

JDJ

Noel W. Anderson

Papers of the Archive

August 29 - October 11, 2020

Noel W. Anderson is known for his explorations into the evolving makeup of black male identity as seen through the lens of American media.

Using a variety of materials, predominantly textiles and experimental printmaking processes, the source images are heavily manipulated—blown up, warped and distorted, limbs bending into unrealistic postures, as though the images are transforming right before our eyes.

Anderson's photographic source material—from political activists like Martin Luther King, Jr., to a group of prisoners lined up against a prison fence, to sports heroes like basketball player Spud Webb—collectively prompts the viewer to consider their own relationship to the distorted depiction of Black masculinity in American culture.

The six unique handmade paper objects on view were produced during Anderson's 2019 residency at the renowned papermaking institution Dieu Donn  in New York. Several works from this series were recently exhibited in museum exhibitions at BRIC, Brooklyn and the Hunter Museum in Tennessee.

These works are made entirely from cotton pulp, and the images on the surface of the paper are made by pressing wet paper pulp of various colors through mesh screens. The process creates a visual distortion that feels similar to the effect of making a copy of a copy of a copy—the original image becoming more indistinct with each translation.

The process and effect of these paper-based works function in a similar vein to Anderson's textile-based pieces, in which distorted photos from his archive are translated into woven fabric, which he then picks apart, thread by thread, until the image becomes barely legible. In both bodies of work, the source photographs have become so distressed that they can no longer articulate what they once represented.

Papers of the Archive is presented in collaboration with Elective Affinity, a multidisciplinary platform featuring artist editions and publications with an emphasis on artistic agency.

Noel W. Anderson was born in Louisville, KY and lives and works in New York. He has an MFA from Yale University in Sculpture and MFA from Indiana University in Printmaking, and is currently a professor in Printmaking at New York University. In 2018, he was awarded the NYFA artist fellowship grant and the prestigious Jerome Prize.

Anderson's most recent solo museum exhibition *Blak Origin Moment* debuted at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati in 2017 and traveled to the Hunter Museum in Chattanooga, TN in 2019. He has an upcoming solo project at the Telfair Museum in Savannah, Georgia, titled *Heavy is the Crown*, which uses the words and images of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rodney King to articulate the spectrum of Black masculinity in America.

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Exhibition Checklist

Clockwise from left:

Noel W. Anderson
Line Up, 2018-2019
Handmade paper object
18 × 24 inches

Noel W. Anderson
Die Leitung, 2018-2019
Handmade paper object
18 × 24 inches

Noel W. Anderson
Spud Webb, 2018-2019
Handmade paper object
24 × 18 inches

Noel W. Anderson
Cuffed (Hands-Up), 2018-2019
Handmade paper object
24 × 18 inches

Noel W. Anderson
Dogon (Hands-Up), 2018-2019
Handmade paper object
24 × 18 inches

Noel W. Anderson
King's Hi-5 (Hands-Up), 2018-2019
Handmade paper object
24 × 18 inches

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