

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ERIC N. MACK: MISA HYLTON-BRIM



12 April – 12 May 2018

Private View: Wednesday, 11 April 6 – 8 PM

Simon Lee Gallery is pleased to present *Misa Hylton-Brim*, Eric N. Mack's inaugural solo exhibition with the gallery and his first in London. The exhibition features a new body of the artist's signature large-scale assemblages, which oscillate between painting, sculpture, the readymade and performance, at the same time initiating a dialogue between fashion and art.

Mack refers to himself as a painter, yet his works rarely observe the medium's traditional canvas-to-stretcher format. Rather, his tactile creations, made from a dynamic combination of used textiles, worn clothes, moving blankets and torn rags, alongside photographs and pull-outs from books and magazines, extend and transform the notion of painting. His use of colour, form and material as elements in a compositional lexicon, as well as the stained or dyed fabrics which are his principal medium, declare the origin of his practice in the investigation of painting in an expanded field, while the way his compositions occupy and transform space are evidence of their sculptural nature. They are at once paintings and sculptures, fully engaging with both disciplines.

Throughout the gallery an abstract hanging display of textural fabrics playfully punctuates the space. Fusing paint with readymade materials, structural frameworks, and his own clothing, the fabric forms hang precariously from ropes and pins, so that each architectural composition expands into the viewer's space. In this way, Mack interrogates the very nature of painting, opening up a conversation that explores the performative qualities intrinsic to his process, and exploring how it both conflicts with and enhances the activity of painting as essentially static. Juxtaposed with these sweeping sculptural forms, wall-based works constructed from moving blankets and recomposed with a patchwork of materials including paint, dye, paper and magazine cuttings, extend his investigation into the relationship between painting and the frame, which is inherent in these works.

The title of the exhibition is named after 90s Hip-Hop stylist Misa Hylton-Brim, who was responsible for creating some of the most iconic looks in the music industry for artists including Missy Elliot, Mary J. Blige and Puff Daddy, using fashion to make expressive visual statements about their identities. By employing a diverse array of textiles – some aesthetic, some utilitarian, most discarded, their use-value depleted – Mack's paintings similarly investigate how different materials reflect trace and identity. His use of factory-made moving blankets, for example, frequently found in galleries and museums during installation project the idea of transit and relates to the nomadic nature of urban living.

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The variety of sources assembled in Mack's artworks leads to the creation of a non-hierarchical system, refusing to privilege the readymade over the hand crafted, or one history over another. His paintings blur the line between utility and style, crafting an oeuvre that is absorbed in the duality of deconstruction and reconstruction.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Eric N. Mack was born in 1987 in Columbia, Maryland and lives and works in New York, NY. He received his BFA from The Cooper Union, New York, NY and his MFA from Yale University, New Haven, CT. In January 2018, Mack collaborated with menswear designer Grace Wales Bonner to create a site-specific installation for her AW18 show as part of London Fashion Week Men's. A second collaboration with Wales Bonner titled 'Blue Duets' recently took place at Totokaelo in New York to celebrate the launch of the designer's new SS18 collection. In 2017, Mack was the recipient of the inaugural BALTIC Artists' Award selected by artist Lorna Simpson and completed the Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva Island, Florida, FL and an artist-in-residency at Delfina Foundation in London, UK. Institutional solo exhibitions include the *BALTIC Artists' Award 2017*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2017) and *Eric Mack: Vogue Fabrics*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2017). Major group exhibitions include *Ungestalt*, Kunsthalle Basel, Basel, Switzerland (2017); *In the Abstract*, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, Massachusetts, MA (2017); *Blue Black*, Pulitzer Arts Foundation, St Louis, MO (2017); *Making & Unmaking: An exhibition curated by Duro Olowu*, Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2016) and *Greater New York 2015*, MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY (2015).

SPECIAL EVENT

ERIC N. MACK IN CONVERSATION WITH TIM MARLOW

THURSDAY, 12 APRIL 6.30 – 8PM

Simon Lee Gallery, London

On the occasion of the exhibition, the artist will be in conversation with Tim Marlow, Artistic Director of the Royal Academy of Arts. They will discuss Mack's work within the context of the exhibition and his wider practice.

Please note this event is free to the public, but booking is required: events@simonleegallery.com / 020 7491 0100.

Tim Marlow is the Artistic Director of the Royal Academy of Arts. His remit includes the RA's exhibition programme and Collection, as well as Learning, Architecture and Publishing. Prior to this Marlow was Director of Exhibitions at White Cube (2003-2014). He has worked with many of the most important and influential artists of our time and is an award-winning radio and television broadcaster. He was the founder editor of *Tate* magazine and is also the author of numerous books and catalogues.

Image: Eric N. Mack, *The Endless Seed of Mystery*, 2018. Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.

For further press information, images and interview requests please contact Julia Kelly Kennedy: julia@simonleegallery.com | +44 (0) 207 491 0100

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