

Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe

Where the Waters Meet

Tuesday, 21st October – Saturday, 3rd January 2026

Gallery II, Accra



Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe, *Diver*, 2025, Oil, bracelet and fabric appliqués on Canvas, 75 x 75 in. Courtesy of the artist and Gallery 1957.

Gallery 1957 is proud to present *Where the Waters Meet*, a solo exhibition by Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe, opening in Accra on the 21st October, 2025 in the lead up to Accra Cultural Week.

In *Where the Waters Meet*, Otis Quaicoe returns to Ghana with a body of work that celebrates black leisure, joy, and the radical act of rest. Marking his first solo exhibition in his country of birth, this homecoming is also a meditation on water—its capacity to hold us, to offer respite, and its particular significance for black bodies navigating histories of exclusion and belonging. Here, pools and oceans become sites of reclamation, spaces where pleasure is not only possible but essential.

The exhibition will continue through 3rd January 2026.

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Currently based in the United States, Quaicoe describes Ghana as his peace — a space of clarity, lightness, and deep connection. Here, surrounded by family, friends, and familiar rhythms, his creative process shifts. It becomes weightless, instinctive, and free. This new body of work embraces that feeling: an exploration of imagined spaces of play, rest, and ease.

This sense of freedom extends to his process and palette. Quaicoe works in a tonal range of black and grey, building the skin of his subjects through layered contrasts that give their forms a sculptural presence. His brushwork is multidirectional, strokes flowing together and apart like waves meeting and parting, echoing the movement of water itself throughout the canvas.

Within these painted worlds, the figures Quaicoe depicts are drawn from life—people he knows intimately—but the spaces they inhabit feel dreamlike. Memory and imagination intertwine as real settings dissolve into idealised spaces of rest and leisure. Pristine lawns, clear blue waters, and idyllic skies frame these moments of ease; manicured gardens and high walls enclose private sanctuaries where his subjects can simply be.

Yet even in leisure, there are layers. In *Intermission II*, a young woman sits at the edge of a pool—book in hand, drink beside her, the day stretching unhurried around her—but her fingers mark her place as if interrupted. A subtle tension inhabits the scene. Quaicoe captures something essential about black life: that full surrender is rarely possible, that pleasure and alertness must sometimes coexist. But there are also moments when caution gives way to freedom. In *Diver*, a woman dives—arms extended, body suspended between sky and water. To dive is to not know how you will land, and in this freefall there is both freedom and faith. Against an endless blue, she lets go completely, trusting the water to receive her.

The exhibition's title, *Where the Waters Meet*, evokes thresholds and confluences—the Atlantic that connects Ghana and the diaspora, the swimming pools and oceans where bodies find buoyancy and freedom. It speaks to cultural exchange, to the artist's movement between Portland and Accra, and to the broader project of recognising shared humanity across geography and experience. Quaicoe invites us to step into these painted worlds as we might step into water: open, trusting, unguarded. Within them, we are offered permission to float, to drift, and to be suspended in pleasure without justification.

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About the Artist

Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe
(b.1988, Accra, Ghana; based in Portland, OR)

Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe is a painter whose work uses color as a powerful language of transformation, social, political, and personal. His figuration explores themes of empowerment, cultural dignity, and identity, particularly within Black and Diasporic experiences, weaving personal narrative with broader discussions of race and gender.

Quaicoe studied Fine Art at Ghanatta College of Art and Design in Accra and developed his distinctive approach to Black portraiture by painting from his own photographs. His breakthrough style, marked by thick, coarse textures and pure pigment on canvas, was formed during his 2019 residency at La Brea Studio in Los Angeles. This period culminated in his first solo exhibition at Roberts Projects, LA.

His recent solo exhibitions include Hall of Fame at Roberts Projects, Los Angeles (2024); Embodiment at Gana Art Nineone, Seoul (2024); Superficial Incision at Almine Rech, Paris (2023); ONE BUT TWO (Haadzii) at Roberts Projects, Los Angeles (2021); and Black Like Me, Roberts Projects, Los Angeles (2020).

Quaicoe's work has featured in major group exhibitions including FEMMES at Galerie Perrotin, Paris (2025); Unlimited III at The African Family, Accra (2024); Singular Views: 25 Artists at the Rubell Museum, Washington, D.C. (2023); Cowboy at MCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver (2023); Au bout de mes rêves at Vanhaerents Art Collection, Lille, France (2023); Inheritance at The Lumber Room, Portland, Oregon (2022); and In Our Time: Selections from the Singer Collection at Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Arizona (2022). He has exhibited widely across the United States, Europe, and Africa, and participated in leading art fairs including Frieze LA (2023) and Art Basel Miami Beach (2021).

In 2021, Quaicoe was appointed Artist-in-Residence at the Rubell Museum in Miami, following other residencies such as the La Brea Studio Residency in Los Angeles. His work is included in important collections such as the Pérez Art Museum Miami, Denver Art Museum, Vanhaerents Art Collection (Brussels), and Longlati Foundation (Shanghai).

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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.

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Artist: Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe

Title: Where the Waters Meet

Dates: Tuesday, 21st October – Saturday, 3rd January 2025

Address:

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