



HIRSCHL & ADLER MODERN

For Immediate Release

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Tula Telfair Who Owns This Land

October 14–November 20, 2026

Hirschl & Adler Modern Announces Inaugural Exhibition of Works by Tula Telfair

New York, NY, August 26, 2026. Iceland's wondrous hot springs and geysers include signs asking tourists to resist the damaging and uniquely human urge to toss coins at them for good luck. "Nature does not care about your money," we are reminded. It is a simple truth, one that hits our fragile egos like a slap in the face. Things we want to assign value or meaning to are reduced to folly in front of, say, a massive waterfall surging 500,000 gallons of water per second into an abyss. Once you accept the fact of nature's cold indifference to humans, you are ready to experience the heart-pounding awe of Tula Telfair's paintings.

Hirschl & Adler Modern is pleased to present *Tula Telfair: Who Owns This Land*, our first solo exhibition of the artist's work, from October 14 through November 20, 2026. The show features more than a dozen new paintings exploring the human condition through our ongoing and complicated relationship with the land. The figure is not needed here. In nature's presence, the artist believes we come to understand our own mortality and insignificance. How would our acceptance of that fact change our trajectory in this world?

The works in this exhibition seem to contemplate that question out loud but stop short of providing answers. Instead, they offer a striking dichotomy: gently populated landscapes in a hushed cobalt blue versus scenes of almost exotic, untamed wilderness without human presence. It is a poignant contrast, one that Telfair knows will elicit a conflicted response. There's nothing simple when it comes to the topic of land use. For her part, the artist takes a dispassionate approach, much as nature does. She insists that she accepts everything on its own terms as beautiful. The cobalt pictures, for instance, embrace the confluence of humans and land, observing coolly from a

distance high in the atmosphere. *Infrastructure and Superstructure*, 2026, suggests a quiet, even harmonic, coexistence of nature and people. The terrain remains the dominant feature, a tranquil blue expanse of bending rivers and undulations stretching well beyond the limits of our sight. But sinuous trails of orange and yellow suggest the familiar trappings of civilization to anyone who has gazed at the ground from thousands of feet in the air—a remarkably common experience today. Telfair is notably restrained in her depiction of human activity spreading across the topography in a logical, almost gentle way. Instead of overwhelming or altering the landscape, the community below us finds safety in its valleys and commerce along its rivers. Like all her paintings, the story is still the land. But the tiny buildings and highways intentionally signal a time rooted in the present moment—a mere blip in the long chronology of this planet.

In contrast, other paintings in the exhibition tell a more timeless story. Telfair turns her attention to a version of nature devoid of anything human—the relentless power of water in *The Temptations*, 2026, or the austere, windswept slope of a mountain in *This is Just the Beginning*, 2026. These are seemingly primordial scenes of earth in a state of constant change, not based in a particular time. Here, we are firmly planted, if almost breathless, amid the jagged rock and vegetation. These are seductive views calling us forward to traverse the heaving, shifting ground as we adjust to a massive geological scale unlike anything we are used to. As with so many of Tula Telfair's paintings, these scenes with their hulking forms, plunging depths and boundless distances, are remarkable for how we *feel* them as much as we *see* them.

The artist is well known for her travels from Iceland to Antarctica, and to all points in between, in search of the most dramatic scenery in the world. Her goal is not to document what she sees, but to bear witness to the spectacle and respond in her own way. That involves re-imagining as much as reproducing. To alter our preconceived view of the world, Telfair heightens the colors and widens the distances to something we have not quite laid our eyes on before. Only then, confronted with a scene far beyond the ordinary, do we realize how much greater the story of our planet is than our own.

So, what is our obligation to it? Does the land belong to us, or we to it? Humans have fought countless wars over the question of ownership, a high-stakes construct to which nature pays no attention. It is a humbling realization. We experience land as property, resource, home, battlefield, and source of meaning; Telfair asks us to see it on a scale at which all those human categories become temporary.

Tula Telfair: Who Owns This Land opens at Hirschl & Adler Modern on Wednesday, October 14th and runs through Friday, November 20th, 2026. Located on the 9th floor of the historically landmarked Fuller Building, at the corner of 57th Street and Madison Avenue, Hirschl & Adler Galleries is open Monday through Friday, from 9:30 am to 5:15 pm.

For additional information or images, contact Thomas Parker or Shelley Farmer, at 212-535-8810 (phone) or by email at TomP@HirschlAndAdler.com or ShelleyF@HirschlandAdler.com. Please visit our website at www.HirschlAndAdler.com for an online preview of the exhibition.