

## Omar Victor Diop

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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

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 Keita, 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 Fransisco, 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

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## 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 this 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