

F

blvxnth LIGHT **MAY 21 – JULY 4, 2022**

F is pleased to announce **LIGHT**, a solo exhibition by Los Angeles and New Orleans based photographer blvxnth, his first outside of New Orleans, on view through July 4, 2022, by appointment, at 4225 Gibson Street, Houston, TX, 77007.

LIGHT consists of eight photographic works that date from 2015 to 2022 (all are chromogenic archival prints). The works fall into two groups: the larger five prints are arguably non-representational, exhibited directly on the wall, unglazed; three are smaller, more straightforwardly figurative portraiture, and framed. Taken as a whole, **LIGHT** is a fluid display of blvxnth's image making procedures over the last seven years. His methods include double exposures, long exposures, and the "decisive moment." Some works utilize mechanical accident and chance, some appear handmade and painterly; one of the earliest in this exhibition was made by splicing two images together using Photoshop. A skilled and experienced street and portrait photographer, blvxnth's development has brought him increasingly to experimental, nearly abstract images, though not as linearly as that might suggest. His work is an exploration and continual reexamination of the mechanisms and materials of photography. Despite the variety and difference of these images, this exhibition presents a cohesive through-line for which *light* is persistent, running through all of blvxnth's work: as a polemic against which to consider its poetic and literal opposites, as the central agent of photography, and as the spiritual and artistic quest with which he is hungrily and energetically engaged.

At one end of the spectrum is *The Mormon* (2021), a tightly cropped, crisp portrait. It shows a young man's face in three-quarter profile, dressed in a white shirt and black tie, as if a classically seated portrait, but its captured stillness shows the subject in a momentary repose, preparing to respond in debate with the artist as he took the picture. *The Mormon* is hung above a closed door in the rear gallery wall, in a gesture reminiscent of where one might hang a picture of a saint. The elevated placement of this work frames the exhibition, bringing to bear an interrogation of religion amongst its themes. *Black Madonna* (2021) is from a recent body of painterly, additive pictures, which are made entirely without film or camera. Applying chemicals to photosensitive paper, which is then exposed to light (and in the case of *Black Madonna*, following that, exposed to heat), creates splashes, drips, scratches and sprays of color. *Black Madonna* appears to be illuminated from within; the streaks of color across its jet-black surface are like the celestial Northern Lights or an oil shine on metal. The black and white *Mother and Child* (2021) is a composite photograph made with a double exposed negative. One exposure is made up of organic patterned passages; the other exposure is of a young girl held tight on her mother's lap sitting on the wooden back steps of a Chicago brick apartment building. The exposure of the patterned passages is very painterly, which look composed, but is in fact a photograph of paint and water mixing in the bottom of a bathtub blvxnth was using to rinse out brushes. The images streak and shadow across each other in bold diagonal shapes and the young girl's eyes make contact with the camera. Her mother looks skyward, a worried expression upon her face.

blvxnth /blak-smiTH/ (Alexander A. Smith) (b. 1992, New Orleans) lives and works in Los Angeles and New Orleans. Recent exhibitions include *BLVXNTH*, Staple Goods Gallery, New Orleans, *Last Truth of the New*, De Boer Gallery, Los Angeles, *Rabbit Hole*, F, Houston, and *Louisiana Contemporary*, Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans. His portraits have appeared in *GQ*, *DAZED*, *Cultured Magazine* and *Rolling Stone*. F PDF 003, featuring blvxnth's street photography, was published September 4, 2020. His work is in the permanent collections of New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA), New Orleans, and The Underground Museum, Los Angeles.

For more information, please contact Adam Marnie at office@fmagazine.info



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Clockwise from front door:

Jerome, 2019

Chromogenic archival print

9 1/8 x 6 inches (23.18 x 15.24 cm); 14 x 11 inches (35.56 x 27.94 cm) framed

Edition of 5

Wildman, 2022

Chromogenic archival print

31 1/8 x 22 inches (79.1 x 55.88 cm)

Edition of 3

The Mormon, 2021

Chromogenic archival print

10 x 8 inches (25.4 x 20.32 cm) framed

Edition of 5

RPG, 2015

Chromogenic archival print

40 x 28 inches (101.6 x 71.12 cm)

Edition of 3

EGGS, 2021

Chromogenic archival print

26 3/4 x 22 inches (67.95 x 55.88 cm)

Edition of 3

Untitled, 2015

Chromogenic archival print

6 3/4 x 4 3/4 inches (17.15 x 12.1 cm) framed

Unique

Black Madonna, 2021

Chromogenic archival print

28 x 22 inches (71.12 x 55.88 cm)

Edition of 3

Mother and Child, 2021

Chromogenic archival print

40 x 28 inches (101.6 x 71.12 cm)

Edition of 3