

# WHEN THE GODS TAKE OVER



**FOR GOOD OR EVIL?** Leah Gordon, Lanse Kod (The Rope Throwers), from the Kanaval series, Haiti, 1996, on show at the gallery *Picture by Christian McLaughlin*

## REVIEW

**VOODOO: HOOCHIE COOCHIE AND THE CREATIVE SPIRIT**  
RIFLEMAKER GALLERY  
UNTIL MARCH 14

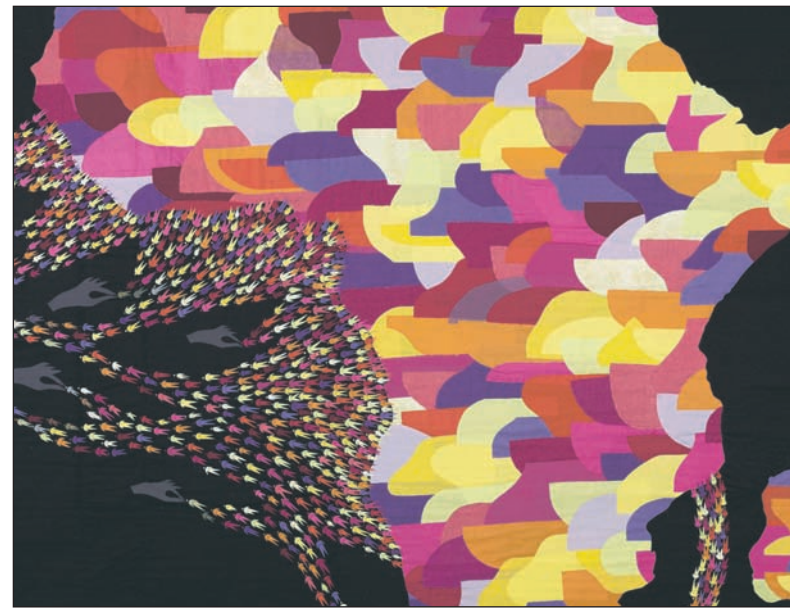
"THE VOODOO, who-do-what-you-don't-dare-to-people!" You might recall the Prodigy lyric – or even Jimi Hendrix's 1968 *Voodoo Child* – but beyond the pins of Indiana Jones, what do we really know about Voodoo?

A visit to Soho's Riflemaker Gallery would be a good start for those curious.

Art-works and especially impressive photography inspired by the theme decorate all three floors of the winding wood-built gallery.

From the plains of West Africa – where the Voodoo religion originates – to reinventions in Haiti and Latin America, exquisite photographs by Leah Gordon, Sebastiao Salgado and Graciela Iturbide record its fascinating guises.

While incorporating many gods, the exhibition focuses on the creative meaning of Voodoo and its influence on artists as broad-ranging as classical composer Rachmaninov and contemporary



**MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS:** Discover more about Voodoo through art at the Riflemaker Gallery exhibition; (above) a piece by Michelle Constantine *Submitted picture*

artist Gavin Turk.

It speaks specifically of the moment before action, when the gods are summoned to temporarily take over the human spirit and help perpetuate one's inner desires into reality – whether for good, or for evil.

Call it mojo, inspiration or the power-to-will, either way we are speaking of Voodoo and a magical moment that exists within us all.

How well we understand its nature and impulse, however, is a question I'm very glad to have been asked.

● Voodoo: Hoochie Coochie and the Creative Spirit, is at the Riflemaker Gallery, 79 Beak Street, until March 14. Call 020 7439 0000. See [www.riflemaker.org](http://www.riflemaker.org)

*Christian McLaughlin*

## behind the news



EVERY week Paddington's Frontline Club is busy bringing audiences remarkable tales from the unreported world. Next Monday's screening and talk with Louis Theroux is sadly booked up, but *Child Miners*, an observational documentary by director Rodrigo Vazquez this Friday might yet steal the show. Creator of *Inside Hamas*, he now turns his camera on two

Bolivian kids whose life down the mines hopes to change with the arrival of the new president, Evo Morales.

● *Child Miners* is at The Frontline Club, 13 Norfolk Place, Paddington, on Friday, January 23. Plus Q&A with director Rodrigo Vazquez. £8. 7pm. Call 020 7479 8950. See [www.frontlineclub.com](http://www.frontlineclub.com)

# PICK OF THE BUNCH

with Christian McLaughlin

## poetry in motion

POETRY takes its fair share of hard-knocks, but with Obama in the air, the importance of oratory is breathing new life.

To get a taste of a woman who has a way with words, Valerie Bloom's the ticket.

At Soho Theatre with a selection of rising stars from poetry power-house

Apples and Snakes, the evening promises a joyous celebration of speech.

● Valerie Bloom (right) is at the Soho Theatre, 21 Dean Street, Soho on Wednesday, January 28. 8pm. £8/6. Call 0870 4296 883. See [www.sohotheatre.com](http://www.sohotheatre.com)



## bite-sized plays



THE FACTORY is anything but your usual product line. Creators of last year's radical interpretation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, they are set to test out eight month's worth of bite-sized plays in development. "As usual, the actors will know all the roles and audiences will choose who plays who in which play," says Factory producer Liam Evans-Ford. "With live music in between each 10-minute play, we're

hoping the night will feel more like a live gig than a stuffy, black-box evening at the theatre."

● The Factory, Round 1, play at the Electricity Showrooms, Shoreditch, from Sunday, January 25 until Tuesday, January 27. £10. Sun 6.30pm. Mon-Tues 7.30pm. Friday, January 30, at Pleasance Theatre, Islington and Saturday, January 31 at Hampstead Theatre. 7.30pm. See [www.factorytheatre.co.uk](http://www.factorytheatre.co.uk)