

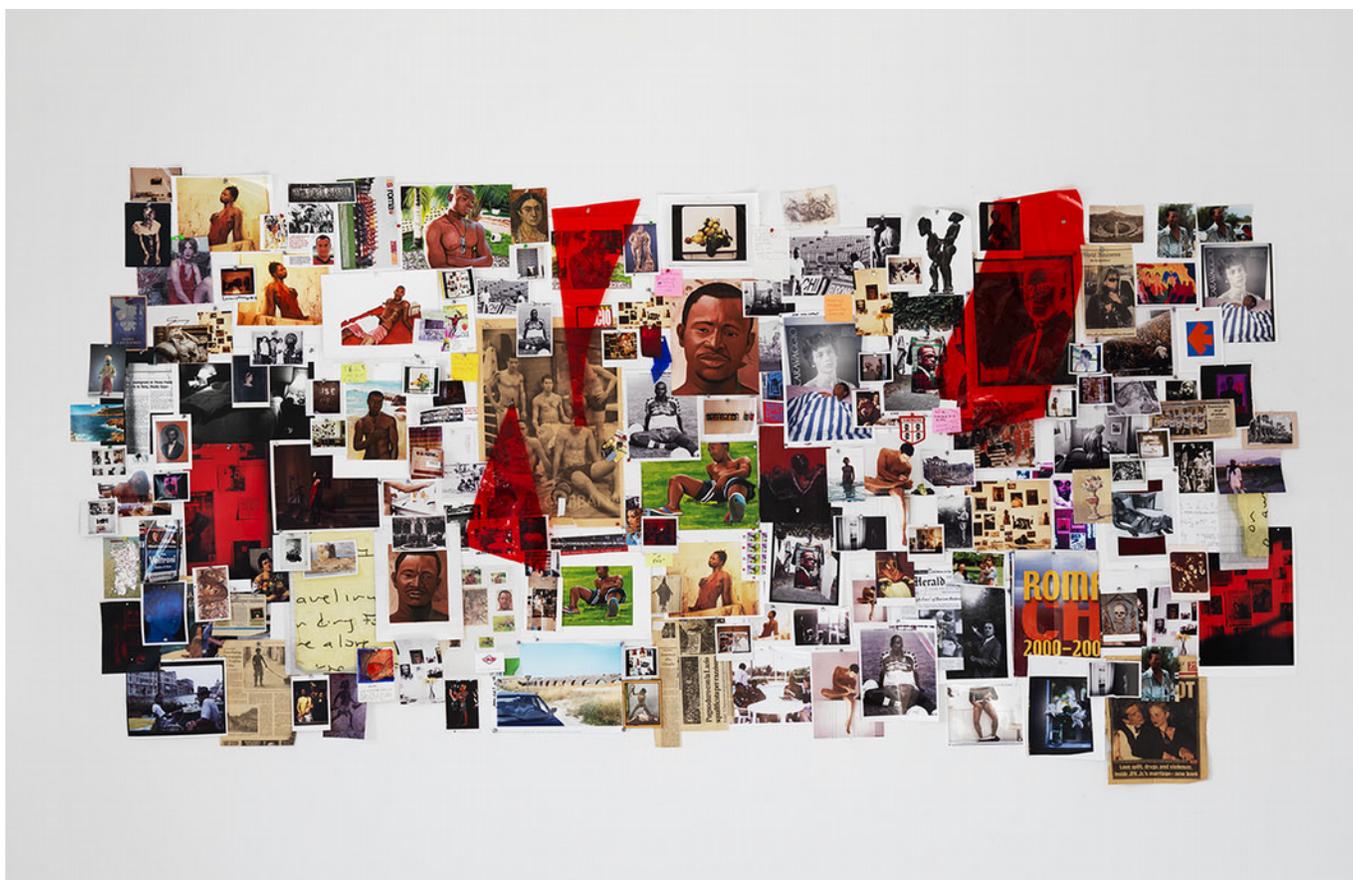
LYLE ASHTON HARRIS

Ombre à l'Ombre

New works and museum acquisitions

9 October 2019 – 11 January 2020

at The Warehouse in Zaventem



Lyle Ashton Harris, *Appunti per L'Afro Barocco*, 2015,
mixed media collage 177,8 x 347,98 cm, framed: 182,88 x 360,68 x 12,7 cm

Lyle Ashton Harris's second solo exhibition titled "Ombre à l'Ombre" presented by **MARUANI MERCIER** at **The Warehouse** introduces the artist's latest body of new work for the first time in Europe and highlights acquisitions by The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Harris's new series of arresting mixed-media assemblages are comprised of monochromatically photographed collages inset into fabric panels patterned in characteristic West African motifs variously overlaid with stenciled letterforms using acrylic spray paint or selectively appended with the artist's personal mementos.

Harris deploys multiple formal and conceptual strategies that intentionally reconfigure meanings to refine his ongoing engagement with themes of difference while further integrating his aesthetic methodologies (using photography, collage, personal archives). The result is a veritable Afro-fusion of historical and contemporary global cross-references that induces a revelatory slippage between the personal and the political. Harris's multilayered new assemblages constitute a sui generis aesthetic investigation into shared social and cultural histories that implicate us all.



Lyle Ashton Harris, *The Watering Hole*, 1996, nine duraflex print 90 x 74 cm

In a feature article published in *Artnews* (April 2019), the Guggenheim Museum's Senior Curator of Photography Jennifer Blessing has observed that Harris's art work is "so prescient, as a technique and a way of working," characterizing it as "a personal history. It's a kind of self-portraiture through objects, photographs, and papers." Describing his work as "complex and beautiful," Guggenheim Senior Curator and Associate Director Nancy Spector also recently noted how Harris "poetically interrogates issues," acknowledging that his "insights and guidance have been integral to our work" at the Guggenheim.

Suffused into aluminum using the dye sublimation process, resulting in highly saturated, intense coloration, the photo components in the new assemblages are composed by Harris through photographically “re-sampling” his dense wall collages, which are aggregated through excavations from his personal archive. Obliquely illuminated to produce shadowy effects, the chiaroscuro of juxtaposed elements constellate a host of personally resonant ephemera, including imagery culled from the internet, archival news clippings, the artist’s handwritten notes, re-photographed or painted renderings of the artist’s work, interspersed with hand-stenciled multicolored polycarbonate gels.



Lyle Ashton Harris, *Black Hummingbird*, 2019
Unique assemblage (Ghanaian cloth, dye sublimation prints, ephemera), 103 x 126 cm

Embedded against a ground of repeating graphic patterns distinctive to African textiles, the tenebrous photographs conjugate light and shadow to produce a fresh remix of figural and abstract forms, embodying a singular visual alchemy that remains unique to each work.

Harris has been widely exhibited internationally, including most recently in “Basquiat’s ‘Defacement’: The Untold Story” and “Implicit Tensions: Mapplethorpe Now” at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; in “United by AIDS” at Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; in “Kiss My Genders” at the Haywood Gallery, London; in “Elements of Vogue” at the Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Madrid (also traveling to Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, in November 2019). In 2018-19 Harris also presented performances at a range of venues, including Volksbühne Grüner Salon sponsored by KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; a lecture/performance on Andy Warhol presented by the DIA Art Foundation, New York; and an installation/performance at Participant Inc, New York. His work was included in the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007), the Bienal de São Paulo (2016), the Whitney Biennial (2017), and presented by Cinéma Du Réel at the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2018), among others.

Harris is represented in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; the Hessel Museum of Art at Bard College, Annendale-on-Hudson, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles; the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Pérez Art Museum, Miami; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain.

Harris received a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (2016), the David C. Driskell Prize from the High Museum of Art, Atlanta (2014), and the Rome Prize Fellowship (2000) among other awards and honors. Harris joined the Board of Trustees of the American Academy in Rome in 2014 and was appointed a trustee of the Tiffany Foundation in 2016.

Born in the Bronx, New York, raised in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and New York, Harris obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wesleyan University, Master of Fine Arts degree from the California Institute of the Arts, and attended the Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study Program. He is a Professor of Art at New York University and lives in New York.

The artist is available for interviews.

For press information and HR images, please contact Margaux De Pauw margaux@maruanimercier.com.

For public information call +32 2 512 50 10, or visit maruanimercier.com.