

Omar Victor Diop

Born in 1980, Dakar, Senegal
Lives and works in Dakar

Omar Victor Diop was born in Dakar in 1980. Since his early days, Omar Victor Diop developed an interest for Photography and Design, essentially as a means to capture the diversity of modern African societies and lifestyles.

The quick success of his first conceptual project fashion 2112 "Le futur du beau", which was featured at the Pan African Exhibition of the African Biennale of Photography of 2011 in Bamako (Rencontres de Bamako), encouraged him to end his career in Corporate Communications to dedicate to photography in 2012.

Omar Victor lives in Dakar, his body of work includes Fine Arts and Fashion Photography as well as Advertising Photography. He enjoys mixing his photography with other forms of art, such as costume design, styling and creative writing. This is particularly visible in his series "Studio des Vanités" (2013), in which he follows his research between photography and design, with a strong influence of the historical African portraitists.

His series entitled "Diaspora" (2014) is a time travel. A journey that takes its starting point in the present with the issue of immigration of African in Europe and their place in European society. Diop forces us to reconsider our perception of history by highlighting notable Africans living in Europe between the fifteenth and nineteenth century. The integration of elements of football, weaves the links between past and present and question the position of African today.

His latest series "Liberty" (2017) recalls, interprets and juxtaposes moments of this Black protest differentiated by time, geography or size, placing them in the same chronology, that of a frantic quest for freedom.

EXHIBITIONS

2015-2019

Making Africa, A Continent of Contemporary Design, Travelling Exhibition
14 Mar 2015 - 13 Sep 2015 Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany
30 Oct 2015 - 21 Feb 2016 Guggenheim Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain
22 Mar 2016 - 28 Aug 2016 CCCB Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
01 Oct 2016 - 17 Jan 2017 Kunsthal Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands
15 Oct 2017 - 07 Jan 2018 High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia
03 Feb 2018 - 06 May 2018 Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, New Mexico
14 Oct 2018 - 13 Jan 2019 Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas, USA
2018
Géricaults shipwreck revisited, On Refugees and Migrants, Goethe-Zentrum, Bakou, Azerbaijan
Daegu Photo Biennale, Role-playing - Rewriting Mythologies, Daegu, South Korea
Omar Victor Diop - LIBERTY / DIASPORA, Autograph, London, England
The Exile Pavilion 03 - Layover in Saint-Louis, French Institute of Saint-Louis - Galerie du Fleuve, Senegal
Ex Africa, CCBB, Brazil
ReSignifications
> The Cooper Gallery, Ethelbert Cooper Gallery of African & African American Art, Hutchins Center, Harvard University, Cambridge
> Palermo University, in collaboration with New York University, for Manifesta Event
Afriques, Artistes d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, Fondation Clément, Le François, Martinique
A Queen Within: Adorned Archetypes, USA
Visual Arts Biennial of Mercosul, Santander Cultural, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Nous sommes Foot, Mucem, Marseille, France
Africa Africa, Exploring the Now of African design and photography, Palazzo Litta Corso Magenta, Milan, Italy
African Passions, Cadaval Palace, Evora, Portugal
Go Figure, Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, USA

2017

Afropolitan Festival, BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium
Jeu et Diversion, Art Souterrain, Montreal, Canada
African Print Fashion Now, Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles
Omar Victor Diop, Project Diaspora, SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film, Atlanta, USA
Trésors de l'Islam en Afrique, Institut du monde arabe, Paris, France
Art/Afrique : le nouvel atelier _ The Insiders : a selection of works (1989 to 2009) from the Jean Pigozzi collection of contemporary African Art, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France
Photo Festival La Gacilly, Morbihan, Bretagne, France
African Print Fashion Now, Museum of Art and Designs, New York, USA
#FFM Le studio des vanités, Photographies d'Omar Victor Diop, Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, Paris, France
Fotoistanbul, Festival, Istanbul, Turkey
Le Havre - Dakar, Museum du Havre, France
The Studio of Vanities, Kulturen, Lund, Suède

2016

Us is them, Pizzuti Collection, Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA
Seeking Africa, Design / Art across a continent, Themes & Variations Gallery, London, England
Foot Foraine, Lille 3000, France
Afropean Mimicry & Mockery, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Frankfurt, Germany
I See Myself in You, Exhibition, Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA
Framing Beauty, Grunwald Gallery of Art, Indiana University, USA
Jacques Chirac et le dialogue des cultures, Musée du Quai Branly, Paris
Tear My Bra, Rencontres de la photographie, Arles, France
Portrait du Pouvoir, Centre d'Art Contemporain Walter Benjamin, Perpignan, France
Brighton Photo festival, Brighton, United Kingdom
African Portraits: Omar Victor Diop, Seydou Keïta, Aida Muluneh, Malick Sidibé & J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, HackelBury Gallery, London, England
Africa Reframed, Oksnehallen, Copenhagen, Denmark
Landskrona Foto Festival, Landskrona, Suède
Portraiture, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco, USA
La Grande Galerie du Foot, Paris, France
Refugee, Annenberg space for Photography, Los Angeles, USA
Enquête d'identité, Jumièges Abbey, France
Studio, portrait(s), Galerie du jour agnès b., Paris, France
What about Africa ?, Visual Art Centre, Amsterdam, Netherlands

2015

Being Black, Arnika Dawkins Gallery, Atlanta, USA
Young, Gifted and Black, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
Us is them, Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, Ohio, USA
Photoquai, Biennale de la photographie, Paris, France
Resignifications, Villa La Pietra, Florence, Italy
Folk Art Africain ?, Bordeaux, France
Parlez-Moi, Antananarivo, Madagascar
Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles, France
Africa, Louisiana, Musée d'art moderne du Danemark, Humlebaek, Denmark

2014

Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain de Dakar, Dak'Art, Senegal
Exposition Solo, Le Studio des Vanités, Allianza Franceza de Màlaga, Màlaga
Exposition solo « Omar Victor Diop, Photographies », série Le Studio des Vanités, Maison de l'Afrique, Paris
Addis Foto Fest, Addis-Abeba, Ethiopia

2013

Fondation Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal
Galerie Le Manège de l'Institut Français, Dakar, Senegal
ONOMOLlywood, Remixing Hollywood, Hôtel ONOMO, avec le photographe Antoine Tempé, Dakar, Senegal

2012

Dak'Art, Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain de Dakar, Senegal
Palais des Beaux-arts, Brussels, Belgium
Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles, France

2011

Biennale de la Photographie Africaine de Bamako, Mali

ART FAIRS

2018

1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New York, USA

2017

1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New York, USA
Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France

2016

Untitled, Miami, USA
Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France
1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New York, USA

2015

Paris Photo, Paris, France
FIAC OFF, Paris, France
1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, Londres, England
1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New-York, New-York, USA
Art Genève, Genva, Switzerland

2014

Paris Photo, Paris, France
FIAC Officielle, Paris, France
1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, England
Paris Photo Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA

LIBERTY (2016-2017)

The history of relations between African societies and the Western powers was characterized at an early stage by deprivations of fundamental freedoms of the people of the continent. These were justified by the need felt by the domineering powers to impose systems allowing them to

legitimize various forms of exploitations of the continent and its riches.
The destiny of African societies and subsequently that of the diaspora was altered forever.

Indeed, throughout the era beginning with the slave trade, and continuing with the colonial period, followed by independence on the continent and emancipation in America, black people found themselves in the need to restore and preserve what had been taken from them : their freedoms. On this basis, it is not superfluous to state the concept of Black protest to evoke a chronology of affirmation movements initiated for the cause of dignity, freedom of blacks, throughout the world.

Liberty recalls, interprets and juxtaposes moments of this Black protest differentiated by time, geography or size, placing them in the same chronology, that of a frantic quest for freedom.

Key dates abound; history of Black protest is rich, whether slave revolts, marches for emancipation and against apartheid movements for independence, or against police violence. Yet, very few think of a parallel between the chronology of protest on the continent and that of similar movements that have been initiated within the diaspora to concurrent periods...

The approach is allegorical, including the placement of symbolic elements, borrowed from the floral language. The tone of Liberty is not that of lamentation, but rather that of contemplation, solemnity and celebration.

DIASPORA (2014)

Identity and discovery, at both the collective and personal levels are themes in the forefront of Omar Victor Diop's Project Diaspora. A journey through time, the photographic series delves into and exposes less spoken narratives of the role of Africans out of Africa. With this body of work, Diop challenges us to rethink our own ideas of history and gives answer to his ongoing, internal dialogue of who he is as artist and person.

Starting his research during a four month residency in Málaga, Spain, where he was immersed in the reality of being a stranger, Diop has focused his first installment on Europe during the 15th through 19th centuries. Inspired by the many baroque artworks created during this time, he considers this period as an awakening of an intense (and previously nonexistent) era of interaction between Africa and the rest of the world. Using portraits of notable Africans in European history as his inspiration, Diop pits their life-journeys and legacies with those of his own, and further defining his intrigue of the singular destinies of travellers and those in alien environments. Choosing, for the first time, to use himself as object in his artwork, he has delved into the realities of being both narrator and character, forcing him to face his insecurities head on, and uses references to sport, football in particular, to show the duality of living a life of glory and recognition, while facing the challenges of being other.

Paradoxes he finds are shared between modern day footballers in Europe and the men of the original portraits depicted in his self-portraits. With plans to widen Project Diaspora's scope to Asia, the Americas and Middle East, Diop hopes his project lends to the current debates, accusations and impacts of migration and immigration, and reshapes thoughts on the histories of Africans discovering the world.

Text by Raquel Wilson, Cultural Curator

STUDIO OF VANITIES (2013)

Staged Portraits of Africa's Contemporary Urban Scene.

These are the fresh faces of the continent's urban culture. They are black, arabs, caucasian, asian...it doesn't matter. They are creative and ambitious, but most importantly, they dedicate their everyday lives to making their dreams a reality. In this series, the objective is to portray a generation which endeavours to showcase the African urban universe and its blossoming art production and exchanges.

The intent is to go beyond the strictly aesthetic depiction of a beautiful youth... Every portrait is the outcome of a collaboration between the sitter and the photographer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2018

CARE affair magazine n°11

Ex Africa, CCBB, Brazil, catalogue (October, 11, 2017 - October, 22, 2018)

2017

Hors-Série Desports, "Nous sommes foot - Pour un football populaire", MUCEM, Editions du sous-sol, Paris

Le métier de photographe en Afrique - 10 ans Afrique in visu, Editions Clémentine de la Féronnière, Paris

Foto Istanbul (catalogue), Besiktas International Festival of Photography, Turkey

Dandy Lion - The Black Dandy and Street Style, Shantrelle P. Lewis, Aperture, New York

Best of New York Magazine, New York

Revue Camera, n° 17/18, june-august 2017, p. 86-87

Collections

COLLECTIONS PUBLIQUES

Brooklyn Museum, New-York, Etats-Unis

Frac Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France

Tang Museum at Skidmore College, Etats-Unis

Vitra Design Museum, Allemagne

Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Illinois, Etats-Unis

Collection Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France

Musée de la Photographie de Saint-Louis, Sénégal

COLLECTIONS PRIVÉES

Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, Ohio, USA

Mott-Warsh collection, Flint, Michigan

Collection Agnès b., Paris, France

C.A.A.C - The Pigozzi Collection, Geneva, Switzerland

JP Morgan Chase collection, New York, USA

Block Museum, Chicago, USA
Dustin Yellin collection, New York, USA
Collection Farida et Henri Seydoux, Paris, France
Collection Jean Gabriel Mitterand, Paris, France
LAC Lambert Art Collection, Genève, Suisse
Collection Helen Burgess, France