

## TAVARES STRACHAN

### Starless Midnight

7 March – 19 April 2025

385 Broadway, New York, NY 10013

Opening reception: Friday, 7 March, 6-8 pm



Tavares Strachan, A Map of the Crown (Fulani Red), 2025

Marian Goodman Gallery New York is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of Tavares Strachan titled *Starless Midnight*. This immersive presentation will feature several new and existing bodies of work across seven diverse and site-specific environments. Through an interconnected array of works comprising painting, sound, robotics, neon, marble, and hair, *Starless Midnight* is a testament to Strachan’s multifaceted artistic practice, structured by a visual language of storytelling. Strachan’s boldly inventive and ambitious work summons historical and cultural references, expressing the affinities, contradictions, and dependencies within oft-untold stories of historically marginalized individuals, places, and events, and finding the interstices between the disciplines of art, science, history, exploration.

The first floor opens on to an immersive landscape with a near life-size ceramic of the musician and artist Exuma commanding the space from the center of a ‘meadow’ of rice grass. Viewed from above, the installation takes the shape of the Ghanaian Adinkra symbol Okodee Mmowere, which directly translates to “eagle’s talons,” metaphysically denoting bravery. Able to transgress the limitations of a phonetic writing system in its expansive interpretations, Okodee Mmowere pulls rice as the wefting thread of universal culinary staples, spanning across civilizations, space, and time. Adjacent in the same gallery, and an anchoring point of the exhibition, is a quote by James Baldwin that begins, “You could be that person...” Transcribed in Strachan’s neon calligraphy, the words flash in time with a dissonant sound work. Throughout this sensory parcours, Strachan assembles fragmented components of cultural and historical significance into rich visual, olfactory, and sonic allegories. The themes within this bricolage landscape call upon a poetics of being, to build on new relational capacities between individuals and the world.

In the second-floor gallery, Strachan introduces a new body of paintings consisting of hand-tiled and painted word searches that speak to the artist’s focus on visibility and invisibility. Overwhelmingly detailed, meticulously painted bits of paper and fiber absorb the viewer into labyrinthine inquiries of storytelling, star gazing, and exploration. While serious in their content, they simultaneously evoke a playful nostalgia of CRTs and television static. A manifestation of electromagnetic noise, the English language is reduced to tactile fragments, the letters nearly feeling debris-like in their fragile organization.

Each work in this exhibition features infinite references to years of research from Strachan’s ongoing project *The Encyclopedia of Invisibility*—an encyclopedia of his own construction to house lost stories. Offering a multitude

of interpretations on subjects from galactic clusters to the fragility of digital data in the information age, Strachan imaginatively maps the unknown and the process by which we attempt to conquer knowledge.

Strachan was born in 1979 in Nassau, Bahamas, and currently lives and works between New York City and Nassau. He received a BFA in Glass from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2003 and an MFA in Sculpture from Yale University in 2006. He draws on both the resources and community of his birthplace, dividing his time between his studio in New York and Nassau, where he has established an art studio and scientific research platform B.A.S.E.C. (Bahamas Aerospace and Sea Exploration Center) and OKU, a not-for-profit community project encompassing an artist residency and exhibition spaces, a scholarship scheme, and after-school creative programs.

Most recently Strachan's work has been featured in the solo exhibitions *Between Me and You*, at the University of Texas, Austin, and *Tavares Strachan: There Is Light Somewhere*, at the Hayward Gallery, London (both 2024). Other solo exhibitions include *You Belong Here*, Prospect 3. Biennial, New Orleans (2014); *The Immeasurable Daydream*, Biennale de Lyon, Lyon (2013) ; *Polar Eclipse*, The Bahamas National Pavilion 55th Venice Biennale, Venice; *Seen/Unseen*, Undisclosed Exhibition, New York; *Orthostatic Tolerance: It Might Not Be Such a Bad Idea if I Never Went Home Again*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; among others.

Upcoming exhibitions include a solo show at Kunsthalle Mannheim this spring, opening in April 2025, and a major presentation co-organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and Columbus Museum of Art (CMA). The exhibition will premiere at LACMA this fall and travel to CMA in spring 2026.

He has been the recipient of numerous awards including the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation fellowship (2022), 2019-20 Artist in Residence at the Getty Research Institute, 2018 Frontier Art Prize, and the Allen Institute's inaugural artist-in-residence in 2018, 2014 LACMA Art + Technology Lab Artist Grant, 2008 Tiffany Foundation Grant, 2007 Grand Arts Residency Fellowship, and 2006 Alice B. Kimball Fellowship.

#### Press Contact

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