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Robert Fishko, *Director*

For Immediate Release

Michael C. Thorpe ***14 Years Old***

November 10, 2022 – January 14, 2023



New York, NY – Beginning November 10, 2022, Forum Gallery will present ***14 Years Old***, the inaugural New York solo exhibition for **Michael C. Thorpe**. At just 28 years of age, Thorpe is an exciting young artist who has burst on to the art scene telling stories about his world expressed in quilts of colorful fabric, meandering stitching and printed canvas, in playful pencil and stitched drawings, and in surprising sculptural works. *14 Years Old* will present thirty new works by Thorpe and continues through January 14, 2023.

Thorpe came to quilting as an artistic vehicle connecting him to his bi-racial background. Quilting is a skill passed on intergenerationally by the matriarchs of Thorpe's family who were part of the quilting community in New England. Thorpe's subsequent discovery of the Gee's Bend community of African American women quilters in Alabama offered the Artist deeper personal meaning in his chosen medium and a connection to his African American heritage.

Recalling his time playing competitive basketball, his friends, family and inspirational figures, Thorpe transports us into the richly diverse community he inhabits encouraging dialogue between people from all walks of life with a generosity of spirit no better exemplified than in the alluring, whimsical *Atlanta House Party* (40" x 33"). In equal measure, Thorpe's illuminating juxtapositions highlight cultural issues in two ingenious, quilted collages, *Whole Family* (62" x 46") and *LOT* (63" x 46"), both inspired by Thorpe's reading of *Ebony* magazine. "Before I had ever opened *Ebony* I thought it was all about celebration of black life however it was far greater than that. It really shed a light on the black experience and talked about topics that are deeply connected to the human experience," Thorpe observes.

A thirst for learning has led Thorpe to the work of artists as wide ranging as Milton Avery, Alvaro Barrington, Romare Bearden, David Hockney, Lubaina Himid, David Hockney, Martin Kippenberger,

Jacob Lawrence, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jonas Wood. Thorpe's boundless imagination and experimental vision has resulted in daring works like *Studio Window* (84" x 78") a found gate repurposed into a woven landscape, and the witty *Mikey's Secret Hideout* (69" x 26" x 28") a wooden cubby-house enclosing a domestic scene in soft-sculpture. His sense of place and the close personal relationships central in Thorpe's life are shared with us in finely crafted, visually bold quilts, including *Corner* (38" x 24"), inspired by his mother's home, and *Gunther Place* (60" x 85"), the largest quilt in the exhibition and a striking, psychedelically colorful interpretation of the apartment he shares with his partner.

Michael C. Thorpe was raised in Newton, MA and earned his BA from Emerson College in Boston, MA where he studied photojournalism. Before his first solo exhibition, Thorpe attracted the attention of NPR, who wrote an article about his story and dedication to creating art in the medium of quilting. Press articles about Michael C. Thorpe have been published in *Artscope Magazine*, *Boston Art Review*, *The Boston Globe*, *CNN Style*, *Cultured Magazine*, *Howl*, and *PBS* among others. Thorpe was recently featured in a Dove Men + Care television commercial and he participated in a collaboration with Nike and the NBA for the league's 75th anniversary.

Works by Michael C. Thorpe have been added to the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and numerous private collections. Thorpe's work is currently included in *Storied Strings: The Guitar in American Art*, an exhibition organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA and traveling to the Frist Art Museum in Nashville, TN. His work will be included in *Fabric of a Nation: American Quilt Stories*, organized and first presented at the MFA Boston and opening on November 17, 2022 at the Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, CA. His work will also be featured in group exhibitions at The Textile Museum, The George Washington University Museum, Washington, D.C. and the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, NY in 2023. Michael C. Thorpe will have one man shows at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA and the Paul R. Jones Museum, University of Alabama in 2024.

A 38-page full-color catalogue accompanies the exhibition. **14 Years Old** opens with a reception for the artist on Thursday, November 10, 2022 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm, the artist will be present.

You are invited to explore our Online Viewing Room for **14 Years Old** here:

<https://viewingroom.forumgallery.com/viewing-room/michael-c-thorpe-14-years-old>

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Forum Gallery is located at 475 Park Avenue at 57th Street, New York, NY 10022. Forum Gallery is open to the public from Monday through Saturday, from 10am to 5:30pm. Please visit <https://www.forumgallery.com/exhibitions/michael-c-thorpe-14-years-old> to view the entire exhibition online. The exhibition begins on November 10, 2022 and will be on view through January 14, 2023.

Forum Gallery is pleased to greet all vaccinated visitors during our public hours, and provides hand sanitizer and face coverings, on request. We comply with New York laws and the protocols recommended by the US CDC.

For press inquiries, please contact **Ilana Jade Roth**, 212-355-4545; ilana@forumgallery.com.

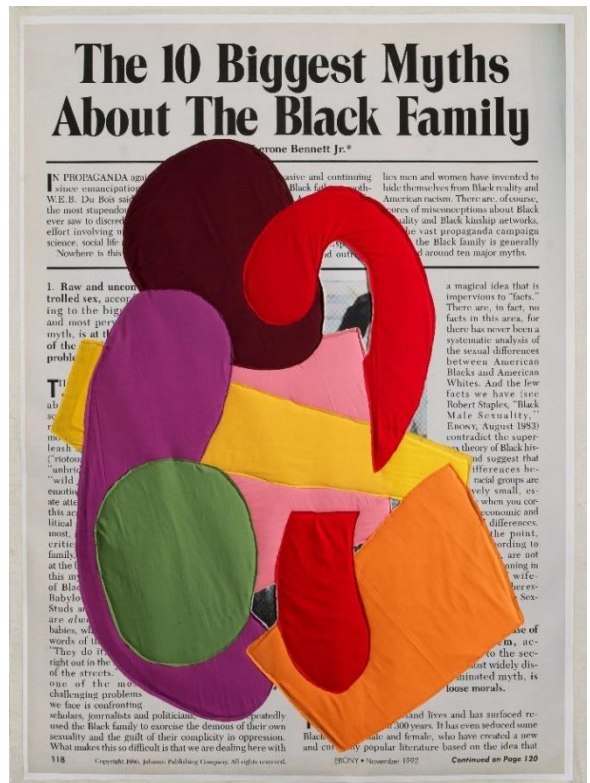
For sales inquiries, please contact **Nicola Lorenz**, Executive Director or **Marjorie Van Cura**, Associate Director, 212-355-4545; gallery@forumgallery.com



Gunther Place, 2022, textile, quilting cotton and thread, 60 ¾ x 85 ½ inches



Da Boat, 2022, textile, quilting cotton and thread, 39 x 33 ½ inches



Whole Family, 2022, quilting cotton and pigment on canvas, 62 ½ x 46 inches