

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

ANNOUNCING REPRESENTATION OF ERIC N. MACK



Eric N. Mack, *Lucky*, 2021, fabric, thread, aluminum stretcher, 91 x 52 x 2 in. (231.1 x 132.1 x 5.1 cm)

Eric N. Mack uses fabric and other found objects to create richly textured compositions that collapse the boundaries between fine art, fashion, and architecture. The artist identifies as a painter due to his preoccupation with surface, light, and material, although his works frequently move away from the walls to synthesize painting with sculpture. Some of Mack's earliest and best-known fabric collages use moving blankets as an aesthetic ground, allowing the intrinsic geometry of the material to provide structure to an assortment of ephemera. In recent years, Mack's compositions have become increasingly intricate and expansive, filling spaces such as the Great Hall at the Brooklyn Museum, the Power Station in Dallas, and a disused gas station in the California desert.

Beyond their ability to transform space, Mack's works gesture to a broad material culture through the specific significance of their individual parts. Gathered from Italian couturiers, international marketplaces, and the streets of Harlem where he lives, Mack employs excess and scarcity in his accumulation and combination of disparate parts. The artist considers fashion to be a universal

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access point to his work and fills discussion of his practice with sartorial metaphors: a single piece is an *outfit*, an installation is a *closet*, and a collage is the descendant of a moodboard. The standardized scale of the human body is also integral to Mack's consideration of his work in relationship to architecture, and he imbues each fabric construction with the potential to function as a shelter as well as an ornament. The specific conditions of an installation bring out the sensorial qualities of the individual materials to varying degrees.

Mack first exhibited with the Paula Cooper Gallery in the fall of 2020 alongside Lynda Benglis and Kelley Walker. In the spring of 2021 Mack was included in *Carte Blanche*, a rotating exhibition of works by represented artists and friends in the gallery's recently opened Palm Beach location. Currently on display in the gallery's vitrine on West 21st Street is Mack's work *Landlord*, a jewel-box-like swath of multicolored fabrics supported by an unlikely armature that the artist designed specifically for this location. A new work by Mack titled *Lucky* will be a highlight of the gallery's booth at Art Basel Miami Beach in December. In contrast to the free-flowing forms of recent installations, Mack reintroduces structure with an aluminum stretcher draped with delicate fabrics. Mack continues to be represented by Morán Morán, Los Angeles.

Eric N. Mack (b. 1987, Columbia, MD) grew up in Maryland, and was a frequent visitor to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., where his father worked as a plexiglass specialist. In 2006 Mack moved to New York to attend the Cooper Union, before pursuing an MFA in painting and printmaking at Yale University. Soon after his graduation from Yale in 2012, Mack was included in *Fore*, The Studio Museum in Harlem's emerging artist exhibition. He would be an artist in residence at The Studio Museum in Harlem from 2014-2015.

In 2015 Mack was included in Greater New York at MoMA P.S.1, and had his first one-person gallery exhibition at Morán Morán in LA. In 2016 his work was featured in several international exhibitions, including *Making & Unmaking* curated by Duro Olowu at the Camden Arts Centre, London, where he met the fashion designer Grace Wales Bonner, with whom he has frequently collaborated. In 2017 Mack presented his first institutional one-person exhibition, *Vogue Fabrics*, at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, NY, and he received the inaugural BALTIC Artists' Award selected by Lorna Simpson. The same year, he completed the Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva Island, FL, and was an artist-in-residency at Delfina Foundation in London, UK.

Two works by Mack were included in the Whitney Biennial in 2019. The same year, the artist transformed the Great Hall of the Brooklyn Museum with his installation *Lemme walk across the room* and The Power Station, Dallas, TX, with a group of works gathered under the title *In austerity, stripped from its support and worn as a sarong*. He also created a site-specific sculpture in the Coachella Valley in California as part of Desert X, an outdoor art biennial, by stretching and draping Missoni fabrics over a defunct gas station. In 2021 Mack was awarded the Rome Prize by the American Academy in Rome, Italy. The prize includes a six-month residency, which the artist is using to research the wrapping of Roman monuments by Christo and Jeanne-Claude. Work by Mack will be on display at The Momentary, a contemporary art space operated by Crystal

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Bridges, as part of the group exhibition *In Some Form or Fashion*, opening November 20th 2021 through March 27th, 2022.

Work by Eric N. Mack is in the permanent collections of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; The Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; the Brooklyn Museum, NY; the NSU Art Museum, Fort Lauderdale, FL; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY.