



DERRICK ADAMS  
*Sky's The Limit*, 2023  
Acrylic and collaged fabric on wood panel  
25 x 25 inches

## **DERRICK ADAMS**

*"...and friends."*

February 24 - April 1, 2023

For Derrick Adams's sixth solo exhibition with Rhona Hoffman Gallery, the artist created a limited series of mixed media paintings in the artist's frame as well as a singular functional sculpture.

Each intimately-sized acrylic and collaged fabric painting is rendered in Adams's signature color-block geometric style, depicting imagery of jovial children, their puppet compatriots, and contemporary cultural phrases interspersed across each panel. A vibrant palette is paired with multicolored and patterned fabric, adding texture and energy to the cast of fun loving characters invented for this new body of work.

For this exhibition Adams was—now more than ever—eager to revisit previously explored themes centered on the power of media influence, both overt and concealed.

In a setting referencing a range of early educational TV programming, each painting in "*...and friends.*" features a Black child with a puppet. The imagery serves as counter-propaganda readjusting the lens towards their very real wholesomeness, prior to, or undeterred by society's inhumane disregard for their innocence.

Each painting is encased in a custom rounded-corner frame topped with a vintage-style dipole (rabbit-ear) antenna, directly referencing an old-school TV set. The frames not only act as a portal for viewership, but also play with the tension of media messaging tactics used to promote diversity and understanding on the surface, with more subtle yet powerful programming layered beneath.

Derrick Adams presented works within this framework in numerous past performances, videos, and installations including: *The Big Getaway* (2003) Jack Tilton Gallery, NY; *Me and My Imaginary Friends* (2004) Triple Candie, NY; *Open House: Working in Brooklyn* (2004) Brooklyn Museum; Greater New York (2005) MoMA PS1; *I'm Smoke; You're Mirror* (2005) Participant Inc, NY; *Anew, PERFORMA* (2005) Participant Inc, NY; *Sometimes I Just Don't Feel Like Myself* (2006) Momenta Arts, Brooklyn; *The Resurrection of Roosevelt Franklin and The Channel* (2012) BAM, Brooklyn; *REALITY BITES: Story Time with That Cat Pat and The Real* (2013) as part of Reading List: Artists' Selections from the MoMA Library Collection, MoMA NY; and *ON* (2016) at Pioneer Works, Brooklyn.

## DERRICK ADAMS

Born in Baltimore in 1970, Derrick Adams is a Brooklyn-based artist whose work spans painting, collage, sculpture, performance, video, and sound. Adams obtained his BFA from the Pratt Institute and MFA from Columbia University. He is also an alumnus of the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture. Among other honors, the artist received a Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency and Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship. With his oeuvre, Adams probes how identity and personal narrative intersect with American iconography, art history, urban culture, and the Black experience. The artist explores how individuals are shaped by their physical, societal, and historical environs. With sophisticated formal techniques, Adams investigates the fragmentation and manipulation of structure and surface—a method that links him to pioneers such as Henri Matisse, Hannah Höch, and Romare Bearden.

Adams has been the subject of solo exhibitions at institutions such as The Momentary, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville (2021); SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film, Savannah (2020–2021); Hudson River Museum, Yonkers (2020); Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg (2020); The Gallery in Baltimore City Hall (2019); and the Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2018). The artist has mounted public installations commissioned through MTA Arts & Design at the Nostrand Avenue LIRR Station, Brooklyn (2020–ongoing); and RxART at NYC Health + Hospitals/Harlem (2019–ongoing). His work has been featured in notable group exhibitions, including *Textures: The History and Art of Black Hair*, Kent State University Museum (2021–2022); *Jacob Lawrence: The American Struggle*, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem (2020), now at the Seattle Art Museum (2021); *Men of Change: Power. Triumph. Truth.*, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Cincinnati (2019), traveled to Washington State History Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Tacoma (2019–2020); and *Performa*, New York (2015, 2013, 2005). His art resides in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Studio Museum in Harlem; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; and the Birmingham Museum of Art, among many others. He has recently established an artist program and residency in his hometown of Baltimore called *The Last Resort*.