



*The Evolution of Mud Mama from Beginning to Start*, 2008, six watercolors, gold leaf and collage on paper, acquired in 2008

*Non, je ne regrette rien*, 2007, ink, acrylic, glitter, cloth, paper collage, plastic, plant material and mixed media on Mylar, 54 1/2 x 92 1/2 in. (138.4 x 233.7 cm), acquired in 2008

The entire body of work I was making at that point was of these characters suspended in-between dimensions, between reality and dreams, between being specimens and spirits. The femaleness of the figure is apparent, but it's not clear what in Heaven's name any of these figures are. That includes other works that I did for that particular exhibition; my first show at Victoria Miro was called "Yo.n.I" or "Yoni." This figure is bent over in this very acrobatic, balletic position. It's almost an impossible, painful position for the body. I think, to be quite honest, the work was being done when I had these issues—immigration and travel problems. One of the things I was expressing, either overtly or not, was that I have no regrets, everything is fine, that I'm able to make work, and that even though I couldn't be at my show in London, it didn't take anything away from the experience of creating these creatures and collages.

There's a lot of serpents. There's dragons, and vaginas, and foliage. There's a lot of references to the exotic impression, the aftertaste of Josephine Baker in visual culture. But really I think the title specifically for this piece is more about that I don't regret coming this far, I don't regret leaving home when I was young to go pursue my dreams because that's what I'm doing.

Wangechi Mutu