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Press Release
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Paul Mpagi Sepuya: Dark Room A-Z

New Monograph Indexes Artistic Process and Portraiture

New York, October 1, 2024—Aperture presents *Paul Mpagi Sepuya: Dark Room A-Z*, a new volume that reflects on the methodologies, strategies, and points of interest behind a single, expansive body of work at a pivotal moment in his career. The book is Sepuya's most comprehensive monograph to date, serving as an artist-guided tour through the processes and approaches within his work, after nearly two decades of practice.

Paul Mpagi Sepuya's photography is grounded in a collaborative, rhizomatic approach to studio practice and portraiture. This volume unpacks his *Dark Room* series (2016–21), offering a deep dive into the thick network of references and the interconnected community of artists and subjects that Sepuya has interwoven throughout the images. The excavation and mapping of intellectual and artistic data points across the artist's work is presented through three distinct "voices," allowing for a comprehensive cross-referencing of conceptual categories.

Each category is alphabetized and illuminated via texts by curator and scholar Gökcan Demirkazik; selections from previously published texts about the work by critics, colleagues, and friends; quotations of other writers' work that inspire the artist; as well as writings by the artist on his thematic preoccupations as they appear and reappear throughout this ongoing body of work. *Dark Room A-Z* serves as an iterative return and exhaustive manual to the strategies and generative ways of working that have informed Sepuya's image-making. *Paul Mpagi Sepuya: Dark Room A-Z* is available at aperture.org/books.

Public programs will include two book launches to celebrate the release of *Dark Room A-Z*. On Friday, October 11 at 6:30 p.m. EDT, **Michael Bullock**, writer and political organizer, will moderate a discussion about *Dark Room A-Z* between **Lesley A. Martin**, former creative director of Aperture and editor of this title, **Silas Munro**, founder of Polymode and the book's designer, and Paul Mpagi Sepuya, at Bortolami, 39 Walker St, New York, NY. A reading with the artist and **Gökcan Demirkazik** on Saturday, November 2, from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. PDT at Arcana: Books on the Arts, 8675 Washington Blvd, Culver City, CA. Further details and additional programs will be listed at aperture.org/events

Paul Mpagi Sepuya (born in San Bernardino, California, 1982)

is a Los Angeles-based artist. His work is held in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Studio Museum in Harlem, all in New York; as well as the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, among other institutions. Notable recent exhibitions include a solo survey exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, a solo exhibition at Foam, Amsterdam, in 2018, the 2019 Whitney Biennial, and *Being: New Photography 2018* at the Museum of Modern Art.

Gökcan Demirkazik is an art historian, curator, and critic, and is currently a PhD student in art history at University of California, Los Angeles. His writing has appeared in *ArtAsiaPacific*, *Artforum*, *ArtReview*, *Di'van: A Journal of Accounts, Even*, and *Frieze*. An alumnus of the Ashkal Alwan Home Workspace Program, Beirut, Demirkazik holds a BA in art history from Harvard College.

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About Aperture

Aperture is a nonprofit publisher that leads conversations around photography worldwide. From our base in New York, Aperture connects global audiences and supports artists through our acclaimed quarterly magazine, books, exhibitions, digital platforms, public programs, limited-edition prints, and awards. Established in 1952 to advance “creative thinking, significantly expressed in words and photographs,” Aperture champions photography’s vital role in nurturing curiosity and encouraging a more just, tolerant society. For more information on Aperture, visit: aperture.org

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