

MONSIEUR ZOHORE

Ivorian American, b. 1993 Potomac, MD
Lives and works between Richmond, New York, and Abidjan

[@mzohore](#)

Amalgamating over a dozen paintings by Piet Mondrian in the towering piece *Stervende Overwinning* (Dutch for “Dying Victory”), Monsieur Zohore presents the trajectory of Mondrian’s artistic path from a painter of still lifes and landscapes to a figure celebrated for radically abstract compositions. Mondrian’s *Dying Sunflower*, 1908, a watercolor in the Kreeger’s collection begins the chronological arc traced by Zohore through to Mondrian’s famous *Broadway Boogie Woogie* and other gridded paintings in red, yellow, and blue of the early 1940s.

Zohore recreates Mondrian’s works with ink and bleach applied to paper towels, materials that invite the entwined but sometimes contradictory metaphors of absorption, staining, labor, caretaking, and removal. The large braid snaking through Zohore’s composition suggests these interwoven states, as well as the ways in which representation and abstraction flow into one another in Mondrian’s approach to visualizing outer and immanent realities.

The withering condition of Mondrian’s sunflower points to another interest of Zohore’s: life cycles. Zohore sees his meditation on Mondrian as reflecting cycles of change in the mystically-inclined Dutch artist’s life. In an installation more oriented to the present day, Zohore places both living and dying birds-of-paradise in bottles of Windex. Visually, the tropical flower’s vibrant flare of orange is brilliantly contrasted with the distinctive chemical blue of the household fluid.

By leaving a cleaning agent on view in a gallery, Zohore reminds us of the extensive physical labor that goes on behind-the-scenes to maintain an institution like a museum. The birds-of-paradise, native to the coastal areas of southern Africa (the continent from which Zohore’s family comes), act as stand-ins for the many people who migrate from elsewhere to the United States and engage in caretaking professions. By arranging flowers at varying stages of robustness and deterioration, Zohore provides evidence of seemingly inevitable cycles—some nurturing, others toxic—of migration, productivity, and life.

Through performance, video, installation, and sculpture, Monsieur Zohore explores queer history and his Ivorian-American heritage deploying humor, economics, art history, and labor. He received an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2020 and a BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York in 2015. He is currently Assistant Professor of Painting and Printmaking at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Zohore has exhibited his works at venues such as Julie Collins Smith Museum (Auburn), Art021 (Shanghai), Paris Internationale (Paris), Art Athina (Athens), Sculpture Center (New York), The Clarington Art Center (Canada), Pace (New York), Spurs (Beijing), Sperling (Munich), Mitterand (Paris), Terrault (Baltimore), Tick Tack (Belgium), The Baker Museum (Florida), Socrates Sculpture Park (New York), The Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore), Von Ammon Co (Washington, D.C.), The Washington Project for the Arts (Washington, D.C.), and The Columbus Museum (Ohio). His work is in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art; Dangxia Art Space (Beijing); The Bunker Collection (West Palm Beach); Brookfield Collection (New York); The Roux Collection (Panama); The Rubell Collection (Miami); Marquez Art Projects (Miami), Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (promised gift); The Zuzuem (Latvia), and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (Washington, D.C.).