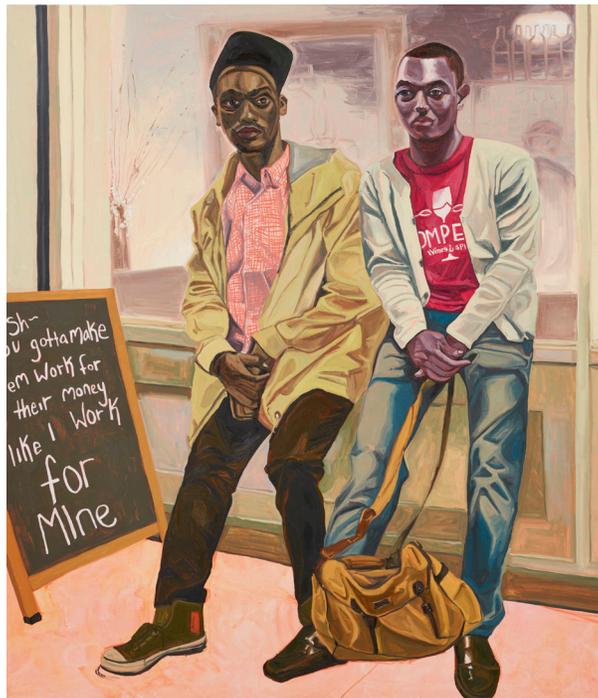


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NEW MUSEUM PRESENTS THE FIRST SOLO MUSEUM EXHIBITION IN NEW YORK BY JORDAN CASTEEL



New York, NY...The New Museum is pleased to present “**Jordan Casteel: Within Reach,**” an exhibition of work by New York–based artist Jordan Casteel (b. 1989, Denver, Colorado), on view in the Museum’s Second Floor Gallery from February 19 to May 24, 2020. Bringing together nearly forty paintings spanning her career, including works from her celebrated series *Visible Man* (2013–14) and *Nights in Harlem* (2017), along with recent portraits of her students at Rutgers University–Newark, this is Casteel’s first solo museum exhibition in New York City.

In her large-scale oil paintings, Casteel has developed a distinctive figurative language permeated by the presence of her subjects, who are typically captured in larger-than-life depictions that teem with domestic details and psychological insights.

Portraying people from communities in which she has lived and worked—including former classmates at Yale, where she earned an MFA; street vendors and neighbors near her home in Harlem; and her own students at Rutgers University–Newark in New Jersey—Casteel insists upon the ordinary, offering scenes with both the informality of a snapshot

and the frontality of an official portrait. In these richly colorful works, Casteel draws upon ongoing conversations on portraiture that encompass race, gender, and subjectivity, connecting her practice to the legacy of artists like Alice Neel, Faith Ringgold, and Bob Thompson, among others. Casteel's studies in anthropology and sociology also inform her works, which can often be read as a reflection on the presentation of the self in everyday life and as an investigation of the relationships that tie together intimacy and distance, familiarity and otherness.

Casteel's subjects, who are frequently black men looking directly at the viewer, are self-possessed and casually posed, but, as they stare into the distance, they also seem to ponder questions about masculinity, class, belonging, and displacement. In the exchange of gazes between the sitters, the artist, and the viewers, her paintings blur impulses and aspirations to compose a nuanced portrait of daily life in the US.

From her earliest series, *Visible Man*, Casteel has challenged conventional depictions of blackness while simultaneously reconfiguring stereotypes and expectations around femininity and desire. In *Jiréh* (2013), a student from the Yale School of Drama appears unclothed and in repose at home, gazing tranquilly at the viewer from a patterned couch. Resting on a kind of quiet empathy, the painting captures the vulnerability intrinsic to being looked at. In later works, Casteel's encounters with her subjects are animated by a different sense of place: in *Nights in Harlem*, Casteel shifts her attention outside to men and women who populate the streets of her neighborhood. Posed in their environments, these figures reflect the communal spaces and social relationships they inhabit.

Along with her depictions of life in Harlem, Casteel also explores scenarios in which anonymity and individuality seem to coexist. In her cropped "subway paintings"—one of which lends its title to the exhibition—she zooms in on everyday gestures she observes on New York City trains. Even against the anonymous weight of strangers clasping cell phones and huddling near doorways, the body still remains legible, its identity concealed but its inner life nevertheless present. In these, as in many of her works, Casteel captures the sensory experience of life in the city, while conjuring the complex emotional landscape of her sitters.

"Jordan Casteel: Within Reach" also includes recent portraits of Casteel's students from Rutgers University-Newark. This series is comprised of works composed as domestic tableaux wherein the sitters and the artist share moments of proximity and estrangement that double as allegories of fleeting youth. These paintings signal a new phase for Casteel, one in which detailed passages of paint are contrasted with more abbreviated notations that still retain all the humanist qualities that distinguish her work.

The exhibition is curated by Massimiliano Gioni, *Edlis Neeson Artistic Director*.

A fully illustrated catalogue published by the New Museum accompanies the exhibition and includes an interview with the artist conducted by **Massimiliano Gioni** and **Thelma Golden**, and newly commissioned texts by **Dawoud Bey**, **Lauren Haynes**, and **Amanda Hunt**.

ABOUT JORDAN CASTEEL

Jordan Casteel (b. 1989, Denver, CO) lives and works in New York City and is Assistant Professor of Painting in the Department of Arts, Culture, and Media at Rutgers University-Newark. Recent solo exhibitions include “Jordan Casteel: Returning the Gaze,” presented at both the Denver Art Museum, Denver (2019) and the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University (2019–20). In recent years, she has participated in exhibitions at institutional venues such as Baltimore Museum of Art, MD (2019); Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR (2018); MoCA, Los Angeles, CA (2018); The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY (2017 and 2016); and MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA (2017). Casteel has been an artist-in-residence at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Process Space, Governors Island, NY (2015); The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY (2015); and The Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program, Brooklyn, NY (2016). Casteel received her BA in Studio Art from Agnes Scott College, Decatur, GA in 2011 and her MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT in 2014.

AUDIO GUIDE

Visitors can explore “Jordan Casteel: Within Reach” with our audio guide. To hear Jordan Casteel speak about her practice as well as featured works in the exhibition, visitors can download the [Gesso Experiences](#) app for iOS and Android devices or listen online at [gesso.fm/newmu](#) or [newmuseum.org](#). A limited number of devices are also provided for use at the Visitor Desk.

IMAGES

For high resolution images for “Jordan Casteel: Within Reach,” please contact press@newmuseum.org.

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

SUPPORT

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Image: Jordan Casteel, *Joe and Mozel (Pompette Wines)*, 2017. Oil on canvas, 90 x 78 in (228.6 x 198.1 cm). Private collection. Courtesy Casey Kaplan, New York