

Lloyd Foster: Double Double

Second Floor Gallery: March 9 – April 15, 2023

WINDOW: March 16 – April 22, 2023

Anton Kern Gallery is pleased to present *Double Double*, Lloyd Foster's first solo exhibition with the gallery, spanning both the second floor gallery at 16 E 55th Street and WINDOW at 91 Walker Street.

Lloyd Foster (b. 1990, lives and works in New York) is the son of Ghanaian immigrants and grew up in Maryland. While he and his family were part of an extended Ghanaian American community in the Washington D.C. area, a major turning point in his life occurred on his first trip to his parents' homeland at age 24. Since then, and through repeated travels over the past decade in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania, the artist's connection to his African heritage has deepened, and his exploration of self continues to evolve.



Lloyd Foster, *Forward*, 2023, Silver gelatin print, 15 1/4 x 22 5/8 inches (38.7 x 57.5 cm), Edition of 3 plus 1 artist's proof

Foster engages with a myriad of materials, including paint, insulation foam, sapor sponges, fabrics, netting, and much more, but photography is at the center of his practice. During his travels, the artist takes photos of people engaged in their daily activities, of vehicles, signs and buildings, and food and beauty products he sees in local shops. Certain photos are straight documentation, and others are posed. Foster's attention gravitates towards sights, sounds, and smells that reminds him of his childhood. After returning home from his travels and reflecting on his photos, the artist follows an intuitive process by which he transforms memories into physical forms. In this way, he uses photography as a means to mine his personal biography, preserve memories and create new connections.

At the Uptown gallery, Foster presents three framed photographs, a group of drawings, and a constellation of mixed media sculptures largely relating to his latest travels in Accra and Swedru in January. Foster arranges the works throughout the gallery in such a way as to suggest a public street scene. On the one hand, his sculptural works are physically rough and relate to the material world; motorcycles, cars, palm trees, packaged food products, and young people styling each other's hair populate the space. On the other hand, there is a spiritual quality to the works, which is underscored by their weightless presentation. Church scenes, street preachers, praying hands, children in angel masquerade costumes add to this impression. Angels have been a recurring motif in Foster's work, as are flame shapes, which the artist uses to represent energy.

Downtown at 91 Walker Street, the artist utilizes the storefront format to recreate Covenant International Grocery & Fabrics, a local West African market located in Laurel, Maryland, which he frequently visited growing up. Here the viewer encounters a sculptural installation representing the basic setup of a small grocery store: a store attendant, a scale for weighing produce, an ATM, a meat counter, advertisements and signage, and an inventory of specialty food products.

As the exhibition title suggests, there are dualities at play in Foster's work. There are images of home and away, references to death and eternal life, past and future. The artist assumes dual roles as both the documentarian and, at a remove, the subject. The medium of photography, and the mechanics of the camera itself, further reinforce this notion of doubling.

Lloyd Foster (b. 1990, Washington, D.C.) lives and works in New York. He received an MFA from New York University in 2021, and his debut New York solo exhibition *Safe Journey* quickly followed, presented at White Columns in 2022. Foster's work was previously exhibited at Anton Kern Gallery in *Photographic Pictures* curated by the artist Anne Collier in 2022. Outside of New York City, he has exhibited in a number of solo and group exhibitions including: *Image Unavailable*, curated by Brittany Adeline King and Zoë Argires, Gallery Albany, Albany, NY (2022); *America Is...*, Touchstone Gallery, Washington, D.C. (2019); and *Connecting the Dots 2*, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria, VA (2018), among others.