



"My art practice now is much more about the negotiation of social dynamics, or my ongoing interest in the human voice."

SONIA BOYCE

Artist, storyteller, activist

Sonia Boyce is a British Afro-Caribbean artist who was born in 1962 in London to a Caribbean family. Growing up, she became increasingly aware of the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of people of colour in Britain and of British Black History in general. Sonia uses her artworks as a vehicle to express her world view from the perspective of an Afro-Caribbean and British woman. She depicts her lived experiences with a political sensibility and creates a space to make her voice and the voices of many other British-Caribbean women heard. By doing so, she raises awareness of and aims to redress the imbalance of art history.

As part of the Activist Black Art Movement, Sonia tells the stories of British citizens that have largely been underrepresented and unheard. Her art is a trigger and activator to shake up the status-quo in British art. She deconstructs and retells single stories and overly simplified representations of what it is like to be black.

In February 2020 Sonia Boyce was selected by the British Council to represent Britain at the Venice Biennale 2022. She will be the first black woman to do so.

EXPLORE

- [The Guardian](#)
- [The Telegraph](#)
- [The Royal Academy](#)
- [YouTube: on celebrating black female musicians](#)
- [YouTube: on objects of obsession](#)
- [YouTube: Newham Trackside Wall](#)

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Making us question the way we interact with the world

Since I started to critically reflect on white supremacy and privilege, I became increasingly aware of the poor visibility and knowledge surrounding black British History in mainstream society.

When visiting art galleries, I predominantly see art by white artists. Isn't it interesting (or rather shocking) that in 2022, Sonia Boyce will be the first black woman to represent Great Britain at the International Art Exhibition "La Biennale di Venezia"? She was selected by the British Council who have been responsible for selecting the best UK's artists, architects, designers and curators since 1937.

What I admire about Sonia's work is that she keeps developing as an artist and specialises in different areas. In her earlier works she explored her own position as a black British woman in drawing, painting and collage. These days, however, Sonia is known for creating an interactive stage in which she takes the audience and places them at the centre. By exploring the unfamiliar, she directs questions to the interpreter. Her art does not provide answers, instead it demands the interpreters to think critically. She documents these unpredictable, open processes through a range of media including photography, film and wallpaper.

There is something in her way of doing art that can be understood as art in itself. The art to go with change, to sense other people and societal developments and to incorporate that in a beautiful and engaging way. Sonia's works invite us to be self-reflective, self-aware and mindful. It urges us to question the way we interact with the world and to challenge the stories that we declare as true.