

**Jeremiah Quarshie**

***Memories of Yellow: A Game of Power & Chance***

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – 26<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**Gallery II, Accra**



Jeremiah Quarshie, *Amina I, Keeper of the Endless Green*, 2024, Acrylic and 24-carat gold leaf on canvas, 175 x 130cm. Courtesy of the Artist and Gallery 1957

Gallery 1957 proudly presents ‘*Memories of Yellow: A Game of Power & Chance*,’ a solo show by Jeremiah Quarshie. In this compelling new body of work, Quarshie weaves themes of unpredictability, memory, and power into a vivid exploration of Accra's water crisis. The exhibition stirs up reflections on the enduring social and economic challenges facing Ghana, restaging them in an emotionally charged constellation of works that offer a nuanced reflection on the resilience of everyday Ghanaians.

Growing up in a country where the past is ever-present, Quarshie's work explores how historical issues persist, highlighting objects that should be forgotten relics but have obtained an iconic status, remaining integral to everyday life. The nation vents through these everyday items, revealing the deep-seated challenges that continue to shape contemporary life. At the heart of the exhibition are towering gallon thrones—both seats of power and burdens of survival—occupied by Ghanaian women whose varied histories and experiences embody the complexities of resilience and endurance.

# 1957

Gallery 1957, I, II and III Accra  
Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast  
& Galleria Mall  
PMB 66 – Ministries  
Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue  
Ridge – Accra  
Ghana

[info@gallery1957.com](mailto:info@gallery1957.com)

Gallery 1957, London  
1 Hyde Park Gate  
London, SW7 5EW  
UK

[london@gallery1957.com](mailto:london@gallery1957.com)

Instagram: [@gallery1957](https://www.instagram.com/gallery1957)  
[gallery1957.com](http://gallery1957.com)

# Gallery

The portraits in the exhibition are characterised by the boundaries of portraiture, studio photography, appropriation from Old Masters' traditions, and a unique realism which questions the construction of imagery and picture-making. His subjects—often friends or women he recruits from diverse walks of life—bring an authentic, lived-in quality to his work.

With these pieces, Quarshie revisits and expands upon themes from his 2016 exhibition at Gallery 1957, *Yellow Is The Colour Of Water*, curated by Robin Riskin. This show marked the first time the iconic yellow gallons took centre stage as a central motif in his work. Haunted by the same things—both the cultural symbolism and significance of these yellow gallons (popularly known as the 'Kufour gallons') and the queens who ruled their kingdom posing amid a pile of them—his new pieces time-travel to those earlier moments, creating space for review, re-encounter, and re-engagement.

The history and relationship between these gallons and Ghanaians are deeply intertwined, spanning decades. Today, the gallon is far more than just a water storage container in Ghanaian households—it has become a versatile object embedded in everyday life. It embodies countless uses and adaptations: from its role as a makeshift seat to a drum set; to being carefully arranged as temporary beds on the streets, and even repurposed as walls. Indispensable in Ghanaian households, the gallon transforms to meet whatever challenge or moment arises. In short, its function depends entirely on its user.

Central to his work is the concept of chance—a poignant metaphor for the unpredictable nature of water access in Accra. Through a maze-like exhibition design, Quarshie invites visitors to navigate a physical and conceptual journey, mirroring the daily realities of Accra's residents as they contend with the erratic availability of water. The maze is not merely a spatial experience but a powerful metaphor for survival. Each turn presents a choice, with paths that may lead to opportunity, uncertainty, or obstruction.

This notion of chance is further underscored by the inclusion of Ludo, the classic board game in which progress is dictated by the roll of a die. Originating in ancient India as pachisi and later adopted in Ghana as Ludo, the game embodies the balance of strategy and luck, offering a fitting parallel to the precariousness of life in Accra. In Quarshie's hands, the game board transforms into a symbolic site of power and survival, where every move is a gamble and every outcome a reflection of broader systemic challenges. But in Ghana, playing Ludo is not merely about winning or safely reaching home. It is a delicate dance of strategy and instinct, a chance to tap into hidden motivations—small rivalries, lingering grudges, and the quiet satisfaction of disrupting another's path. The 'labourer rule'—a twist in the game that can alter fortunes in an instant—is both volatile and thrilling, a microcosm of the unpredictable power dynamics that shape everyday life. Through this lens, Quarshie draws a powerful analogy to the nation's social structures, where progress is often dictated by chance as much as by cunning.

By drawing visitors into this interplay of game, chance, and reality, Quarshie transforms the gallery space into an immersive experience. Rather than passively observing, audiences are compelled to participate, to make choices, and to confront the unsettling reality that, much like in Ludo, winning—or simply finding water—is never guaranteed. Will you find your way through, or will the maze of chance leave you searching?

This exhibition also marks the 9th anniversary of Gallery 1957, celebrating nearly a decade of championing contemporary art and amplifying diverse voices from Africa and the Diaspora.

- Curatorial Text by Samuel Baah Kortey

# 1957

Gallery 1957, I, II and III Accra  
Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast  
& Galleria Mall  
PMB 66 — Ministries  
Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue  
Ridge — Accra  
Ghana  
info@gallery1957.com

Gallery 1957, London  
1 Hyde Park Gate  
London, SW7 5EW  
UK  
london@gallery1957.com  
Instagram: @gallery1957  
gallery1957.com

## About the Artist

### Jeremiah Quarshie

b. 1985, Accra, Ghana. Lives and works in Karlsruhe, Germany

Jeremiah Quarshie is a Ghanaian visual artist renowned for his striking, life-like paintings that confront pressing social issues. Quarshie's practice uses the "politics of painting" and its traditional formalistic concerns as metaphors to explore complex socio-political landscapes, particularly focusing on historical and contemporary divisions shaped by social, economic, and geographical conditions on the African continent.

Quarshie obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, Ghana, in 2007. Since then, his work has been included in numerous exhibitions internationally, including *The Gown Must Go To Town...* at the National Museum of Science and Technology, Accra (2015); *Silence Between the Lines* at Prime Motors Ltd., Kumasi (2015); *The Munich-project, Global Art — Local View* at Villa Mohr, Munich (2014); *Muses* at Goethe Institut, Accra (2013); and *Time, Trade and Travel* at Nubuke Foundation, Accra, and Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam (SMBA), Amsterdam (2012).

Quarshie has exhibited with Gallery 1957 at the 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, New York (2017), and has shown work internationally in London, Munich, Marrakesh, Cape Town, and Paramaribo. His works are part of notable collections including The Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town; The Harn Museum of Art, Florida; The Seth Dei Foundation, Accra; and The World Bank Collection, Washington D.C.

## About Gallery 1957

Gallery 1957 is a contemporary art gallery with spaces across Accra, Ghana and London, UK.

It dedicates its programme to spearheading international exchanges between art practices from these communities and the rest of the world, presenting artists who interrogate concepts of belonging and identity, cultural exchange, and social history beyond Western narratives.

Launched by Marwan Zakhem in 2016 on Ghanaian Independence Day, Gallery 1957 has since expanded across three gallery spaces in Accra. Originally set up to promote Ghana and West Africa's presence in the arts scene, it now encompasses the Global South and its diaspora. Gallery 1957's London space opened in October 2020, providing a further platform for artists to build dialogues with its growing network of international collaborators.

Gallery 1957 presents exhibitions, installations, and performances by celebrated artists, fostering connections between local and international audiences. The Gallery's global gallery partnerships and ongoing artist residency program have attracted numerous international artists and arts professionals to Ghana. The Gallery's annual Cultural Week in September serves as a platform for encouraging deeper engagement with Ghana's vibrant contemporary art scene.

In 2021, Gallery 1957 launched the Yaa Asantewaa Art Prize for female Ghanaian artists, the first ever dedicated art prize of its kind. The prize aims to further strengthen the gallery's commitment to supporting and promoting emerging and established artists.

# 1957

Gallery 1957, I, II and III Accra  
Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast  
& Galleria Mall  
PMB 66 — Ministries  
Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue  
Ridge — Accra  
Ghana  
info@gallery1957.com

Gallery 1957, London  
1 Hyde Park Gate  
London, SW7 5EW  
UK  
london@gallery1957.com  
Instagram: @gallery1957  
gallery1957.com

# Gallery

Gallery 1957's work expands beyond the gallery walls through a public programme that includes local and international art fairs, talks, off-site projects, and site-specific installations as well as the publication of books and catalogues – continuously supporting cultural initiatives in Ghana, Africa and beyond.

Artist: Jeremiah Quarshie

Title: Memories of Yellow: A Game of Power & Chance

Dates: Thursday 6th March 2025 – 26th April 2025

Artist Talk: Thursday 6th March 2025 5pm

Opening Reception: Thursday 6th March 2025 6pm-9pm

Address: Gallery 1957, Accra, Gallery I

Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast and Galleria Mall

PM 66 - Ministries

Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue

Ridge - Accra

Ghana

Email: [info@gallery1957.com](mailto:info@gallery1957.com)

[www.gallery1957.com](http://www.gallery1957.com)

@Gallery1957

# 1957

Gallery 1957, I, II and III Accra  
Kempinski Hotel Gold Coast  
& Galleria Mall  
PMB 66 – Ministries  
Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue  
Ridge – Accra  
Ghana  
[info@gallery1957.com](mailto:info@gallery1957.com)

Gallery 1957, London  
1 Hyde Park Gate  
London, SW7 5EW  
UK

[london@gallery1957.com](mailto:london@gallery1957.com)

Instagram: [@gallery1957](https://www.instagram.com/gallery1957)  
[gallery1957.com](http://gallery1957.com)