

David Alekhuogie
highlifetime

September 2 – October 18, 2025



Yancey Richardson is proud to present *highlifetime*, an exhibition of new work by David Alekhuogie, the artist's second exhibition with the gallery. Bringing together work from his series *A Reprise*—including layered, wall-mounted works that combine photographs, collage and sculpture—Alekhuogie continues his exploration of how narrative and authorship are embedded in Western presentations of African art while reflecting on how Black aesthetics are circulated, accessed, valued and interpreted today. Coinciding with the exhibition will be the release of Alekhuogie's new monograph titled *A Reprise*, published by Aperture. The exhibition will be on view from September 2 through October 18, 2025. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, September 11 from 6–8PM.

Reflecting his understanding of the relationship between modernity and colonialism, Alekhuogie sees photography as a site where complex historical processes unfold and where the consequences of those processes continue to be seen. In his works, he critiques the underlying structures of western appropriation and classification that shape the collective understanding of images, often through his own acts of appropriation whereby source material is rephotographed, reimagined and remade.

Alekhuogie's series *A Reprise* is the result of his engagement with the photographs Walker Evans made while on commission from the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1935 of African sculptures included in the exhibition *African Negro Art*. These photographs were revisited in *Perfect Documents: Walker Evans and African Art, 1935*, an exhibition organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2020, that reexamined the tightly cropped and formally inventive images Evans made.

Alekhuogie's encounter with this exhibition and the images Evans made sixty-five years prior provided the basis for considering how Black aesthetics and cultural objects have been altered—if not altogether changed—by their exhibition in western institutions and subsequent documentation by photographers such as Evans. In *highlifetime*, Alekhuogie investigates these images of African sculpture by remixing them into vibrant and multilayered collages which attempt to reanimate historical objects after their original capture.

To make these works, Alekhuogie transposes facsimiles of masterpieces of African art onto paper structures of his own making, before then rephotographing these image-sculptures, regularly using East and West African textiles as backdrops to create dynamic juxtapositions of space and form. The spatial interpretation of the original sculptures via Evans' photographs is intensified by Alekhuogie's layering of two or more framed photographs into new sculptural constructions. Through his own transmutation of these images, Alekhuogie brings what he calls the "hand-me-down nature of Pan Africanism" to the foreground and questions through whose eyes and whose agency African Americans form their cultural narrative.

Accompanying new works from the *A Reprise* series are selections from Alekhuogie's 2017 series *Pull_Up*, which will be on view in the project gallery. Referencing the fashion trope of sagging pants that reveal successive layers of clothing, Alekhuogie creates flattened and nearly abstract fields of layered color and contrasting textures. With the horizon line of the waist present yet concealed, Alekhuogie reimagines the body as a landscape, one where the coded representations of Black masculinity can be explored.

Through his critical evaluation of Black antiquity and formal interpretation of contemporary representations of Black masculinity, Alekhuogie's images pose fundamental questions about our relationship to the past and how we continue to remake it in the present.

David Alekhuogie (b. 1986, Los Angeles, CA) is a photographer and artist based in Los Angeles. He received his MFA from Yale University in 2015 and BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013. His work will be featured in the Hammer Museum's upcoming Made in LA 2025 biennial. His work was also included in *Companion Pieces*, the 2020 iteration of the Museum of Modern Art, New York's biennial *New Photography* series and was presented in *Men of Change: Power. Triumph. Truth* (2021) at the California African American Museum in Los Angeles.

From 2024 to 2025, he was a fellow of the Harvard Radcliffe Institute. His work has been exhibited at the Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA.

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Image: David Alekhuogie, *Mother Country Masque I*, 2024.