

Gideon Appah: Beneath Night and Day

January 16 – February 28, 2026
510 West 25th Street
New York



Gideon Appah, Detail of *Night Catch (Prise de nuit)*, 2025 © Gideon Appah, courtesy Pace Gallery.

Pace will present an exhibition of new paintings by Gideon Appah at its 510 West 25th Street gallery in New York from January 16 through February 28, 2026. This will be Appah's first solo show with Pace in New York, spotlighting works on canvas he created over the past year in his studio in Ghana, West Africa.

Drawing inspiration from scenes of everyday life in Ghana, as well as personal memories, dreams, and family histories, Appah creates compositions that dissolve divisions between the tangible and the imagined while engaging questions of identity, freedom, and form. Though his paintings are informed by real places and people, they can appear more mythological than representative, employing elements of Fauvism and Surrealism that complicate any clear narrative reading. Oneiric and reflective, his works elevate the simple act of gathering to the realm of collective memory, in which it takes on new and unexpected significance.

Works from Appah's Swimmers and Surfers series will be the focus of his upcoming presentation with Pace. Inspired by the local surfers, fishermen, and swimmers at Busua Beach and Kokrobite, Ghana, where Appah's studio is located, this series encompasses a range of compositions, with landscapes populated by multiple figures in various states of action—carrying surfboards, resting, and swimming. His exhibition in New York will also feature vertically oriented portraits of solitary figures, which signal a new direction in the series. The subjects of these portraits wear simple yet carefully rendered clothing inspired by patterned textiles found in his studio.

The slippage of time across the Swimmers and Surfers canvases as they move from day to night, dusk to dawn, enhances their dream-like mood. In these works, Appah pursues a wider exploration of color to capture different times of day and conditions of light, applying a range of blues before layering on a more expansive palette with touches of purple, yellow, orange, and highlights of white. The overall effect is complex and textured, with brighter hues toned down by the underlying blues to create a muted atmosphere. Through this process, Appah starts with the shadow of the subject—its outline and memory—before allowing it to fully emerge.

Appah first visited Busua Beach in 2022 and has returned several times since. In early 2025, he created the short film *Beyond the Shadows*, which will also feature in the exhibition at Pace. Directed by Chris Baiden with a voiceover poem

written and performed by Poetra Asantewa, the film explores the lifestyle of the surfers and swimmers in the area, capturing images of men and women in the ocean or looking out from the shore. Many subjects in Appah's paintings can be traced back to the real people in this film and in reference photographs, with recognizable faces often repeating across works. Their enigmatic expressions invite viewers to experience the languid fluidity of their surroundings.

In addition to his time at Busua Beach and Kokrobite, Appah references found materials like posters, prints, and photographs to create scenes that exist outside of a single time or place. Drawing on images from African popular culture—including post-colonial Ghanaian cinema and historical newspaper clippings—and transforming them with his striking use of depth, color, and line, Appah paints a world that is at once familiar and new. A selection of his reference photographs will be included in the presentation at Pace.

Appah's work was recently included in the group show *Corps et âmes* at the Bourse de Commerce in Paris, which ran from May through August 2025. He will also participate in the forthcoming exhibition *Ibrahim Mahama: The Harvest Season* at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain in Paris in fall 2026 alongside Dorothy Akpene Amenuke, James Barnor, le Cercle d'art des travailleurs des plantations congolaises (CATPC), Courage Dzidula Kpodo with Postbox Ghana, Zohra Opoku, Tjaša Renner, and Feda Wardak. Each artist in *The Harvest Season* was invited by Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama, who studied at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Ghana at the same time as Appah.

Gideon Appah (b. 1987, Accra, Ghana) creates dreamlike worlds through a fauvist lens, examining personal and homeland histories such as Ghanaian post-colonial cinema, leisure culture, and nightlife, using source material including newspaper clippings from the 1950s through the '80s, found and collaged posters, prints, photographs, and film stills. Appah received his BFA at The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana, in 2012. After graduating, Appah held his first solo exhibition at the Goethe-Institut Ghana, Accra, in 2013. Other important exhibitions of his work include End of Year Exhibition, KNUST Museum, Kumasi, Ghana (2012); Clay Objects (Past and Present Aesthetics), Nubuke Foundation, Accra, Ghana (2013); Orderly Disorderly, Museum of Science and Technology, Accra, Ghana (2017); Blue Boys Blues, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York (2020); Gideon Appah: Forgotten, Nudes, Landscapes, Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond (2022); and Gideon Appah: Beyond the Shadow, Gallery 1957, Paris (2025). In 2015, he was chosen as one of the top ten finalists for the Kuenyehia Art Prize for Contemporary Ghanaian Arts. That same year, he became the first international artist to win the 1st Merit Prize Award at the Barclays L'Atelier Art Competition, which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa. His work is held in public collections worldwide, including Absa Money Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa; Amorepacific Museum of Art, Seoul; Kistefos Museum, Jevnaker, Norway; Musée d'Art Contemporain Africain Al Maaden, Marrakesh, Morocco; and Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential artists and estates of the 20th and 21st centuries, founded by Arne Glimcher in 1960. Holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko, Pace has a unique history that can be traced to its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery continues to nurture its longstanding relationships with its legacy artists and estates while also making an investment in the careers of contemporary artists, including Torkwase Dyson, Loie Hollowell, Robert Nava, Adam Pendleton, and Marina Perez Simão.

Under the current leadership of CEO Marc Glimcher and President Samanthe Rubell, Pace has established itself as a collaborative force in the art world, partnering with other galleries and nonprofit organizations around the world in recent years. The gallery advances its mission to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences and collectors around the world through a robust global program anchored by its exhibitions of both 20th century and contemporary art and scholarly projects from its imprint Pace Publishing, which produces books introducing new voices to the art historical canon. This artist-first ethos also extends to public installations, philanthropic events, performances, and other interdisciplinary programming presented by Pace.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide, including two galleries in New York—its eight-story headquarters at 540 West 25th Street and an adjacent 8,000-square-foot exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. The gallery's history in the New York art world dates to 1963, when it opened its first space in the city on East 57th Street. A champion of Light and Space

artists, Pace has also been active in California for some 60 years, opening its West Coast flagship in Los Angeles in 2022. It maintains European footholds in London, Geneva, and Berlin, where it established an office in 2023 and a gallery space in 2025. Pace was one of the first international galleries to have a major presence in Asia, where it has been active since 2008, the year it first opened in Beijing's vibrant 798 Art District. It now operates a gallery in Seoul and opened its first gallery in Japan in Tokyo's Azabudai Hills development in 2024.

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