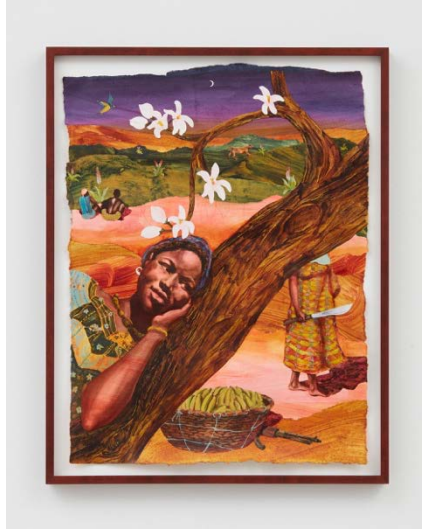


MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

NEW YORK | ASPEN

Winner Takes All

Curated by Amoako Boafo and Larry Ossei-Mensah
On View January 13 – February 26, 2022 | 507 West 24th Street, New York, NY



"To be aware of who we are, what we are, what we are doing, what we are thinking seems to be a very easy thing to do—and yet it is the most important thing; to remember—the starting point of the salvation of oneself."

– Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Raft Is Not the Shore*

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *Winner Takes All*, a group exhibition co-curated by visual artist Amoako Boafo and curator Larry Ossei-Mensah. *Winner Takes All* features new works by nine emerging painters whose practices contend with history and the complexity of identity through experimentation with figurative forms, including **Sophia-Yemisi Adeyemo-Ross**, **Jessica Alazraki**, **Aplerh-Doku Borlabi**, **YoYo Lander**, **Anoushka Mirchandani**, **Zéh Palito**, **Adjei Tawiah**, **Nigatu Tsehsay**, and **Didier Viodé**. The exhibition is on view from January 13 to February 26, 2022, at the gallery's 507 West 24th Street space. Long-time collaborators, Boafo and Ossei-Mensah recently presented Boafo's first museum solo exhibition, *Souls of Black Folks*, on view at the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco, California, from October 22, 2021 through February 27, 2022.

Taking inspiration from the emotional impact and resiliency found in Carla Bruni's rendition of the ABBA classic *The Winner Takes It All*, the exhibition subverts preconceived notions of how figurative painting, and the identity of the maker should be presented. The artists featured in the exhibition construct imaginary spaces within the pictorial planes of their artwork that liberate their diverse subjects from societal constraints of what can be a zero-sum game, especially for people of color and immigrants. It is through this liberation that the featured artists create expansive narratives that encompass a plurality of unique creative voices, including those that have historically been omitted from Western canonical discourse.

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Winner Takes All juxtaposes traditional paintings with mixed media works to represent a constellation of artistic voices that unfurl questions of selfhood, culture, and resilience. Through dynamic use of color, texture, line, medium, and form, the artists are unified in their desire to invite the viewer into a deep, but necessary, discourse related to our collective humanity and personhood. The artists explore what representation looks and feels like for their communities, ultimately begging the question *how can we see each other and ourselves truthfully?*

Larry Ossei-Mensah says of the exhibition: “Amoako and I are excited to expand the nature of our collaboration into the realm of co-curation. *Winner Takes All* provides an ideal opportunity to amplify the artistic practices of these nine artists, each of whom is cultivating a unique visual vocabulary. The evocative works in the exhibition are imbued with fresh points of view and respond to the nuances of our current cultural and art historical moment.”

Amoako Boafo in his own words: “I am pleased to be a co-curator on this exhibition alongside my friend, Larry. It is not surprising for us to be working together on a meaningful project such as this because we share similar ideals when it comes to the world of art. Providing emerging artists an avenue to showcase their talent is essential to their growth and the continued interest in the art community as a whole. These are talented artists that I am excited about as a fellow artist and want to afford them the same opportunity I was given. I am looking forward to seeing their amazing works on display and the looks of admiration that the room will undoubtedly be filled with.”

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Sophia-Yemisi Adeyemo-Ross (b. 1999, Burlingame, CA; lives and works in New York) paints portraits of individuals from archival photographs into imagined landscapes. She is not rewriting history, but rather using a stolen past as the raw material to construct a vision of a liberated existence. Adeyemo-Ross collages painted pieces of paper to envision a complete restructuring of Black/Indigenous relationships to land and labor. Her work depicts the restoration of ancestral agricultural practices and community sovereignty over land, lives, and collective care.

Jessica Alazraki (b. 1972, Mexico City, Mexico; lives and works in New York, NY) creates work that brings Latinx daily life into contemporary art. She seeks to celebrate the culture, rituals, and family values as a vehicle to construct new narratives about the Latinx community. Her paintings often highlight the experiences of Latinx immigrants shown in the context of interior domestic spaces.

Aplerh-Doku Borlabi (b. 1987, Ghana; lives and works in Accra, Ghana) visually narrates the physical, organic connections between humanity and plant life. Borlabi uses coconut sheaths to render the skin of his subjects, articulating the tension between what is disregarded, discarded, and deemed ugly, and what is natural, strong, complex, multidimensional, and beautiful.

YoYo Lander (b. 1986, Sumter, SC; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) is an autodidact painter whose work explores the essence of humanity. Her subjects are comprised of layers of individually cut and stained watercolor paper strategically placed over rough sketches.

Anoushka Mirchandani (b. 1988, Pune, India; lives and works in San Francisco, CA) examines her experience navigating a multiplicity of identities as an Indian, American, Immigrant, Woman, and Artist. Mirchandani explores how the context of her existence—history, culture, sociopolitical environment, and her immediate surroundings—shapes her inner world and what it feels like to exist in a liminal space.

Zéh Palito (b. 1986, Limeira, Brazil; lives and works between São Paulo and Baltimore) uses his artistic practice to promote a relationship of mutual respect and pleasure between humans and the natural world, often drawing inspiration from Brazilian and African cultures. Palito's vibrant paintings present fantastical landscapes where humans, animals, and plant-life coexist in dynamic harmony.

Adjei Tawiah (b. 1987, Ghana; lives and works in Accra, Ghana) creates brightly colored yet delicately textured portraits across mixed media. Using a technique he calls 'sponge martial,' Tawiah evokes a figurative cleansing of negative thought processes.

Nigatu Tsehay (b. 1981, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; lives and works in Frankfurt, Germany) portrays the lived experience through depictions of distorted bodies in collage and embedded within various compositions combining body parts and still life. Tsehay explores the nearness or closeness of the ways in which human beings relate with one another and how each individual appears to exist through reflection, by association with others, and through objects that come to symbolize or signify various sentiments depending on our shared stories and histories.

Didier Viodé (b. 1979, Ivory Coast; lives and works in Besançon, France) creates observational artworks that depict his daily life and the lives of immigrants in his community. Placing humanity at the heart of his artistic practice, Viodé's objective is to present an image of the world through the lens of his art.

About Larry Ossei-Mensah

Larry Ossei-Mensah uses contemporary art as a vehicle to redefine how we see ourselves and the world around us. The Ghanaian-American curator and cultural critic has organized exhibitions and programs at commercial and nonprofit spaces around the globe. A native of the Bronx, Ossei-Mensah is also the co-founder of ARTNOIR, a 501(c)(3) and global collective of culturalists who design multimodal experiences aimed to engage this generation's dynamic and diverse creative class. Ossei-Mensah is the former Susanne Feld Hilberry Senior Curator at MOCAD in Detroit. Ossei-Mensah currently serves as Curator-at-Large at BAM, where he curated the New York Times heralded the exhibition *Let Free Ring*. Ossei-Mensah recently co-curated the 7th Athens Biennial—*ECLIPSE* with OMSK Social Club. Additionally, Ossei-Mensah curated Ghanaian painter Amoako Bofo's first museum solo exhibition—*Soul of Black Folks* at the Museum of the African Diaspora currently on view until February 27, 2022.

About Amoako Bofo

Amoako Bofo was born on the 10th of May 1984 and raised in Osu, Accra – Ghana. He studied at the Ghanatta College of Art and Design in Accra in 2007, before attending the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, Austria. He is regarded as a notable young voice in art of the African diaspora through his new approaches to the "representation, documentation, and celebration of Blackness" by shaping of Black forms and their dispositions in a larger global context. Bofo was awarded with the jury prize, Walter Koschatzky Art Prize in 2017 and the STRABAG Art award International in 2019 both in Vienna, Austria. In 2019, he participated in a residency with the new Rubell Museum in Miami, Florida and in 2020 collaborated with Dior for their Spring/Summer 2021 Men Collection. Widely collected by private and public collectors and institutions, most recently by Leopold Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Rubell Museum, Marieluse Hessel Collection, the Aishti Foundation, Centre for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Hessel Museum of Art, The Pizzuti Collection of Columbus Museum of Art and the Albertina Museum in Vienna.

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About Marianne Boesky Gallery

Since its inception in 1996, Marianne Boesky Gallery has represented and supported the work of emerging and established contemporary international artists of all media. In its first decade, the gallery was instrumental in launching the careers of major artists through an innovative exhibition program; and in 2016, the gallery expanded its flagship location to its adjacent space on West 24th Street. The gallery actively represents many significant international artists such as Ghada Amer, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Donald Moffett, Sanford Biggers and Frank Stella, among others. To learn more, visit marianneboeskygallery.com

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For more information about the artists, please contact Gallery Director Jack Cassou at jack@boeskygallery.com or 212-680-9889. For press inquiries, please contact Anika Zempleni, THIRD EYE, at anika@hellothirdeye.com or 212-355-9009.

Image Captions

Image 1: Zéh Palito, *My Daddy Alabama*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 62 1/8 x 52 in. (157.8 x 132.08 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Luce Gallery, Turin. © Zéh Palito. Photo credit: Jason Wyche.

Image 2: Sophia-Yemisi Adeyemo-Ross, *Visions of Iron (Aloe Vera for Your Wounds)*, 2021. Acrylic, watercolor, paper, 30 x 22 in. (76.2 x 58.4 cm). Courtesy of the artist. © Sophia-Yemisi Adeyemo-Ross. Photo credit: Jason Wyche.

Image 3: Aplerh-Doku Borlabi, *Blue Earing*, 2021. Coconut sheath and oil on canvas. 47 1/4 x 39 3/8 in. (120 x 100 cm). Courtesy of the artist. © Aplerh-Doku Borlabi. Photo credit: Jason Wyche.

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