

GIDEON APPAH: *Blue Boys Blues*

November 5 – December 5, 2020

534 West 26th Street, New York



NEW YORK, October 29, 2020 - Mitchell-Innes & Nash is pleased to present its first solo presentation of Ghanaian artist, Gideon Appah (b. 1987) on view November 5 – December 5, 2020. In this new body of work, Appah expands on his mystical landscapes and dreamlike narratives in large-scale oil paintings that consider memory and tradition.

A mixed-media artist, Appah often draws from personal experiences to create works that are informed by life in Ghana's capital of Accra, but this exhibition will mark a critical juncture in his practice that incorporates fictional and unknown places and people. In new otherworldly works, Appah's compositional range is evident in both the city and domestic scenes that feature figures in positions of leisure as well as his depiction of ritual in areas where the land meets the sky. The compositions filled with reference to a city life of the past showcase architecture and fashion elements as well as smoking and car culture that nod to the 1970s and 1980s. Additionally, the surreal scenes of rural landscapes populated by unknown, indigenous people divorced from city influence are miraged with tropes from legend and myth. Here, he abandons the city scenes in order to consider what happens when the body cannot rely on other elements in the composition.

Appah uses thick, rough applications of pigment to build up his compositions. His treatment of flesh or earth is as much about feeling a sense of texture as it is about pure abstraction in order to reflect on a country's national history. His paintings imbue an acute technicality, using color and scale as important signifiers in his work. Through nostalgic blues and verdigris, his worlds are abstracted and fragmented, with glimpses of nature and ghostly reflections barely visible. He focuses on presence or feelings evoked within his ethereal works, whether through a figure's confrontation with the viewer to invite them into the scene or a glimpse inside a sensual, private moment where joy or ecstasy is experienced. This in turn alludes to the organic transformations of memories over time.

About Gideon Appah

Born in Ghana in 1987, Appah lives and works in Accra. His most recent solo show, "Love Letter," was on view at Gallery1957 in 2019. His works have also been exhibited internationally, including at Casa Barragan, Mexico City; Ghana Science Museum, Accra; Goethe Institute, Accra; KNUST Museum, Kumasi and Nubuke Foundation, Accra. His work is included in the collection of the Absa Museum, Johannesburg; Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden, Marrakesh and Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto as well as private collections. He was shortlisted for the 2016 Kuenyehia Art Prize.

About Mitchell-Innes & Nash

Founded by Lucy Mitchell-Innes and David Nash, who previously headed the worldwide Contemporary and Impressionist & Modern Art divisions of Sotheby's, Mitchell-Innes & Nash

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places exemplary contemporary artists within a historical context, revealing a continuity of ideas and aesthetic virtuosity from the Modern era through the present day. Lucy Mitchell-Innes is also a member of the selection committee of Art Basel and a former president of the Art Dealers Association of America.

Mitchell-Innes & Nash's renowned exhibition program fosters excellence within artistic practice, while forging an informed dialogue between emerging and established internationally recognized artists. From acclaimed surveys of 20th century masters, such as Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, Jay DeFeo, Willem de Kooning, Leon Kossoff, Kenneth Noland, Roy Lichtenstein, and Nicolas de Stael, to solo exhibitions of Sarah Braman, Keltie Ferris, Daniel Lefcourt, Pope.L, Martha Rosler, and Jessica Stockholder, Mitchell-Innes & Nash has proven expertise in both advancing the careers of emerging artists and maintaining the superior standard set by established artists.

Notes to editor

Title: Gideon Appah, *Blue boys blues*

Dates: November 5-December 5, 2020

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