

Until Then Reginald Sylvester II

4 June–1 August 2026

Maximillian William is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Reginald Sylvester II, his fourth solo show with the gallery. In a new series of paintings, Sylvester continues to explore the associations and implications of the readymade, as well as the history and limits of abstraction.

Sylvester builds his paintings from a particular set of materials and processes, infusing the works with a range of ideas. The artist starts by stretching rubber, a material associated with Africa and colonisation, over an aluminium substrate. Atop the rubber surface, Sylvester creates a form of assemblage out of discarded military shelters known as ‘drab shelter halves’ or ‘military pup tents’. These shelters were designed as a form of refuge for soldiers amid harsh conditions, or for the more mundane task of housing military equipment. Sylvester sources the material specifically from the 1960s and early 70s, a period of tumultuous political and social change in the US, not to mention the end of abstraction and modernism as the dominant form in American art. Finally, Sylvester layers this rough, articulated surface with a dynamic abstraction, replete with saturated colour and dynamic brushwork. *Cup of Water the Colour of Fire* (2026) conveys a multivalent energy. The base of rubber and drab shelter articulate a nostalgia or melancholy, while the efflorescence of pigment greets the viewer like a burst of unbridled energy. The painting both reveals and obscures the texture and contours of the assemblage, while the green, orange and red painting mimics the lushness of foliage and other natural forms.

Freighted with a history of combat, disguise and temporary shelter, yet alive with an expressive bloom of paint, the paintings address our age of uncertainty, becoming forms of both self-protection and self-presentation. Moreover, artists such as Alberto Burri and Robert Rauschenberg have influenced how Sylvester approaches medium and assemblage. By using readymades reclaimed from the military, from an era when Abstract Expressionism had run its course, he addresses with a unique artistic language the politics and legacy of abstraction in America and beyond.

Timed to coincide with London Gallery Weekend, Sylvester’s exhibition follows his solo show at Limbo Art Museum, Accra, Ghana, while building on recent museum presentations, including at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture in Charlotte, NC, and the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO.

Reginald Sylvester II (b. 1987 in Jacksonville, US) lives and works in Jersey City, New Jersey, US. He studied at the Academy of Art, University of San Francisco.

Solo exhibitions include *On the Other Side of Languish*, Limbo Museum, Accra, Ghana (2025); *Groanings Which Cannot Be Uttered*, Institute of Contemporary Art Chattanooga, Tennessee, US (2024); *T-1000*, Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, US (2023); *Green Gate*, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, US (2023); and *CUTS*, Maximillian William, London, UK (2022). Group exhibitions include *Hyphen American: Intersections of Identity*, organised by Christian Wurst, Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln, US (2026); *A Meadow in the Clouds*, curated by Allison Glenn, The Shepherd, Detroit, US (2026); *The Spirituality of Color*, Gladwell Projects, New York, US (2025); *Noctis Imago*, François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, US (2025); and *Beyond the Frame: Abstraction Reconstructed*, a two-person exhibition with Denzil Hurley, CANADA Gallery, New York, US (2025).