibition, these corporate souvenirs will be repurposed into a monumental new installation staged on a giant tiled display in the ICA's lower gallery. The strange and highly designed objects boast slogans of success and depict their origin landscapes, from the snowy oil fields of Siberia and Alaska to the deserts of Texas and Saudi Arabia and the waters of the Scottish North Sea. Taken from the executive desks and domestic mantels for which they were intended, Sasraku will reconfigure them within a conceptual chess game offering a meditation on extraction, pride, and empire.

In the rear gallery, another series of paperweights will continue Sasraku's enquiry into the intersection of oil and nationalism. Two sets of newly fabricated acrylic sculptures, approximately the size of an Action Man box, resemble miniature military coffins. Each set references a site of war and/or oil extraction: one topped with a screen-printed Scottish flag placed over a North Sea landscape; another draped with an American flag laid across a desert terrain.

The exhibition will also include a new series of works on paper, examining military and national emblems, symbols which distil complex and often devastating histories into designs that can be worn and celebrated as individual achievement. Service ribbons such as the Kuwait Liberation Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and the Prisoner of War Medal, among others, are rendered in muted, UV-printed patterns on thick stacks of newsprint which warp and ripple like fabric from the artist's experimental printing process. Sasraku relegates the bold colours represented in these ribbons to the outer edges of the paper, using brightly coloured binder clips to mark their symbolic hues. The centre of the page is left pale, drained. These materials of newsprint, binder clips and paperweights, evocative of administrative bureaucracy, speak to the faded ideals and the aesthetics of power.

The largest of these works at three metres wide, *Allomother*, will address the American flag, which Sasraku approaches from the perspective of a British artist raised on American pop culture, and for whom the flag once embodied fantasy and aspiration. In *Allomother*, the iconic stripes of the flag have been burned into the paper using UV light, creating an image that emerges from the natural tone of the newsprint itself. The image, like the material used to make it, is unstable and will fade over the course of the exhibition, contradicting the American flag as a symbol that has seemingly indefatigable potency, and acknowledging its shifting meanings as American national identity evolves amid an unsettled geopolitical landscape.

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A publication will accompany the exhibition and feature a conversation between Tanoa Sasraku and Fiona Banner, as well as texts by Susan Schuppli, Chiorstaidh Black, Pip Laurenson and Libby Ireland, among others.

Priority booking for ICA Members will be on sale from 2nd September. General booking will be available from 9th September. For information about tickets and membership, please visit ica.art or contact: sales@ica.art / +44 (0)20 7930 3647

Tanoa Sasraku commented:

I was first invited to produce a solo exhibition for the ICA in the Summer of 2023. The ideas for this new body of work have been in my back pocket over the past two years; made, broken down and reformed, as I left art school, left England and began to understand the kind of artist I want to be. The curatorial team at the ICA have made me feel believed in, through a deep, enthusiastic engagement with my ideas and my shift from the materials and processes I was previously known for. This has allowed me to take the risks that I needed to at this juncture in my career and I feel very proud of the work that has emerged during this time.

Bengi Ünsal, Director, commented:

The ICA's history reflects a series of pioneering exhibitions where we have collaborated with artists who took risks, experimented, and placed their trust in the ICA at pivotal moments in their development. Today, as global events change and fluctuate around us at an unprecedented pace, this feels like a fitting time to present Tanoa Sasraku's new solo commission. Across mediums, Tanoa brings a deliberate and nuanced perspective to the world we inhabit today. We are proud to support her work at this exciting juncture and look forward to following her career in the decades to come.

Andrea Nitsche-Krupp, Curator of Exhibitions, commented:

It has been a privilege to have ongoing conversations with Tanoa about this body of work and her wider artistic practice. These conversations about material and individual agency in relation to conceptions of place and nationhood have taken place against a volatile political landscape, and Tanoa has in parallel expanded the boundaries of her practice in surprising and responsive ways. Now, welcoming the public into this dialogue feels not only timely, but essential.

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Visitor Information

Tickets: from £6.00

Pay What You Can: Tue to Sun: 12 – 1pm

Members go free

Exhibition opening times:

Monday: Closed

Tue to Sun: 12 – 9pm

Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London SW1Y 5AH

About Tanoa Sasraku

Tanoa Sasraku's (b. 1995, Plymouth) practice encompasses sculpture, drawing and filmmaking. Her work is rooted in the material and symbolic properties of land via landscapes, pigments, and minerals, and informed by a personal relationship to textiles and patternmaking. Sasraku graduated from Goldsmiths College (2018) and Royal Academy of Arts (2024).

Recent solo exhibitions include 'Man Engine', Vardaxoglou, London (2023); Tanoa Sasraku, Vardaxoglou, London (2022); 'Terratypes', Spike Island, Bristol (2022); and 'Liths', Peer, London, UK (2023).

Sasraku's moving image works have been screened at the BFI Southbank, as part of the 18th London Short Film Festival (2021); Selected X, VideoClub online and touring (2020); Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, Berwick-upon-Tweed (2019).

In 2021, Sasraku was awarded the Arts Foundation Futures Award for Visual Arts. In 2023 Sasraku completed a residency at Porthmeor Studios, St Ives, UK. Tanoa Sasraku's work is held in a number of collections, including Arts Council Collection, UK; The Government Art Collection, UK; and The Box, Plymouth, UK.

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About the Institute of Contemporary Arts

The **Institute of Contemporary Arts** (ICA) is London's leading space for contemporary culture. We commission, produce and present new work in film, music, performance and the visual arts by today's most progressive artists. In our landmark home on The Mall in central London, we invite artists and audiences to interrogate what it means to live in our world today, with a genre-fluid programme that challenges the past, questions the present and confronts the future.

The ICA platforms the daring and the curious, supporting artists and ideas that challenge perceptions, inspire social change, and connect with diverse audiences locally and globally. As a space for bold, boundary-pushing creativity, we cultivate connections across disciplines, communities, and cultures. Our cross-disciplinary programming invites audiences to explore beyond the boundaries of individual art forms, fostering experimentation and the discovery of new perspectives. Open to all voices and ideas, we embrace interplay and interaction across club nights, film festivals, gigs, exhibitions, talks, and digital art. With inclusivity and collaboration at the heart of our work, we remain fearless in shaping contemporary creativity, connecting diverse voices, and making unexpected connections that define the future of arts and culture.

Our history of presenting and promoting visionary new art is unrivalled in London: from Kenneth Anger to Kathy Acker, Kano to Klein, Jackson Pollock to Jean-Michel Basquiat, Gay Sweatshop to Forensic Architecture, David Bowie to Stormzy, Pop Art to queer techno. Today, as ever, our inclusive programme reflects and represents who we are as a disparate and diverse collection of cultures and identities.

Exactly 78 years after a group of artists and poets founded the ICA as an alternative to the mainstream, we are committed more than ever to pave the way for the next generation and to platform creative voices. The ICA continues to celebrate risk and champion innovation, and experimentation across the arts – a playground and a home for today's most vital artists. Central to the ICA's vision and mission is a commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion at all levels of the organisation. We want to create and maintain an ICA that is a positive environment where similarities and differences of people are valued – a space where everyone belongs and feels welcome. We hold ourselves accountable through our regularly reviewed Anti-Racism Strategic Plan; Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan; and Safety Policy.

Since its inception, the ICA has been the home of future-thinking ideas and urgent cultural discourse. We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment that encourages dialogue and debate, recognising that differing viewpoints are essential to the advancement of contemporary arts and culture.

The ICA is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Access

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