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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REGINALD SYLVESTER II

OPENING

Tuesday, March 3, 2020, 6-8pm

TALK

March 14th, 2020, 3pm

Reginald Sylvester with Humberto Moro, Deputy Director & Senior Curator at Museo Tamayo

James Fuentes is pleased to present a solo presentation of new works by Reginald Sylvester II. Motivated by a drive to dismantle and rebuild, over the past year and a half, Sylvester II has been occupied by a transition into abstract painting, evolving from his figurative works that came before. Through this process, Sylvester II spent time traveling to Bali, Japan, and then Mexico City, where he has kept a studio since. The qualities of music and light in this space have had a profound effect on his work, resulting in his series of “light paintings.” Unlike his artificially lit New York studio, his studio in Mexico City is filled only by abundant natural daylight. Its warmth emanates from the innermost layer of his paintings. Sylvester II also began using oil paint, departing from acrylic in favor of the generative possibilities in taking more time to gradually build up translucent layers of paint. The result is a sense of three-dimensionality and luminosity internal to the work. Bearing the time-based effects of process and light, this group of paintings embodies an archeology and alchemy of energy and environment.

The exhibition also includes Sylvester II’s series of oil on paper “stampings,” an element that has been crucial to his practice over time. Applying paint to the surface, he folds the unstretched canvas over onto itself to stamp wet paint from one area to another, a formal as well as practical compositional strategy. Sylvester II later began pressing down heavy sheets of paper instead, expanding the process to apply each sheet to multiple paintings at one time, bringing forward an all-over textural, celestial DNA of his larger body of paintings. Moving ever more toward the improvisational and simultaneous, Sylvester II extends the time inside his works to touch upon past and future. This is an intuitive and spiritual process of looking within in order to reach beyond the confines of controlled movement, framing, or style. In his own words, “I feel that the unconscious or subconscious is a place of great depth. [...] It’s not about making a picture, it’s about finding it.”

Sylvester II was born in Jacksonville, NC in 1987, grew up in Oakland, CA, and lives and works in New York City. He studied graphic design at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions at Pace Prints, New York (2016); Fondazione Stelline, Milan (2017); The Lever House Art Collection, New York (2017), and Maximillian William, London (2019). Group shows include *Surface Issues*, Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai (2017); *PUNCH*, curated by Nina Chanel Abney at Jeffrey Deitch, New York (2018); and *Chairs Beyond Right & Wrong*, curated by Raquel Cayre at R & Company, New York (2019).

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