



AWOL ERIZKU: MYSTIC PARALLAX

Exhibition dates: September 26 - November 14, 2020
The FLAG Art Foundation | 545 West 25th Street, NY

The FLAG Art Foundation is pleased to present *Mystic Parallax*, a solo exhibition by multidisciplinary artist **Awol Erizku**, on view **September 26 - November 14, 2020**, on its 9th floor. Erizku engages an Afrocentric perspective to a new body of photo-based works, sculpture, drawings made from incense smoke and ash, and a series of short films, which act as a counternarrative to the historically westernized discourse on African and African American culture.

Central to the new works are signifiers rooted in Trap music and Islam that employ contronyms as a visual and linguistic device to explore new dimensions in the evolving lexicon on objects, music, and prose. Throughout the exhibition, Erizku combines expropriated and commodified Aethiopean artifacts, contemporary African American iconography, and references to photography, media, and image creation. Fire, both as a medium and symbolic, Benu¹-like element, serves as a catalyst for metamorphosis and transfiguration, creating a space for historical interventions, and rejuvenating fossilized concepts and visual language.

The title *Mystic Parallax* suggests alternative readings and cross-cultural perspectives from multiple vantage points, inviting viewers to participate in an open-ended investigation into a constellation of ideas. The exhibition aims to construct a new paradigm; a break from master narratives and Eurocentric intellectual gate-keepers; the treatment of Africa as a monolith; mythopoeia²; post-structuralism; culture as commodity; and impact of language on the construction of meaning.

About:

Awol Erizku (b.1988, Gondar, Ethiopia, lives in Los Angeles, CA) is a conceptual artist who received his B.A. from Cooper Union in 2010 and his M.F.A from Yale in 2014. He has exhibited at institutions across the country including the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include *Slow Burn* at Ben Brown Fine Arts Hong Kong, *Menace II Society* at Night Gallery, Los Angeles, *Make America Great Again* at Ben Brown Fine Arts, London, *New Flower | Images of the Reclining Venus* at The FLAG Art Foundation, New York, and *Smokes of Anomy* presented at nomadic exhibition venue, Duchamp Detox Clinic, by the artist in the Bronx. *Mystic Parallax* is Erizku's second solo exhibition and the eighth time FLAG has worked with the artist since 2011.

The FLAG Art Foundation, founded in 2008 by art patron Glenn Fuhrman, is a non-profit exhibition space that encourages the appreciation of contemporary art among a diverse audience. FLAG presents four to six exhibitions a year that include artworks by international, established and emerging artists, borrowed from a variety of sources. FLAG invites a broad range of creative individuals to curate exhibitions and works in-depth with artists to provide curatorial support and a platform to realize their own solo exhibitions. Based in Manhattan's Chelsea art district, FLAG and its related programs are free and open to the public.

Join the conversation online and follow FLAG's Instagram (@flagartfoundation) and Twitter (@FLAGartNYC) and use the **#AwolErizkuMysticParallax** hashtag when posting.

¹ The Benu was a mythological avian deity who played central role in the ancient Egyptian creation myth and is associated with the solar gods Atum and Ra; the Benu was said to appear each morning in the form of the rising sun. This relationship to rebirth and renewal also links the Benu to Osiris, god of the Egyptian underworld, fertility, and the embodiment of the dead and resurrected pharaoh.

² Mythopoeia (from the Greek words that mean "myth-making") is a narrative genre in modern literature and film where a fictional mythology is created by the author or screenwriter. (tvtropes.org)