

Anton Kern Gallery

Aaron Fowler **RELEASE**

July 9 – August 15, 2025

Opening Reception: Wednesday, July 9 from 6-8pm

Text by Monique Mitchell

"When I am tested, I will come forth as gold." Job 23:10

RELEASE is both a mirror of Fowler's transfiguration, and an invitation for audiences to let go of what no longer serves them, so they too may be transformed.

The exhibition takes its title from a family ritual: the release of balloons to honor the passing of loved ones. The largest work in the show, *Family Release*, a thirty-six foot long painting, depicts a large group during this act, anchoring the exhibition in a gesture that becomes a structure through which Fowler explores mourning, remembrance, and transformation.

Re-approaching work that began in an unhealed space during the height of the pandemic, Fowler uses found materials: grief, childhood trauma, recycled car parts, clothing, and household items, to reassemble both himself and his compositions. Through the process of examining and excavating his own internal landscape, Fowler seeks to inspire audiences to release a cry that has been suppressed for too long, clearing space for vulnerability, sharing, and connection.

Fowler's collection is a reminder that release is a prerequisite for growth. Only when our storage is emptied can we create space for Beauty to take root and thrive.

This is not a story of trauma. This is a story of alchemy. A story of hope. A story of healing. **RELEASE** is a reminder that even the heaviest burdens can become as light as balloons when we choose to let go. Fowler's latest collection frames this process not as an ending, but as an opening: a space in which grief and reflection give way to realignment and renewal.



Aaron Fowler, **RELEASE**, Car bumpers, afro wigs, foam, acrylic, vinyl, paper, string, on wood support

Aaron Fowler (b. 1988, St. Louis, Missouri) currently lives and works in St. Louis, Missouri. Fowler received his BFA from Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, in 2011, and MFA from Yale University, in 2014. Fowler's work has been presented in institutional exhibitions including the Seattle Art Museum, Washington (2020); *Made in L.A.* at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2018); the New Museum, New York (2018); Savannah College of Art and Design Museum of Art, Georgia (2017); Saatchi Gallery, London (2017); and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2015). Other exhibitions include *Aaron Fowler, Bigger Than Me 2: The MECCA*, Anton Kern Gallery WINDOW, New York (2023); *N2EXISTENCE GENESIS*, The Luminary, St Louis, MO (2021); *Exceedingly and Abundantly Blessed, Part 2*, Francois Ghebaly, Los Angeles (2018); *Donkey Nights*, Salon 94, New York (2018); among others. Fowler was awarded the Gwendolyn Knight | Jacob Lawrence Prize by the Seattle Art Museum (2019) and the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant (2015). He attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2014.