

# FORT GANSEVOORT

**Christopher Myers**

***Let the Mermaids Flirt With Me***

**Opening On:**

**Friday, September 14 2018, 6 – 8 PM**

**September 14 – October 27, 2018**

*Cast my body out to the sea  
Save all the undertaker bills  
Let the mermaids flirt with me  
When my earthly days are over*  
-Mississippi John Hurt



Taking his cue from the liminal spaces of the ocean and death invoked in the Blues Singer Mississippi John Hurt's ode to alternative mythologies and economic hardship, Myers presents a series of works that map the dreams of migrants, the micro-nations in which one finds belonging, and the landscape of dreaming that happens in the spaces between here and there.

The three bodies of work he collects in the three floors of Fort Gansevoort, range in medium from applique tapestries, that borrow equally from Matisse, Gee's Bend, and Asafo Flags, delicate embroideries that parse the work of Lil Wayne into a vernacular of craft and surrealism, and a series of model boats drawn from stories of refugee youth that Myers worked with in Munich, Germany in 2016.

One of these young people, a spirited teenaged girl from Nigeria who had been rescued from the Mediterranean on an inflatable raft, said to Myers, "Who will remember the boats we came on?" This question inspired this body of work, thinking through concepts like Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic and what it means to live on the hyphen between African and American.

Using traditional techniques like quilting, embroidery, ship-building, and sail making, and working with craftspeople from Saigon and Luxor as well as his own hands, Myers tells the story of a world that is connected through craft and image, a conversation with people that find themselves "in-between." He has been thinking about African-American history and culture as the grandparent of such liminalities, (he writes, "We were the first hyphenated peoples.") using the metaphors and modes of the culture he grew up in, to talk to a global context that increasingly finds itself living on the hyphen between geographies and dreaming.

Concurrently with the exhibition Myers will be opening the show "Jack&" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, a collaboration with the theater artist Kaneza Schaal, an evening length work conceived by her, a meditation on prison re-entry and dreaming, which he both designed and contributed text, performed by Cornell Alston.

The exhibition will be accompanied by several events and special programming with a diverse range of artists, performers, and writers that have worked with Myers in the past.

*Christopher Myers is a multimedia artist, author, and playwright from New York City born in 1974. Myers earned his B.A. in Art-Semiotics and American Civilization with focus on race and culture from Brown University in 1995. His work has been exhibited throughout the United States and internationally at venues including MoMA PSI, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Mistake Room at Paos GDL, Akron Art Museum, Contrast Gallery Shanghai, Goethe-Institut Ghana, Kigali Genocide Memorial Center Rwanda, San Art Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam, and The Studio Museum Harlem. Myers won a Caldecott Honor in 1998 for his illustrations in the book Harlem and a Coretta Scott King Award in 2016 for illustrating Firebird with Misty Copeland. Myers currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.*