

Kwesi Botchway

The Sun Must Come Down Part II

Thursday 13th March 2025 – 3rd May 2025

Gallery 1957, London



Kwesi Botchway, Messenger of Hope, 2025, Oil on canvas, 238 x 175 cm. Courtesy of the Artist and Gallery 1957.

Gallery 1957 is thrilled to announce the second iteration of Kwesi Botchway's solo exhibition, *The Sun Must Come Down Part II*, opening in London on Thursday, 13th March 2025.

Following the resonant experience of *The Sun Must Come Down*, presented at the French Protestant Church of London during Frieze Week in October last year, this expanded body of work pushes the narrative further. Examining the ongoing cycles of light, darkness, and renewal through a new lens, it shifts from the descending sun of the first exhibition—a powerful metaphor for reflection, rest, and the necessary pauses for healing—to the rising sun, symbolising a new beginning, hope, and the promise of transformation.

The core of *Part II* lies in the dramatic evolution of Botchway's landscape paintings. In contrast to the portraiture-centric works in the first pieces, these vast and luminous environments now dominate the canvas, bringing forward a sense of expansive potential. The landscapes are no longer passive

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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](https://www.instagram.com/gallery1957)
gallery1957.com

backdrops but active participants in the cycles of healing and growth that the artist explores. These dynamic settings evoke a feeling of emergence, with the surrounding world offering an ever-present invitation to evolve, heal, and renew. They capture the metaphorical landscapes of life, reflecting the broader cosmic context within which these transformative journeys unfold.

At the heart of this exhibition is the monumental work, *The Messenger of Hope*. In this captivating piece, a solitary figure rides into a radiant dawn, surrounded by otherworldly pink mountains and the gentle first light of the rising sun. This messenger, poised at the cusp of the day's first light, signifies the heralding of new beginnings and the rejuvenation that comes with the rising sun. Where the first series reflected moments of stillness and reflection, Part II speaks to the power of forward momentum, of hope that emerges from the darkness and leads us into the light of a new day. The figure's journey into this space of radiant colour is not just a literal passage from night into day—it is an allegory for the cycles of life, the strength to rise again after adversity, and the collective human experience of moving toward a brighter future.

In addition to his iconic portraits, this exhibition introduces two new sculptures—busts painted in Botchway's signature vibrant style. These three-dimensional works offer a striking contrast to the two-dimensional canvas portraits, inviting viewers to experience the figures from all angles. By lifting these figures into the physical space, Botchway encourages a more intimate connection with the subjects, allowing for an embodied experience of the themes of unity, transformation, and division. These sculptures breathe life into the works, allowing the viewer to step into the shared space between the figure and the landscape, fostering a deeper understanding of the personal and collective journeys depicted in the art.

Through these new works, Botchway continues his exploration of the human condition, the universal cycles of judgment, healing, and hope. The sun—whether rising or setting—remains a central symbol, representing both the enduring constancy of the human spirit and the cyclical nature of existence. His figures continue to embody the metaphysical connection between the individual and the cosmic forces that shape our lives, suggesting that we, like the sun, are all part of a greater interconnected journey.

The Sun Must Come Down Part II invites us to reflect on our own roles within these cycles. It challenges us to examine our past and present in light of the transformative possibilities that the rising sun offers. As we journey through this new body of work, we are called to embrace the healing that is possible when we unite, recognise our shared struggles, and rise together into a new dawn.

About the Artist

Kwesi Botchway

(b. 1994, Lives and works in Accra)

Kwesi Botchway lives and works in his city of birth which inspires his artistic representations of black beauty, joy, and futurity. Botchway locates himself firmly in the Black Art genealogy, using his work to respond to anti-Blackness as experienced by Africans as well as those in far-flung African diasporas. Resonant across his work is the mission to represent Blackness beyond the limits of dominant narratives, representing its loveliness, vitality, and expansiveness.

Kwesi Botchway is the Founder of WorldFaze Art Studio in Accra, a studio and residency space focusing on supporting young local artists. This support for emerging talent is deeply inflected by his own introduction to painting through apprenticing with a Ghanaian street artist at a young age. He studied art at the Ghanatta College of Art and Design in Accra before enrolling at the Academy of

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Visual Arts in Frankfurt, Germany. He has held solo exhibitions in Denmark, Ghana, the UK, and Belgium, some resulting from his residency at Gallery 1957 in Ghana in 2020. Group exhibitions have featured his work across Ghana, South Africa, the UK, Germany, Denmark, and Belgium, while he has been exhibited at fairs such as Art Brussels Week in 2021.

Botchway was nominated for the GUBA Awards USA as an Influential Artist in 2019 and has received significant press attention, profiled by publications such as Vogue, Financial Times, Flash Art, The Art Newspaper, Stylist, ArtNews, and Frieze.

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.

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: Kwesi Botchway

Title: The Sun Must Come Down Part II

Dates: 13th March 2025 – 3rd May 2025

Opening Reception: Thursday 13th March 2025 6pm-9pm

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