

GAGOSIAN

Gagosian to Present *Come as You Are* by Derrick Adams

Featuring New Paintings, Artist's Debut with the Gallery Opens on September 14, 2023, in Beverly Hills



Derrick Adams, *Be the Table*, 2023, acrylic on wood panel, 60 × 60 inches (152.4 × 152.4 cm) © Derrick Adams Studio

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This body of work flirts with the idea of sensuality—images fused with constructs of desire, self-embodiment, humor, and normalcy. There are no limits to character building and the elaborate environments of these paintings are the manifestation of that feeling.

—Derrick Adams

BEVERLY HILLS, July 17, 2023—Gagosian is pleased to announce Derrick Adams's debut exhibition with the gallery, which will open on September 14, 2023, in Beverly Hills. For *Come as You Are*, Adams continues to develop pictorial vignettes centering the Black figure, this time in new works born from the artist's imagined invitation to the real or fictional personalities he paints.

The exhibition's title offers encouragement to be present without the need to conceal one's true self, dreams, and aspirations—a prompt to shed the pressures of adaptation and conformity. Adams counters hackneyed narratives by presenting figures in moments of carefree leisure, inspired by his belief in the constructive power of scenes that uplift and support Black culture. Adding elements

of fantastical daydreams along with a few icons familiar from previous series, he dramatizes lived experience and self-actualization in compositions that balance vivid and muted tones, flat planes and multidimensional space.

Inspired by a Halloween costume once worn by the artist's aunt, *Be the Table* (all works 2023) merges the levity of a masquerade party with themes surrounding equity and access. The intermingling of her features with a table setting complete with cups and slices of cake, means that she no longer needs "a seat at the table." *Lookie Loos* represents the window display of a beauty supply store near Adams's studio in Brooklyn. A tribute to the power of self-adornment, it explores a theme also present in his *Style Variation* series (2019–21). Creative expression is central to *Taking It on the Road*, in which a female figure plays a banjo, an instrument with deep roots in the African diaspora and American popular music. Encircled by cars, she is envisioned as at one with the lyrics of her song.

The Believers I and *The Believers II* present two views of a father holding his child in a swimming pool enmeshed with large self-portraits of the artist with an arcing red-and-white straw, suggesting summertime refreshment. These linked canvases flank *A Moment*, a work that plays with the depiction of objects at multiple scales, including a "guardian" figure peeking over a fence, comfort food, and a black unicorn inflatable—a motif that has come to define Adams's *Floater* paintings (2016–21) as well as recent public installations and editioned artworks.

In some of the works, Adams incorporates textiles, introducing additional patterns to the multifaceted painted compositions. Each developed in a distinct palette that emphasizes its subject's individuality, these larger-than-life portraits assert strength, creativity, and definitions of self.

This summer, Adams joins five other leading artists to reimagine the role of monuments in civic life through the temporary outdoor exhibition *Pulling Together* on the National Mall in Washington, DC, from August 18 through September 18. In *America's Playground: DC* (2023), Adams offers a prototype monument in the form of a fully operational playground that reflects on legacies of leisure, racial division, and transformation in the nation's capital and beyond.

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, AL; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; 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 Art 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

DERRICK ADAMS

Come as You Are

Opening reception: Thursday, September 14, 6–8pm

September 14–October 28, 2023

456 North Camden Drive, Beverly Hills

Press

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