

JDJ

Noel W Anderson

Black Exhaustion

Shirley Fiterman Art Center

81 Barclay Street, New York, NY 10007

September 6 - December 2, 2023

Opening reception: Wednesday, September 6, 6-8pm

It Belongs in a Museum

JDJ Tribeca

373 Broadway, B11, New York, NY 10013

September 8 - October 30, 2023

Opening reception: Friday, September 8, 6-8pm

JDJ is thrilled to present Noel W Anderson's third solo exhibition with the gallery, *It Belongs in a Museum*. This exhibition runs concurrently with Anderson's first solo institutional exhibition in New York City, *Black Exhaustion*, at the Shirley Fiterman Art Center. Linked together conceptually, the two shows — essentially one exhibition taking place across two spaces — explore the socially constructed formation of Black male identity through American media.

The exhibitions mark the first time Anderson's work has been seen en masse in New York City in a decade. Taken together, they expand on Anderson's exploration of the history and creation of images, especially as they relate to the construction of Black identity, Black labor and performativity, and issues of racialized success.

On the occasion of the exhibitions, JDJ and the Shirley Fiterman Art Center have co-published a limited edition publication which takes the form of an experimental coloring book, which includes an essay by Anderson that reflects on this new body of work. Anderson's process starts with found images, appropriated from various archives and media outlets, that he digitally manipulates through mirroring, inverting, cropping or other forms of distortion before it is reproduced as a cotton jacquard tapestry. The resulting textile is then altered by distressing, dyeing, staining, and physically picking it apart thread by thread. In new works on view, Anderson repeatedly picks and brushes the surface, transforming it into a fur-like texture.

Anderson's interest in textiles as a medium began with his frequent trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where he was captivated by Medieval tapestries, realizing their essential role as an origin and intersection point between image reproduction, the grid structure of weaving, and digital technology (the pixels that comprise the printed image, the warp and weft of fabric,

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and the binary code of computer processing). Another formative reference point for Anderson comes from the rabbit-eared antenna on the television in his childhood home in Louisville, Kentucky. In moving the antenna, he could manipulate images on the screen—destabilizing and distorting them, and calling their reality into question.

Visual and intellectual references that span centuries and cultures inform Anderson's work: from sculptures made by the African Dogon peoples in the 14th-17th centuries, to art historical references ranging from Georges Seurat to Frank Stella to David Hammons, to Black American sports and music figures, to the writings of poets and theorists such as Édouard Glissant and Fred Moten.

The literal blurring of the images with the foundations on which they are formed parallels the ways in which representations of Black male figures are warped in contemporary culture and media. The formal shift from clarity into abstraction in Anderson's work conceptually mirrors the process by which stereotypes and archetypes overtake individuality. These works ask us to question our own relationships to issues of race and gender and to the distorted depiction of Black masculinity in American culture.

For more in-depth reading, links to Anderson's artist statements for each exhibition are below:

[It Belongs in a Museum](#): artist statement by Noel W Anderson

[Black Exhaustion](#): artist statement by Noel W Anderson

Noel W Anderson (born in Louisville, KY) received an MFA from Indiana University in Printmaking, and an MFA from Yale University in Sculpture. He is also Area Head of Printmaking in NYU's Steinhardt Department of Art and Art Professions. Anderson has been awarded the NYFA artist fellowship grant, the prestigious Jerome Camargo Prize, and the paper-making residency at Dieu Donn . Anderson's most recent institutional solo show, *Erasure's Edge*, was on view at KMAC Contemporary Art Museum (Louisville, KY). He also exhibited in the 12th Berlin Biennale. His work is included in the permanent collections of the International Center of Photography (New York, NY), The Studio Museum (Harlem, NY), and the Hunter Museum of American Art (Chattanooga, TN).