



**CLAIRE OLIVER GALLERY ANNOUNCES DEBUT SOLO EXHIBITION  
BY ARTIST ADEBUNMI GBADEBO**

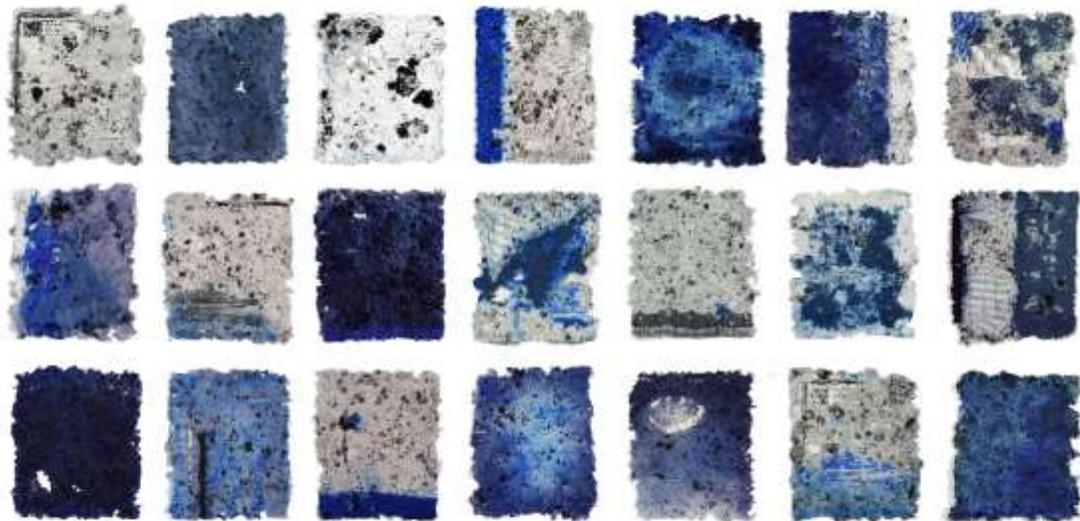
***A Dilemma of Inheritance* Will Be On View By Appointment  
September 17 – November 5**



**New York, NY | September 1, 2020** – Claire Oliver Gallery is pleased to announce the debut solo exhibition by artist Adebunmi Gbadebo, *A Dilemma of Inheritance*. The exhibition will showcase the artist's *True Blue* series which is comprised of more than 45 works that grapple with concepts surrounding heredity and the evolution of memory and forgetting focused on two former slave plantations in South Carolina, both named True Blue. Gbadebo's conception behind the exhibition and its naming was sparked by author Ta-Nehisi Coates' exploration of patrimony and the inheritance of status in his case for reparations, stating "We recognize our lineage as a generational trust, as inheritance, and the real dilemma posed by reparations is just that: a dilemma of inheritance. It is impossible to imagine America without the inheritance of slavery." Within this inquiry, materiality is central to Gbadebo's work, she employs Black hair, rice paper, cotton and indigo to create works that are visceral portraits of human narratives that have been erased by history. *A Dilemma of Inheritance* will be on view by appointment September 17 – November 5, 2020.

"As an artist I'm confronting my relationship with the color blue, Indigo, and materials cotton and rice in the context of their origins as commodities born of violence and enslavement. I'm interested in the whole system that produced these materials and how its memory has been treated," states Gbadebo. "Furthermore, through the usage of Black human hair, the narratives I'm interested in depicting actually are the work itself."

Rejecting traditional art materials from European cannon, Gbadebo materially investigates history, commodities and identity that challenge the very substance of art making. With a studio practice anchored in material innovation and exploration, Gbadebo creates unique “portraits” by beating together human hair, cotton, rice paper and indigo dye. A central material for Gbadebo is the usage of human hair, which carries the very DNA of the people whose story she is telling: enlisting them as collaborators and symbolizing the humanity of the larger African Diaspora. As hair carries unique DNA chromosomes that remain for between 1,000 and 10,000 years, Gbadebo’s use of genes as a material reframes the microcosm of ancestry as point of entry through which to unpack larger global histories. The finished works are rendered as beautifully pigmented, layered portraits, or topological maps, of her community’s history.



In her series of 42 portraits, *True Blue*, Gbadebo explores two distinct former plantations in South Carolina called True Blue. 21 of the works in the series delve into a former plantation on Pawley’s Island that is now a golf club where the history of enslavement has evolved into a location of leisure and privilege. Architectural renderings from the transformation of the land from a plantation to a golf club are incorporated into these works. Another 21 works are dedicated to the True Blue plantation in Fort Motte, where Gbadebo can trace her own families lineage, whose history is obscured by neglect. In confronting the erasure of the history of slavery on the land in these two locations, Gbadebo reasserts the legacy of this experience and reclaims the very products that were once the fruit of her people’s stolen labor.

*A Dilemma of Inheritance* marks the artists first solo exhibition in New York City and follows on critically acclaimed exhibitions in 2019 at 1-54 London Contemporary African Art Fair and UNTITLED Art, Miami with Claire Oliver Gallery.

**IMAGE CAPTIONS** (top to bottom, left to right):

Adebunmi Gbadebo, *True Blue: Patience*, Human Black Hair, Cotton, Rice Paper, Denim, Indigo, Hair Dye, Silk Screen Print, 22 x 28 x 2 in., 2019

Adebunmi Gbadebo, *True Blue: Simon*, Human Black Hair, Cotton, Rice Paper, Denim, Indigo, Hair Dye, Silk Screen Print, 22 x 28 x 2 in., 2019

Adebunmi Gbadebo, installation of True Blue series at the 2020 Dhaka Art Summit

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#### **ABOUT CLAIRE OLIVER GALLERY**

Claire Oliver Gallery is located in Central Harlem in a four-story brownstone. The gallery's exclusive commitment to the primary market promoting significant emerging artists has allowed for an intensive focus that has nurtured and grown the careers of their artists. Many of the gallery's artists have been included in The Venice Biennale, The Whitney Biennial, and biennales in Sydney, Pittsburgh, and Lyon and have exhibited works in major international museums including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Art Institute of Chicago, Center Georges Pompidou, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, and The Los Angeles County Museum of Art amongst others. Claire Oliver Gallery artists are included in the permanent collections of many important museums worldwide including The Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Tate Britain, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The State Hermitage Museum and MoMA. Claire Oliver Gallery held the first American exhibition for the Russian collaborative AES+F, whose work went on to twice represent Russia in the Russian pavilion of the Venice Biennale. Gallery artists have received prestigious fellowships including Fulbright, Guggenheim, USArtist and National Endowment for the Arts.

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#### **ABOUT ADEBUNMI GBADEBO**

Adebunmi Gbadebo is a multimedia artist living and working in Newark, New Jersey. She was a featured artist at the 2020 Dhaka Art Summit and her work is currently on view at Minneapolis Institute of Art in an exhibition entitled "Mapping Black Identities." Her work is in the permanent collections of the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Minnesota Museum of American Art. Her work has been exhibited at 1-54 London Contemporary African Art Fair, UNTITLED Art, Miami, Chashama (NYC), Miranda Kuo Gallery (NYC), the Paul Robeson Gallery at Rutgers University, SVA's Flat Iron and Chelsea Gallery (NYC), Monmouth University, Newark Open Doors, Gallery Aferro, and the Therese A. Maloney Museum at the College of Saint Elizabeth (NJ), among others. While simultaneously earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the School of Visual Arts (SVA), Gbadebo had her first solo show, held at Rutgers University, which was reviewed in *The New York Times*.

