

## Reginald Sylvester II CUTS

Late Opening: 28 April 2022, 6 – 8pm  
Exhibition Dates: 23 April – 1 June 2022

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We are pleased to present *CUTS*, a new suite of works on paper by Reginald Sylvester II. In these recent works, the expectation of a linear, rectangular base for painting is disrupted by curved cuts which split the works into two or three pieces or remove sections entirely. Positive and negative space is examined both in the application of paint on the picture plane and beyond, with the frame becoming a key component of the work which struggles to maintain a linear structure.

A disintegration of traditional art materials first appeared in Sylvester's large-scale works when the artist began placing canvas string that had fallen from the edges of the material back onto the surface of his paintings. Since then, the artist has used the polymeric quality of rubber to further explore the potential of cutting into his base material. In the *Offering* series, smooth curves are cut into stretched rubber, revealing the armature of the canvas stretchers and transforming the works from opaque, unrefined paintings to sculptural painterly objects.

The suite of works on paper that make up *CUTS* continues to thwart our expectations by pushing the limits of scale, with some works on paper maintaining the same dimensions as Sylvester's large-scale canvases. The expectation that a diptych must be symmetrical is challenged with sheets placed at an angle from one other drawing attention to the margin between frame and artwork, a seemingly neutral space that becomes enlivened. The tension between the works and the frame makes them feel active, as alive as the energy captured in Sylvester's signature mark-making.

## Notes to editors

**Reginald Sylvester II** (b. 1987, Jacksonville, North Carolina) works predominantly in abstraction. Many of his paintings are large-scale, featuring gestural mark-making with layers of paint applied through a physically demanding process. His works are held in public collections including the Pérez Art Museum, Miami; ICA Miami, Florida; Ackland Art Museum, North Carolina; Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Wolverhampton, UK; Spazio 1, Lugano, Switzerland; and Fondazione Stelline, Milan, Italy. His first solo exhibition in an American museum *Painter's Refuge: A Way of Life* will open at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charlotte, North Carolina, May 5, 2022 and will be on view through January 16, 2023. A series of paintings is currently on view at the Arts Club, London, until May 15, 2022 in a solo exhibition titled *Feelin' Blue*. Recent solo exhibitions include *With the End in Mind*, Maximillian William, London, 2021; *NEMESIS*, Maximillian William, London, 2019; and *The Rise and Fall of a People*, Fondazione Stelline, Milan, 2017. Sylvester is featured in the publication *Prime: Art's Next Generation*, London: Phaidon, 2022. Other publications include *With the End in Mind*, London and New York: InOtherWords, Maximillian William, and Natchez, 2021; and *NEMESIS*, London: Maximillian William, 2020.

**Maximillian William** was founded in 2015 with an itinerant model which allowed the gallery to gradually form a roster of contemporary artists. An impulse to expand alongside the advancing careers of these artists led to the establishment of a permanent gallery space in Fitzrovia in 2019. The gallery is artist-centric, collaborating closely with those it supports to build their platforms. On occasion, the gallery seeks to produce exhibitions that highlight those who have influenced its creative community, with the aim of presenting pivotal figures to a new generation. Alongside exhibition making, the gallery is committed to publishing, producing a range of publications from artist books to exhibition catalogues and monographs. The distribution of literature is key to the gallery's commitment to improving accessibility to contemporary art. Publications by the gallery are held in the archives of MoMA and Tate.

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