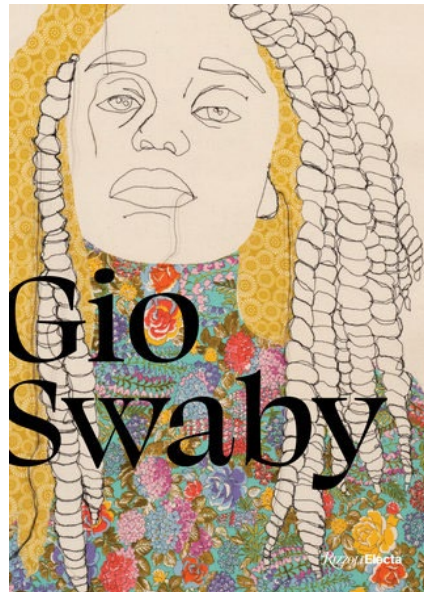


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:
Elizabeth Lagno
Publicity, Rizzoli New York
917.648.8815 or elagno@rizzoliusa.com



GIO SWABY: FRESH UP

Written by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Katherine Pill, and Melinda Watt

Contributions by Gio Swaby

Hardcover / 8.5" x 12" / 104 pages / 70 color photographs

\$35.00 U.S. / ISBN: 978-0-8478-7173-5

Rizzoli Electa in Association with the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida
and the Art Institute of Chicago

Release date: May 2022

Rizzoli Electa, in association with the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida and the Art Institute of Chicago, is proud to present the first monograph on artist Gio Swaby (b. 1991). Swaby, a Bahamian currently working in Toronto, has garnered significant attention for her powerful figurative works, which are rooted in a form of portraiture she calls "love letters to Black women." The over 40 works presented in *Gio Swaby: Fresh Up* have their roots in the personal connections—between subject and artist, portrait and viewer—that are a driving force behind the artist's practice. While Swaby draws her sitters from her own tight social circle, she invites her audience to engage with these women, whose confident demeanor upends typical power dynamics between the observer and the observed.

Working across a range of textile-based techniques, such as embroidery and appliqué, Swaby's intimate portraits are made from an incredibly unique array of colorful fabrics and intricate, freehand lines of thread on canvas that explore the intersections of Blackness and womanhood. She has described her multidimensional depictions as a restorative form of resistance that counters the prevailing tendency to present generalizations about Black lives. At the same time, her portraits are both a gift and a celebration. According to Swaby, "I wanted to create a space where we could see ourselves reflected in a moment of joy, celebrated without expectations, without connected stereotypes."

Featuring a specially commissioned artist interview and original texts, *Gio Swaby: Fresh Up* is the first in-depth look at this exciting contemporary feminist artist who is undoubtedly a rising star in the world of textiles and portraiture. This publication accompanies an exhibition of Swaby's work organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida (May 28 to October 9, 2022), the Art Institute of Chicago (April 8 to July 3, 2023), and traveling to Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts (August to November 2023).

About the Authors: **Nikole Hannah-Jones** is an award-winning journalist who focuses on civil rights and racial injustice for *The New York Times Magazine*, where she founded the Pulitzer Prize-winning 1619 Project. She holds the position of Knight Chair in Race and Journalism at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and in 2017 was the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship. **Katherine Pill** joined the Museum Fine Arts, St. Petersburg as the first curator to focus on modern and contemporary art. Pill previously held the position of Assistant Curator at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, MO. **Melinda Watt** has been Chair and Christa C. Mayer Thurman Curator of the Textile Department at the Art Institute of Chicago since June of 2018. Previously, Watt was a Curator at The Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as Supervising Curator of the Antonio Ratti Textile Center.

Credit for the book must read: © *Gio Swaby: Fresh Up*, written by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Katherine Pill, and Melinda Watt, Rizzoli Electa in Association with the Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, 2022. Images available upon request and may not be reproduced in any way without written permission from the publisher, are available to accompany your coverage. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Lagno at elagno@rizzoliusa.com or 917.648.8815

GIO SWABY: FRESH UP

Written by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Katherine Pill, and Melinda Watt

Contributions by Gio Swaby

Hardcover / 8.5" x 12" / 104 pages / 70 color photographs

\$35.00 U.S. / \$47.00 Canadian / £25.00 U.K.

ISBN: 978-0-8478-7173-5

Rizzoli Electa in Association with the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida and the Art Institute of Chicago

Release date: May 2022

www.rizzoliusa.com