

GAGOSIAN



On View: ‘Social Works,’ Curated by Antwaun Sargent at Gagosian in New York, Exhibition Will Have a Sequel in London in October

Victoria L. Valentine



RICK LOWE, “Black Wall Street Journey #5, 2021 (acrylic and paper on canvas, 108 x 192 inches / 274.3 x 487.7 cm). | © Rick Lowe Studios. Photo by Thomas Dubrock

At Gagosian, Antwaun Sargent has organized his first show since being named a director at the gallery in January. An ambitious group exhibition, “Social Works” explores the relationship between public and private space and Black social practice.

Sargent has brought together an intergenerational slate of artists—up-and-coming talents and more established, critically regarded figures, many of them institution builders providing physical and psychological space and opportunities for other artists and their wider communities. The 12 participating artists are David Adjaye, Zolika Azim, Linda Goode Bryant, Allana Clarke, Kenturah Davis, Theaster Gates, Lauren Halsey, Rick Lowe, Titus Kaphar, Christie Neptune, Alexandria Smith, and Carrie Mae Weems.

Major installations include “Asaase” (2021) by Adjaye, the British architect’s first large-scale sculpture, which pays homage to West African design; acrylic box sculptures by Halsey that reflect the advertising, commercial signage, graffiti, and cultural symbolism of her South Central neighborhood; a new series of abstract collage paintings that explore the legacy of the 1921 Tulsa, Okla., massacre by Houston-based Lowe; and from Goode Bryant, a new video and operational farm display inspired by her latest endeavor, a New York City urban farming initiative called Project EATS.

Originally scheduled to close Aug. 13, the exhibition remains on view through Sept. 11. Next month, the show goes international. “Social Works II” opens Oct. 7 at Gagosian London, where it will explore the same concept with a reinvented artist list. CT



DAVID ADJAYE, *Installation view of “Asaase,” 2021 (rammed earth, variable dimensions).* | © David Adjaye. Photo by Dror Baldinger, Courtesy Gagosian

Art and culture are at the center of Ghanaian-British architect David Adjaye’s practice. A global firm, Adjaye Associates has studios in Accra, London, and New York and projects including museums, libraries, civic buildings, concept stores, high-rise residential building, artist’s homes and special exhibition spaces for their work, furniture collections, and product designs. Adjaye is celebrated for his design of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History & Culture in Washington, D.C. Forthcoming projects include a new Studio Museum in Harlem building; The Africa Institute in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; George Street Plaza Building in Sydney, Australia; Holocaust Memorial and Learning Center in London; and 101 new hospitals across Ghana, a monumental government project designed to transform the nation’s healthcare infrastructure.



Installation view of “Social Works,” Curated by Antwaun Sargent, Gagosian, 555 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y. (June 24–Sept. 11, 2021). Shown, Photographic works from CARRIE MAE WEEMS “Roaming” (2006) and Museums (2006–). At center, “British Museum” (2006–). | Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian



LINDA GOODE BRYANT AND ELIZABETH DILLER, Installation view of "Are we really that different?," 2021. | © Linda Goode Bryant and Elizabeth Diller, Photo by Rob McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian

Possessing an entrepreneurial spirit, Linda Goode Bryant has reinvented herself multiple times over the course of her career. As a gallery owner, she established Just Above Midtown (JAM) gallery, an experimental and pivotal space where art was developed, displayed, and performed. David Hammons, Senga Nengudi, Lorraine O'Grady, and countless other artists, gathered and were in constant discussion at JAM, which she operated from 1974-1986 in Manhattan. Goode Bryant has also been a documentary filmmaker and she started Project EATS in 2009. The urban farming initiative serves communities of color in New York City. In fall 2022, the Museum of Modern Art is presenting an exhibition dedicated to JAM. "Just Above Midtown: 1974 to the Present" is curated by Thomas J. Lax with Lilia Rocio Taboada, in collaboration with Goode Bryant.



Installation view of "Social Works," Curated by Antwaun Sargent, Gagosian, 555 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y., June 24–Sept. 11, 2021. Shown, from left, works by Alexandria Smith, Kenturah Davis, and Titus Kaphar. | Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian

Titus Kaphar's painting practice challenges art historical images and the American history narratives they normalize. More recently he has considered notions of absence and presence in contemporary life. To further his storytelling, he physically manipulates his canvases in a variety of ways, including cutting them, covering them with tar, or whitewashing them with paint. Kaphar co-founded NXTHVN in New Haven, Conn.. The new nonprofit arts hub has been providing education, mentorship, and professional development opportunities for artists and curators of color since 2019. Kaphar is represented by Gagosian. When he joined the gallery last

year, his deal included support for NXTHVN. Also featured in “Social Works” are five former NXTHVN Studio Fellows—artists Zalika Azim, Allana Clarke, Kenturah Davis, Christie Neptune, and Alexandria Smith.



KENTURAH DAVIS, “the bodily effect of a color (sam),” 2021 (oil paint applied with rubber stamp letters and color pencil on debossed Igarashi Kozo paper, in artist’s frame, 40 x 30 inches / 101.6 x 76.2 cm). | © Kenturah Davis. Photo by Fredrik Nilsen Studio, Courtesy of the artist, Matthew Brown Los Angeles, and Gagosian.



Installation view of “Social Works,” Curated by Antwaun Sargent, Gagosian, 555 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y., June 24–Sept. 11, 2021. Shown, from left, works by Zalika Azim, Allana Clarke, Linda Goode Bryant, and Rick Lowe. | Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian



ZALIKA AZIM, "Heard on higher grounds (the hunted have two primary tools for survival: imagination and hyperbole)," 2021 (C-print mounted on archival pigment print, 33 3/8 x 50 inches / 84.8 x 127 cm), Edition of 3. | © Zalika Azim, Courtesy Gagosian



LAUREN HALSEY, "black history wall of respect (II)," 2021 (vinyl, acrylic, and mirror on wood, 19 7/8 x 96 1/8 x 48 1/8 inches / 50.5 x 244.2 x 122.2 cm). | © Lauren Halsey, Photo by Rob McKeever, Courtesy the artist, David Kordansky Gallery, and Gagosian

Lauren Halsey works in a variety of mediums "rethinking the possibilities for art, architecture, and community engagement." Her artistic practice is inspired by Afrofuturism, funk, and the South Central Los Angeles community where grew up. Halsey still lives and works in the neighborhood and built the Summaeverthang Community Center next door to her studio with a vision for empowering "black and brown folks socio-politically, economically, intellectually and artistically." The scheduled opening of the center coincided with the pandemic so she pivoted, working with her team to develop a food program. Inaugurated in March 2020, the initiative brings organic produce boxes from nearby farms to residents of South Central, free of charge.



Installation view of "Social Works," Curated by Antwaun Sargent, Gagosian, 555 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y., June 24–Sept. 11, 2021. Shown, box sculptures (2021) by LAUREN HALSEY. | Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian



Installation view of "Social Works," Curated by Antwaun Sargent, Gagosian, 555 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y., June 24–Sept. 11, 2021. Shown, Collage paintings by RICK LOWE. | Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian

A Houston artist, Rick Lowe has worked on space-based art projects across the United States, including the Watts House Project in Los Angeles; Borough Project in Charleston, S.C.; and Transforma Projects in New Orleans, engaging artists in collaborative rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Katrina. Lowe is best known for founding Project Row Houses (PRH) in 1993 in Houston's Third Ward, an African American neighborhood where shotgun houses spanning five city blocks provide a platform for art programs, residencies, collaborations, and development initiatives serving artists and members of the community. PRH is ongoing. Lowe led the project through 2018. He is now dedicated to his individual art practice and the Greenwood Art Project, a new effort with fellow artist William Cordova to bring attention to the history of Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Okla.



THEASTER GATES, "A Song for Frankie," 2017-2021 (5,000 records, DJ booth, and record player, variable dimensions). | © Theaster Gates. Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian

A Chicago-based sculptor and performance artist, Theaster Gates is renowned for preserving and giving new life to collections and buildings. In 2009, he established the Rebuild Foundation, "a platform for art, cultural development, and neighborhood transformation." The foundation operates out of Stony Island Arts Bank, a renovated bank building on Chicago's South Side that houses the Johnson Publishing Company Library and hosts exhibitions, public programs, and residencies. Gates is represented by Gagosian. A few days ago, he announced a new project. Dorchester Industries Experimental Design Lab is a three-year incubator for designers of color in the fields of furniture, fashion, architecture, industrial arts, and graphic design, created in partnership with Prada Group and the Rebuild Foundation.



Installation view of "Social Works," Curated by Antwaun Sargent, Gagosian, 555 West 24th Street, New York, N.Y., June 24–Sept. 11, 2021. Shown, from left, DAVID ADJAYE, "Asaase" (2021); THEASTER GATES, "A Song for Frankie" (2017-2021); and box sculptures (2021) by LAUREN HALSEY. | Photo by Robert McKeever, Courtesy Gagosian