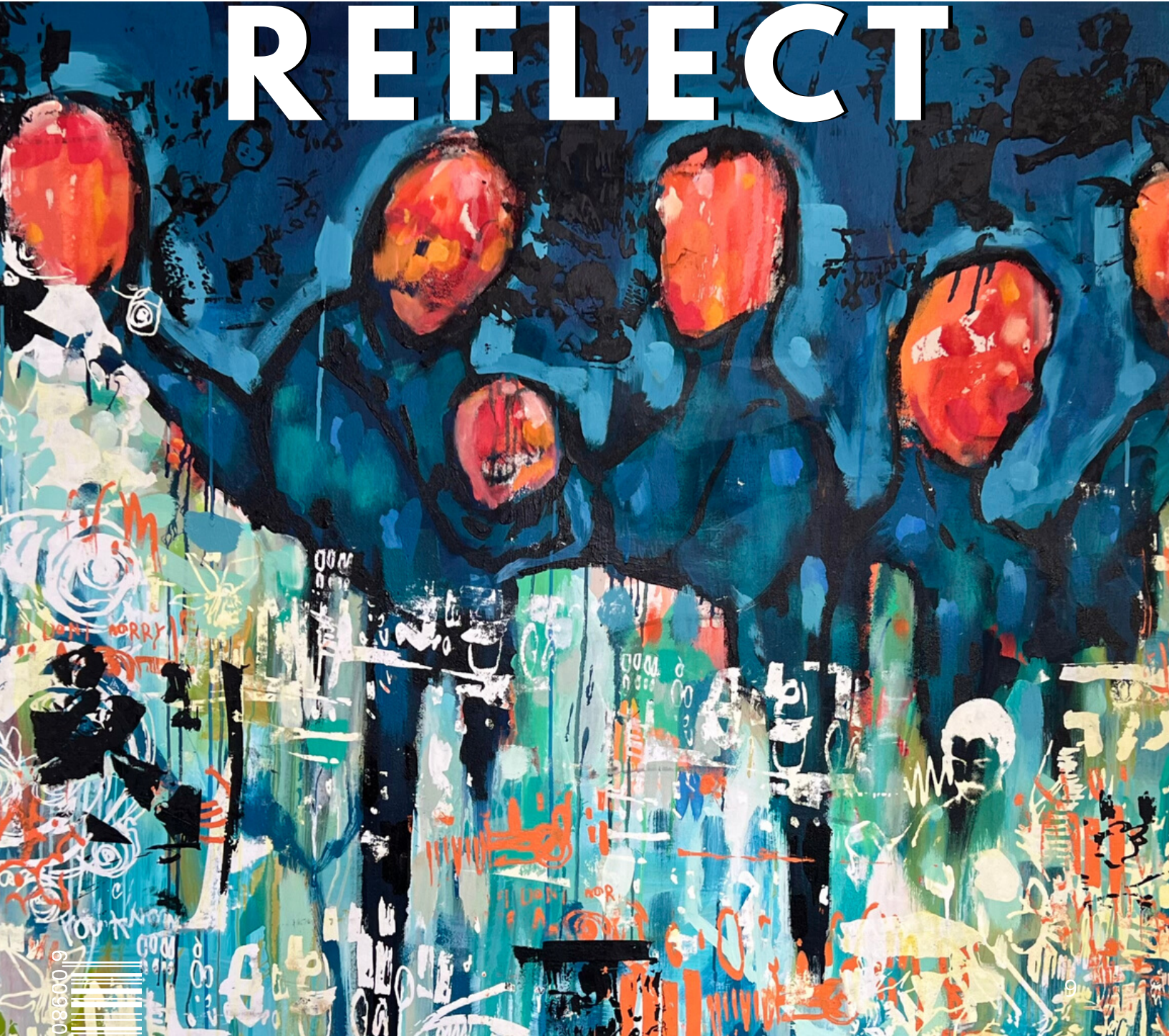


JOHN-HERBERT WRIGHT • SOLO EXHIBITION • 2022

# REWIND & REFLECT



For purchasing inquiries or a collector's consultation please contact  
Amit Vaidya 929.398.9661 / Mekia Machine 917.724.3396

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# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **For Immediate Release**

### John-Herbert Wright: A Solo Exhibition

Curators: Amit Vaidya & Mekia Machine

New York, New York, September, 2022 - We are pleased to announce the inaugural solo exhibition of artist John-Herbert Wright. The exhibition runs from September 15th to September 22, 2022 and features his latest silkscreen prints and large-scale paintings.

From the tender age of eight, Wright gravitated to painting as an escape expressing a rich inner world. His work heavily relies upon dark figurations amongst an urban landscape leaving the viewer space to navigate the world he creates. An analogy of the human condition; centering the female nude/mother and child as the protagonist, he tells the story of the broken seeking respite, the downcast, the other. Wright seeks to illuminate the universe of darkness within all of us, within himself, and that darkness contrasted with fragility has always been at the epicenter of his work.

Wright has managed to create a niche for himself as a painter and street-wear designer, contributing to the role the graphic t-shirt played in disseminating New York street culture across the globe. Transferring the techniques of garment making onto his canvases, Wright's paintings feature backdrops of multiple layers of silk-screened images, drawings and text. Although his success has been celebrated, in many ways till now, Wright has also kept his own story on fade.

Rewind & Reflect debuts John-Herbert Wright, the next chapter in the artists' journey. For his solo premiere, Wright explores the theme of abstract figurations in nine new paintings reflecting an intimate expression of his own personal story narrated through the music that has provided the soundtrack to his life.

In the new collection, the artist reflects on the evolution of fatherhood across multi-generations, silkscreening personal photographs from his childhood and family history to weave his story, highlighting relationships between himself, his father and grandfather. His own challenges with violence and mental health, understanding and embracing his own unique multi-racial, multi-ethnic identity, with roots spanning from the Philippines to Harlem ca. 1950s.

Each painting is titled after a song that has impacted the artist. From his father's favorite musicians like James Taylor and Simon & Garfunkel to his own contemporary heroes like Nipsey Hussle and Juice Wrld, the music serves as a creative bridge if you will between his abstract streams of consciousness and the world at large. The collection celebrates everything that has brought the artist from standing behind the hat as Mr. John Wright to standing tall as John-Herbert Wright, the painter willing to not only craft but curate and celebrate his past and all of its beauty and bruises through this show.

In addition to this exclusive new collection, we are also featuring some well-celebrated local artists, many of whom have collaborated with Wright or are artists he hopes to work with in the future. This includes John Mazlish, CAM, Paddy Cohn, Mekia Machine, Jordan Barker, BIC, Taylor Ette, M. Clark, Elsa Marie Keefe, Tyler Jordan, Lunfarda and Martine Reyna.

Exhibition Details:

John-Herbert Wright: A Solo Exhibition  
September 15 to September 22, 2022

BLUE BUILDING, 222 E. 46th Street, New York, NY 10017  
Hours: Daily 12:00-5PM

Opening Reception: September 15, 2022, 7:00-11PM  
Artist Talk: September 18, 2022, 5:00-7PM  
Closing Reception: September 22, 2022, 7:00-10PM

For purchase inquiries or more information, please contact:

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Follow the artist on Instagram: @mr.johnwright



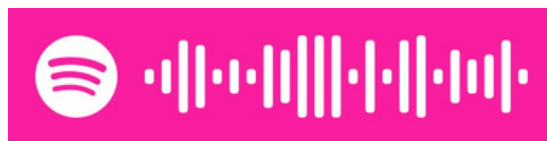
Smooth Operator, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 58 X 54 inches*

\$10,000

Sade's 1984 classic "Smooth Operator" has been a song that resonated with Wright for numerous reasons. Besides his personal admiration for the track and the beauty of the band's lead singer Helen Folasade Adu, the term rather appropriately refers to his grandfather, Herbert. Wright's father was the unexpected result of his black grandfather's affair with a white woman. This painting was the first piece Wright explored as part of the Rewind & Reflect collection. Understanding his grandfather and the two women he had as grandmothers is a chapter of Wright's family story he never discussed as openly, until now.

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Baby Can I Hold You, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 66 X 36 inches*

\$7,500

Tracy Chapman's 1988 beloved single "Baby Can I Hold You" in many ways captures the love John saw the older women in his life express for their men. His paternal grandmother stood by her husband despite his infidelities and even after the passing of their own child, wished to make Wright's father a part of their story. This compassion has continued to transcend generations, making for an embrace that many have sought and received in the family.

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IF WE LIVE  
TILL FOREVER

FOREVER

DEATHS GONE BY

NOBODY  
ABOVE  
YOU

Forever Your Girl, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 66 X 40 inches*

\$7,500

Paula Abdul's "Forever Your Girl" had rocketed to the top of charts in 1989. It also kept a young boy who was just beginning to spend time with a paintbrush jubilant and feeling loved. Wright's world has encompassed many strong women, including his Filipino grandmother, his mother, his sister, and now today his niece. The freedom that the women both lived and also empowered for Wright serves as the inspirational force behind this piece.

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Fade Into You, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 62 X 54 inches*

\$10,000

Mazzy Star's "Fade Into You" in many ways encompassed Wright's adolescence. Tumultuous and often filled with angst, sadness and feelings of extreme pain and loss, Wright unmask the challenges of fighting for love and chasing the belief that sometimes passion can immerse one so deeply that you can lose yourself. From the inside it feels sacred but from the outside, it's far from that - leading to a feeling of isolation that can only be saved by addiction.

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Sweet Baby James, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 58 X 54 inches*

\$7,500

As Wright's life began shifting from the comfort of his home to the streets in the early 2000's, in many ways his childhood and the music that his father played for him became his only blanket. James Taylor's "Sweet Baby James" in particular, was a song his father would sing to him as a kid. Despite their own personal relationship meeting challenges over the subsequent years, the warmth that the song gave and those early memories kept Wright painting and seeing the beauty despite such moments of darkness

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I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 58 X 54 inches*

With the knowledge that painting was refuge but having to fight the challenging streets of New York, Wright spent his 20's in a battle against his own mental health, further fueled by his alcoholic binges and stints in jail. "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" by U2 echoes the question Wright was asking - if the world outside would be any easier on him than the one inside his head, still unable to express creatively as his soul aspired. In many ways, looking out was easier on canvas than the reality, even though his reality was far more colorful than any painting.

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You Got Me, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 62 X 54 inches*

\$12,000

Sometimes the faith that others have can save you. The Root's "You Got Me" speaks of love and for Wright, despite all the challenges his life and his living saw, the love that was expressed across his family became the ultimate force in giving Wright the support he needed to leave his dark past behind and begin to paint the world, flaws and all, from the heart.

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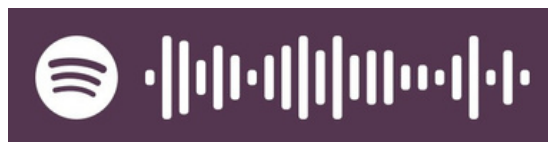
The Sound Of Silence/Lucid Dreams, 2022

*Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 78 X 65 inches*

*\$15,000*

Of course no redemption is easy and even when things seem to be improving, there can be moments of darkness. Wright's dreams were just that "Lucid Dreams" as Juice WRLD expressed. Of course, they would be fueled by a suicidal ideation that longed for "The Sound Of Silence" as detailed by Simon & Garfunkel. For Wright, his dreams bridged the gap between his past and what his future could have been. The appreciation for the darkness by shining a light on it through his art has carried Wright to his latest chapter as an artist.

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Grinding All My Life, 2000-2022

*Oil, Latex enamel, acrylic, plastisol on canvas, 60 X 35 inches*

\$12,000

Nipsey Hussle's "Grinding All My Life" has been a personal mantra for Wright and Hussle's murder deeply impacted Wright as he identified with the young rapper who had a zest for life and was trying to do good for his community. Of course, not everyone gets a chance for salvation in this lifetime. Wright's composition was started more than 20 years ago but he was unable to complete the piece until this collection. Call it needing to go back to see forward, Wright now sings Hussle's hit with swag and style, as badges of pride and with purpose.

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