

VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Press Release

CORNELIUS ANNOR: A FABRIC OF TIME AND FAMILY

March 16 – April 22, 2023

Opening: Thursday, March 16, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Venus Over Manhattan
55 Great Jones Street
New York, NY 10012



(New York, NY) – Beginning March 16, **Venus Over Manhattan** will present **Cornelius Annor: A Fabric of Time and Family**, an exhibition of new paintings by the Accra-based artist whose vibrant canvases offer glimpses of Ghanaian life through figures in states of gathering, leisure, and repose. In the series of fifteen works on view, Annor depicts scenes culled from photo albums, archives, recollections, and imaginings—a group of paintings that radiate kinship and hearken to both classical art historical paradigms and the unique aesthetics of modern African portraiture.

On view through April 22 at the gallery's Great Jones Street location, this presentation marks the artist's second solo exhibition with Venus Over Manhattan.

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Cornelius Annor has achieved international critical praise for his narrative figurative scenes and portraits, elements of an oeuvre that captures the transitory moments and ineffable atmosphere of contemporary life in his native Ghana. Amalgamating sources, including familial records and internet archives, Annor creates a vivid metafiction that pulses with life and resonant affection for his subjects, both known and imagined. Characteristic of Annor's work is the incorporation of fabric segments as well as portions of canvas with fabric transfers. The Ghanaian textiles and motifs he uses function twofold, referencing both the artist's West African heritage and literalizing the multidimensionality and layering of memories and meaning in his work. Speaking to the relationship between elements in his paintings, Annor has observed:

"Some of these West African textiles are kept in family cabinets of curiosities for several years for new generations to see and bond with the past. This collision of the album photos and the fabric collage fictionally weaves my personal history and family story with those of different groups' family narratives."

By drawing from references particular to Annor's family and friends, as well as more wide-ranging sources like social media and movies, the artist endows his work with both immense specificity and universality. The salience of feeling—warmth and congeniality, a quality of fellowship and deep humanity—pervades his canvases. Of his paintings Annor has said, "I want everyone to see their family in my work." Visibility and affirming image-making are critical motivations for the artist, who is passionately committed to depict-

VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

ing Africa and Ghana as vibrant, strong, relevant, and most fully and fruitfully alive. As the artist has said, "Because most of the positive images of Black people focus on the African American story, I would like what I am creating right now to depict positive imagery of Africa and Ghana. I want people to change their view about our beautiful continent."

Honoring occasions of gathering, moments of respite, kith and kin, Annor's paintings are both a testament to and celebration of the richness of Ghanaian life - nostalgic and envisaged, joyously resolute. Connecting the past, present, and future in a suite of works teeming with affection, Annor achieves a feat of remembrance and willful creation through his painterly practice.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Cornelius Annor was born in 1990 in Accra, Ghana. Annor studied at the Ghanatta College of Art and Design. His work has been featured in numerous exhibitions both stateside and abroad, including recent presentations at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town; Kunsthalle Krems, Krems; Maruani Mercier, Knokke; and Gallery 1957, Accra. His work is held in the permanent collections of The Brooklyn Museum; Buxton Contemporary, Melbourne; The Bunker Art Space, West Palm Beach; Denver Art Museum; the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami; and the Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach. In 2022, Annor's work was featured in "When We See Us: A Century of Black Figuration in Painting," at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, in Cape Town. Annor lives and works in Ghana, where he established C. Annor studio, a space dedicated to encouraging and supporting young artists.

For further information about the exhibition and availability, please contact the gallery at info@venusovermanhattan.com.

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55 Great Jones Street
New York, NY 10012

GALLERY HOURS

Tuesday – Saturday
10:00 am – 6:00 pm

PRESS CONTACT

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IMAGE CREDITS

Amandeɛ (A Country's Inheritance), 2023. Acrylic, fabric and fabric transfer on canvas; 65 3/4 x 41 3/4 in (167 x 106 cm)

A Night with Fela, 2023. Acrylic, fabric and fabric transfer on canvas; 83 7/8 x 59 7/8 in (213 x 152 cm)

Onipa Akoma, 2023. Acrylic, fabric and fabric transfer on canvas; 83 1/2 x 118 1/2 in (212 x 304 cm)

All images of works by Cornelius Annor, courtesy the artist and Venus Over Manhattan, New York.