



Fotografiska Berlin presents

Omar Victor Diop

18.1.2024 — 21.4.2024

Opening: THU, 18.1.2024, 6–11 pm

The Senegalese contemporary artist Omar Victor Diop is coming to Fotografiska Berlin. The photographs of Omar Victor Diop (b. 1980) focus on a recasting of history, the representation of diasporic experiences and global politics of black resistance. The artist himself appears as the main protagonist and interlocutor in these visual reinterpretations of defining moments of historical revolt and black struggle: addressing the climate crisis, its impact on the Global South and the African continent.

Combining photography with other art forms, **Omar Victor Diop's** remarkable body of work includes fine art, fashion, design, and portrait photography. Using artistic self-portraiture as a key tool to engage with complex representational politics, community embodiment and ideas of self-fashioning, his practice is characterised by meticulously staged, dramatic imagery in which the artist himself appears as the main visual protagonist and interlocutor.

“Self-portraiture has become a way for me to embody historical figures that are important and relevant to current social conversations. Having them all appear with the same face they become a part of the same human army marching towards progress, dignity, and humanity. For me it emphasises the fact that I could have been one of them. Through my work I pay homage to them.” says Omar Victor Diop.

This exhibition presents three distinct yet interconnected emblematic bodies of works completed between 2014–2021: *Diaspora*, *Liberty* and *Allegoria*. *Diaspora* (2014) draws inspiration from 15th to 19th century Western portraits depicting a diverse constituency of black figures who have risen to prominence in courts, science, politics, and social movements in Europe – yet often missing from conventional narratives. Largely based on historical paintings, which Diop imbues with playful contemporary references, the series celebrates four centuries of notable Africans with extraordinary lives in the diaspora.

In *Liberty* (2017), subtitled *A Universal Chronology of Black Protest*, the artist reinterprets significant moments of historical revolt associated with the struggle for black freedom; from Apartheid movements in South Africa to civil right campaigns in America, the Caribbean and Europe to contemporary Black Lives Matter politics, exploring what unifies and defines these ongoing, global fights for equality and human rights.

Diop's project *Allegoria* (2021), imaginatively addresses the climate crisis and its impact on the Global South and the African continent especially. In these vibrant metaphorical, paradisiacal images, Diop is pictured amidst stunning imagery of carefully constructed flora and fauna. Here, openly borrowing from genres that include classical painting, religious iconography and West African photographic studio portraiture, as well as science textbooks and encyclopaedia, the artist considered the fate of humanity in the wake of natural disasters and environmental decline, asking how we may secure more viable, liveable futures together.



“We are proud and happy to present the colorful world of Omar Victor Diop, composed of historical reflections and future visions. With a critical eye, Diop gazes back in time and highlights those often despatched to the periphery of history. His latest series Allegoria calmly reflects over our shared contemporary world and raises questions on how we shape our future together,” says Johan Vikner, Global Director of Exhibitions at Fotografiska.

The Omar Victor Diop exhibition is based on a 2018 exhibition by Autograph, originally presented in London (co-curated by Renée Mussai and Mark Sealy), this touring iteration for Fotografiska is curated by Renée Mussai and reflects the accompanying monograph *Omar Victor Diop (5 Continents Editions, 2021)*.

The exhibition was co-curated for Fotografiska Berlin by Johan Vikner, Global Director of Exhibitions, Fotografiska, Marina Paulenka, Director of Exhibitions Fotografiska, Berlin and Yolandé Gouws, Exhibitions Manager, Fotografiska Berlin. Fotografiska Berlin would like to thank Autograph, London and Gallery MAGNIN-A, Paris for the collaboration.

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Opening hours: daily from 10 am to 11 pm

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#OmarVictorDiop

www.fotografiska.com/berlin