



Maria's Song Triptych
1999
Acrylic and collage on cold press watercolor paper
30 x 66 in

Armando Alleyne *Body and Soul*

Curated by Nicole Mouriño and Clarence Johns

May 20 – June 25, 2022

Opening reception and book party:
Friday, May 20, 2022, 6–8 PM

Carracci Art is pleased to announce *Body and Soul*, a one-person presentation of work by Armando Alleyne. Curated by Nicole Mouriño and Clarence Johns, the exhibition will be held at 368 Broadway, Suite 305 in Tribeca and will be open from **May 20 to June 25, 2022**. The reception will correspond with a book party for the Edition Patrick Frey monograph *Armando Alleyne: A Few of My Favorites*, to be held on **Friday, May 20 from 6–8 PM**.

Body and Soul presents a selection of Armando Alleyne's work from the late 1990s and early 2000s, focusing on paintings and drawings on paper which explore themes of family, community, sex, and love. Born to a Puerto Rican mother and Barbadian father in 1959, Alleyne grew up in the Lower East Side of Manhattan with nine siblings. In the 1970s, Alleyne attended City-As-School alongside Jean-Michel Basquiat and interned at the Children's Art Carnival in Harlem. Alleyne graduated with a B.A. in Fine Art and Education from City College in 1983, where he developed an interest in queering portraiture. Since the 1990s, Alleyne's compositions have portrayed Jazz & Salsa musicians as well as intimate moments with friends and loved ones, both real and imagined.

Alleyne's figurative paintings on paper feature patchworks of vivid color surrounded by 'hieroglyphs' of evocative near-abstract marks and collage. Drawing on the iconic composition of Édouard Manet's *Olympia*, *Maria's Song Triptych* depicts the artist's younger sister reclining with her right arm resting on a skull. Alleyne collages real condoms to the maid figure's bouquet as a meditation on safe sex, reimagining Manet's painting as a reflection on the passing of a sibling due to HIV/AIDS. *Nourishing Ourselves* and *The Couple III* exemplify Armando's expression of Gay love; one work evokes two couples dancing and the other is an impassioned embrace between intertwined lovers. The artist's vibrant use of color brings to mind the influence of Romare Bearden and Betye Saar, while his 'hieroglyphs' include symbols of life and faith such as the Egyptian ankh and the Christian cross. Furthering an interest in depictions of the body, Alleyne began a series of ballpoint pen drawings during his time in the New York shelter system in the 1990s. Taking inspiration from the sculptures of Henry Moore, Alleyne interweaves curved figures with evocative abstract forms.

Body and Soul is the first one-person presentation of Alleyne's work since 2010, and posits a relationship between the intimate and the spiritual. Like Jazz, Alleyne uses a combination of structure and improvisation by uniting photographic and art-historical references with a bold use of color, 'hieroglyphs' and collage to render family, friends and notable figures. The lyrics of the standard "Body and Soul" refer to desire and longing, sentiments echoed in the thematic and stylistic elements of Alleyne's practice.

Armando Alleyne (b. 1959, New York) grew up in Lower Manhattan and graduated from The City College of New York with a B.A. in Education and Fine Arts in 1983. He lives and works in Brooklyn. A one-person exhibition of his work from the late 1990s and early 2000s, *Body and Soul* is on view at Carracci Art through June 25, 2022. Alleyne's work has also been included in *Refuge*, a group show curated by Nicole Mouriño for 440 Gallery. Throughout the decades, his work has been shown at Sage Center Harlem, Gallery M, Chi Chiz, the Bronx River Gallery, Clover's Fine Art Gallery, Metropolitan Community Church, Sarah Lawrence College, the Jazz Gallery and Black Lawyers Association, among others. He has illustrated numerous publications including *Blackheart 2: The Prison Issue—A Journal of Writing and Graphics by Black Gay Men* (1984), *Black Music*, *Black Poetry: Blues and Jazz's Impact on African American Versification* (Gordon E. Thompson, 2014), *Kwanzaa in the Gay and Lesbian Family* (Imani Rashid, 2011) and *Saving the World from Self—Or Should I Say Selfishness* (Philip Regman, 2010).