



**Roberto Visani**  
**Reap The Wild Wind**

**TW Fine Art**  
**2412 Florida Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL, 33401**  
Opening Reception: April 18th, 2024 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM

To request an exhibition preview, please email:  
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TW Fine Art is pleased to present *Reap The Wild Wind*, an exhibition featuring the work of Roberto Visani on view from April 18th to May 18th. Visani's sculptures reference the African diaspora and transatlantic artifacts and archives as a form of comparative history. Within the body of work titled *Primary Structures*, the artist reconsiders stylized indigenous representations of the human form, specifically West African figurative sculpture and its relationship to modernism and 3D modeling. Through a combination of analog and digital methods, these works re-orient misplaced ideas of primitivism through a metamorphosis, translating code into cardboard and cast metal and adding layers of meaning throughout the process. The sculptures, cast in iron, bronze, and aluminum, suggest an enduring legacy of cultural expression while employing digital fabrication as a generative tool. This juxtaposition of traditional and technology explores the anonymity that our digital world engenders and how identity interfaces with it.

Within his body of work, *Primary Structures*, Visani has created two distinct series – sculptures with upraised arms, titled *Hands Up*, and his series of *Helmet Masks*, abstracted conical mask forms related to *Dogon* ceremonial masks and other sources. The artist states, 'These works confront ideas of transformation, translation, and the transportation of the body through time and space, particularly the "Black Body." The artist has provided referential imagery on display in his studio. These images highlight the comparisons to historical and cultural documentation recognizable in Visani's oeuvre.

*Hands Up* is a series of sculptures investigating the universal gesture of upraised arms. As stated by Visani: "I began thinking of this pose after visiting the Metropolitan Museum of Art. During the visit, I encountered a figurative sculpture by an unknown Dogon artist from Mali. These sculptures are associated with connecting the earth to the heavens. I was reminded of another instance in which people expressed themselves with upraised arms - the protests that took place in Ferguson, Missouri, after Michael Brown was shot and killed. I began making other associations – gospel music and the Black church, a conductor preparing an orchestra, the dancers in Ernie Barnes' painting *The Sugar Shack*, and police encounters when suspects are ordered to put their hands in the air.

Visani's *Helmet Masks* conflate mask imagery from numerous sources, beginning with comparisons of the visual forms of Dogon helmet masks and KKK hoods. While considering other masking traditions, the works attempt to reconcile the contrast of meanings and center the sculptures as a form of spiritual inheritance, incorporating symbols of empowerment, kinship, and authority.

Visani's sculptures are juxtaposed with works from Mike De Paola's collection, which round out and contextualize the conceptual framework. The artists on view are Theaster Gates, Shinique Smith, and LaKela Brown. The exhibition as a whole examines the dilemmas of racial biases and the layered connotations of both joy and hardship and questions the ambiguity of the human form in various states of existence.



**Roberto Visani** is a multi-media artist residing in Brooklyn, New York. Primarily working in sculpture, his artwork examines the black body, often through the reinterpretation of historical artworks and artifacts.

Roberto Visani has exhibited at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY; The Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; The Bronx Museum, NY; Brattlesboro Museum, VT; Speed Museum of Art, KY; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, SF; and Barbican Galleries, London. Visani has been awarded residencies from Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, NY, Chelsea College of Art, London and Art Omi, NY. He is a NYFA Fellow in Sculpture and was a Fulbright Fellow to Ghana. His work has been reviewed by the New York Times, Art Forum, Art News, and Frieze among others. Since 2004 he has taught at John Jay College of Criminal Justice where he is an associate professor of art.