

Morgan Presents

The Muse's Gaze: Ana Benaroya & Yinka Shonibare CBE
November 11th—December 17th, 2021
155 Suffolk Street, New York, NY 10002



The Muse's Gaze presents a new suite of paintings by Ana Benaroya in dialogue with a Yinka Shonibare CBE sculpture installed in the center of the space.

These paintings represent a new endeavor for Benaroya, of reimagining and retranslating modernist masterpieces through a queer feminist lens. The muse is transformed from the coveted object of the viewer's gaze, into the magnetic protagonist who now looks out at us. Benaroya tackles Pierre Bonnard's *The Bath* of 1925, reinvigorating the features and expression of the bather in *Beyond the Sea*. Benaroya recasts the muses and musings of other male painters—including Pablo Picasso, Otto Dix, and Henri Matisse—into assertions of these women's independence and character through particular attention to their facial features and expressions. This recasting is not only about strength, however, as Benaroya never disregards the tender subtlety of these women's beauty nor denies them their seductive power.

Shonibare's sculpture, *Diana of Gabii*, also retranslates and reimagines a historical work: the late-classical sculpture of the same name housed in the Louvre's collection. By shrinking the figure in stature and hand painting her skin and garb in rich and colorful patterns evocative of Dutch wax fabric, Shonibare challenges the structural association of classical sculpture with whiteness and in turn the hegemony of a Western art-historical perspective.

The Muse's Gaze challenges presupposed hierarchies of art history and the weight they impose upon art today. Through this dialogue between Benaroya's paintings and Shonibare's sculpture, the viewer is challenged to reexamine the past and presented with an alternative vision for the future.

Ana Benaroya (b. 1986, New York) lives and works in Jersey City, New Jersey. She received her MFA in painting from Yale School of Art in 2019 and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2008. Recent solo shows include 'The Passenger', Carl Kostyál, London (2021); 'The Softest Place on Earth', Ross+Kramer Gallery, New York, (2020); 'Teach Me Tonight', Richard Heller Gallery, Los Angeles (2020); 'Beach Bodies', Ross + Kramer Gallery, East Hampton, NY (2019); 'Two First Names: Ana Benaroya and Anna Park', Over the Influence, Los Angeles (2019); NSFW – Postmasters Gallery, New York (2018); 'Standing Before Evil', Masur Museum of Art, Monroe, LA; 'My Foolish Heart' Rabbithole Projects, Brooklyn, NY. Benaroya's work has been shown in numerous group exhibitions, most recently in 'Stockholm Sessions', Carl Kostyál, Stockholm (2021); 'Resting Point of Accommodation', Almine Rech, Brussels (2021); 'Allegory of Painting', WOW Gallery, Hong Kong (2021); 'How About Them Apples?', Ross + Kramer Gallery, New York; '1988', Anthony Gallery, Chicago (2020); 'American Woman', Allouche-Benias Gallery, Athens, amongst others. Her work is included in the public collections of The Beth DeWoody Collection, The Herb & Lenore Schorr Collection, The Lumpkin-Boccuzzi Family Collection, The Hall Art Foundation, The Alex Katz Foundation, and Zuzeum Art Center, Latvia.

Yinka Shonibare CBE RA (b. 1962, London, UK) is a member of the 'Young British Artists' generation who first came to prominence in the late 1990s. His works have been featured in Documenta11 (2002) and the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007). Shonibare has been the subject of solo exhibitions at institutions including M WOODS, Beijing, China; Arts House, Singapore; Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan; Driehaus Museum, Chicago, IL; Norval Foundation, Cape Town, SA; Hereford Cathedral, Herefordshire, UK; and Davidson College, Davidson, NC. Shonibare's The British Library was recently acquired by the Tate London, where it remains on long term display. His works are included in notable collections internationally, including the Tate Collection, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome; Pérez Art Museum Miami, FL and VandenBroek Foundation, The Netherlands.

Morgan Presents is a New York exhibition space founded and directed by Morgan Aguilar-Lucander, an independent curator, writer, dealer, and advisor to both artists and collectors.

Morgan Presents invites pairs of artists to create an exhibition that offers a new perspective into their practice. Morgan Presents is not a representing gallery, and no one artist will exhibit twice during the run of the program. Morgan Presents intends to offer an insight into today's emerging vanguard of painting and sculpture in collaboration and dialogue with established artists and galleries both domestically and abroad. A hard-back publication, cataloguing each exhibition, will be published at the conclusion of the project. The curatorial program will be presented out of 155 Suffolk Street in Manhattan, commencing from September 2021.

For press inquiries please contact Alan Gutierrez at alan@morgan-presents.com

Images: Ana Benaroya, *Sweet Nothings*, 2021, spray paint and oil on canvas, 59 x 71 in.
R: Yinka Shonibare CBE, *Diana of Gabii*, 2019, fiberglass, paint, globe, steel, 55 1/8 x 16 3/4 x 15 in. (including base)