

Paul Mpagi Sepuya: *Exposure* 27 January – 5 May 2024

***Exposure* is the first institutional presentation in the UK by the Los Angeles- based artist Paul Mpagi Sepuya. The exhibition brings together over forty intimate studio portraits that explore the relationship between camera, subject and viewer. For the past twenty years, Sepuya has trained his eye exclusively on people he knows including friends, lovers and members of his queer and creative communities. Often the artist himself features in the photographs, with glimpses of his body appearing in reflections or from outside the frame. His photographs are not only images of desire, but also images about the making of images.**

The history of photography, particularly that of daylight portrait studios in 19th- century Europe

and North America, forms the basis of Sepuya's most recent body of work, *Daylight Studio/Dark Room Studio* (2021 – ongoing). This series coincides with the artist's relocation to a larger studio in 2021, a skylit space where the changing conditions of light could be observed over the course of a day. Here Sepuya began gathering props and furniture seen in early portrait studios – velvet cushions and woven rugs, European pedestals and African stools, and other objects from the height of Europe's colonial exploits – and thinking about how the queer, racialised bodies he photographs might be situated amongst them.

This exhibition brings this new body of photographs into conversation with a selection of works from the past eight years around different ideas and acts of 'exposure'. The works in Gallery 1 consider the photographic

exposure and acts of image-making, as well as the intimate dynamics of obscuring and revealing that occur within the spaces of the studio and the darkroom.

In Gallery 2 Sepuya's studio appears as a space for play, pleasure and empowerment – a kind of stage where images are constructed through casual and informal interactions with his subjects.

Exhibition Credits

The exhibition is curated by Nicole Yip, Chief Curator at Nottingham Contemporary.

All works courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich, Paris, unless otherwise stated.

Paul Mpagi Sepuya: *Exposure* is generously supported by the Paul Mpagi Sepuya Exhibition Circle: Bortolami Gallery, DOCUMENT Chicago

**& Lisbon, Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Vielmetter
Los Angeles, & those who wish to remain
anonymous.**

Exhibition graphics by Studio Marie Lusa.

RELATED EVENTS

Artist Talk: Paul Mpagi Sepuya

Saturday 27 Jan, 3 – 4:30pm

**Join artist Paul Mpagi Sepuya and Ali Roche for
a presentation and conversation on his
practice.**

EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGHS

Wednesday 7 Feb, 12pm

Welcome Walkthrough

**Explore the exhibition with our team and
community partners Emmanuel House and
Skate Nottingham, followed by refreshments
and conversation in the café afterwards.**

Wednesday 28 Feb, 2pm

Curator's Walkthrough

Join Nottingham Contemporary's curators for a tour of our Spring exhibitions.

Wednesday 6 Mar, 1pm

With Natifah White, dance artist, self-archivist.

Tuesday 30 Apr, 1pm

With Jazz Swali, curator and programme coordinator, BACKLIT Gallery.

12.30 TALKS

12.30pm every Tuesday, Thursday and

Saturday, starting Tuesday 6 Feb Join one of our friendly Gallery Assistants for a short exploration of one

of our current exhibitions. For more details visit our website.

FREE FAMILY ACTIVITIES

February Half-Term: 13 Feb – 15 Feb

**Early Years Workshops: Mon 4 Mar & Mon 22
Apr**

Easter Holiday Workshops: 2 Apr – 11 Apr

**Explore the themes in the exhibitions through
making and play.**

The Screen at Contemporary

Light After Dark Film Festival 2024: 8 – 16 Mar

**A city-wide immersive film festival for intimate
and collective encounters with cinema. Made
possible with support from Film Hub Midlands
through funds from the National Lottery. Film
Hub Midlands support people to watch, show,
and make films in the Midlands.**

**For more information about the exhibition,
related events and learning programmes, visit
nottinghamcontemporary.org or scan here:**



Nottingham Contemporary is a registered charity and dependent on the generosity of our visitors, partners and supporters. Donate today to directly support our ambitious exhibitions, and the vital work we do with artists, schools, young people, families, and our local community.

Suggested donation: £5

If you would like a calm space to reflect during your visit, please feel free to use Gallery Zero (room adjacent to Gallery 1), where you can also find support resources and tools. Please speak to a member of staff for more information.

Environmental: Nottingham Contemporary is committed to advancing sustainability within the organisation and aims to explore and embed sustainable working practices and habits within our workplace and across the sector. This includes standardising environmental considerations at all stages of decision making.

In *Exposure*, most of the artworks have been transported using road freight. In instances where new editions have been produced, framing and fabrication was completed in the UK. Our exhibition notes are printed on FSC Mix paper (Forest Stewardship Council ® certified products manufactured with a variety of sources including FSC-certified virgin fibre, controlled wood and/or recycled materials).