

Gagosian is pleased to announce the global representation of

DERRICK ADAMS



Photo: Emil Horowitz

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NEW YORK, March 2, 2023—Gagosian is pleased to announce the global representation of Derrick Adams. The gallery’s debut exhibition of new paintings by Adams will be presented in Beverly Hills in September 2023.

Adams’s paintings, sculptures, collages, performances, videos, and public projects celebrate and expand the dialogue around contemporary Black life and culture through scenes of normalcy and perseverance. He has developed an iconography of joy, leisure, and the pursuit of happiness. Adams’s distinctive style synthesizes representational imagery with planar Cubist geometry to produce multifaceted figures and faces that address the richness of the Black experience.

Adams’s current exhibition *I Can Show You Better Than I Can Tell You* is on view at the FLAG Art Foundation, New York, through March 11, 2023. These expansive panels from his *Motion Picture Paintings* series (2020–22) combine references to movies, music, and the artist’s observations of everyday moments. Juxtaposing stylized figures and evocative text in cinematic compositions, the paintings explore Black culture as it is both lived and imagined—and how art informs identity.

Also on display in New York is *The City Is My Refuge*, an immersive work of public art situated throughout Penn Station's upper-level concourse through June 2023. Commissioned by the Art at Amtrak program, Adams's installation presents abstracted faces that emerge from dense patterns of foliage, uniting humanity with the natural world. In the summer of 2023, Adams will join five other artists to reimagine the role of monuments in civic life through the temporary exhibition *Beyond Granite* on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

Floaters (2016–20), a series of paintings presented in the exhibition *Derrick Adams: Buoyant* (2020) organized by Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, New York, features Black figures relaxing in the water on various inflatables. *Floater 80 (Self-Portrait)* (2018) shows the artist riding on a black unicorn with a rainbow mane. This work inspired *Funtime Unicorns* (2022), a whimsical installation in Rockefeller Center of rideable playground unicorns as well as *Funtime Unicorn: Ruby Rides through Four Seasons*, on view this April at Chicago's Art on theMART. His ongoing *Style Variation* paintings are the focus of the recent exhibition *LOOKS* (2021–22) at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and depict wiggled mannequin heads in tribute to the transformative and expressive power of personal style and self-adornment.

The installation at Penn Station continues Adams's commitment to public art, following projects that include *Around the Way* (2019), a commission by MTA Arts & Design at the LIRR Nostrand Avenue Station in Brooklyn. Composed of vibrant colored glass, its eighty-five panels fuse imagery of figures with natural and architectural elements to convey the diversity and vitality of the neighborhood. In 2021, he completed *Our Time Together*, a panoramic ninety-three-foot mural at the Milwaukee Art Museum. Representing locations of intergenerational congregation for the city's Black community, the mural combines historic photographs with dynamic figures to portray a continuum of past and present. Adams's site-specific installation (2021–22) for the Museum of Modern Art, New York, pictures cars driving past billboards for two classics of 1990s Black cinema, *Juice* and *Set It Off*, exploring how popular culture permeates contemporary reality.

In 2022, Adams established two initiatives to nurture the arts and culture in his native Baltimore. The Last Resort Artist Retreat is a residency program committed to the concept of leisure as therapy for the Black creative. The Black Baltimore Digital Database is a multipurpose physically and digitally accessible space dedicated to cataloging and archiving cultural contributions by Black Baltimoreans, both historical and ongoing.

Derrick Adams was born in Baltimore in 1970, and lives and works in New York. Collections include the Baltimore Museum of Art; Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Exhibitions include *ON*, Pioneer Works, New York (2016); *Network*, California African American Museum, Los Angeles (2017); *Patrick Kelly, The Journey*, Studio Museum in Harlem/Countee Cullen Library, New York (2017); *Sanctuary*, Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2018); *Transmission*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver (2018); *Where I'm From*, Baltimore City Hall (2019); *Buoyant*, Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, NY (2020); *Derrick Adams and Barbara Earl Thomas: Packaged Black*, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2021); *LOOKS*, Cleveland Museum of Art (2021–22); and *I Can Show You Better Than I Can Tell You*, FLAG Foundation, New York (2023). Adams has received the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award (2009), Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize from the Studio Museum in Harlem (2016), Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship (2018), and Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency (2019).

#DerrickAdams

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