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WE ARE FAMILY

February 1– March 6, 2022
 New York Academy of Art
nyaa.edu/we-are-family/
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The New York Academy of Art is pleased to present “We Are Family,” a group show which invites over a dozen contemporary artists to explore the concept of family – both those we are born into and those that we choose. “We Are Family” is co-curated by the Academy Provost Peter Drake and faculty member Clifford Owens, Director of the Department of Critical Studies. The exhibition will be on view at the New York Academy of Art from February 1 to March 6, 2022. On Wednesday, February 23 at 6:30 pm EST, the Academy will present a panel via Zoom featuring participating artists Kathia St. Hilaire and Alison Elizabeth Taylor and moderated by Drake and Owens.

The works in “We Are Family” reflect the multitudinous emotions that the word “family” can conjure, from love to obligation to familiarity to discomfort. Artworks include an intimate domestic scene of an expectant mother and her partner, exquisitely rendered in wood by Alison Elizabeth Taylor; a plaster and fiberglass sculpture of a young girl having her hair tenderly brushed by her grandmother, part of Rigoberto Torres’ “Bronx Hall of Fame” series; and a surreal graphite drawing by Amy Cutler in which a woman’s brain is cracked open and her interior thoughts are directly illustrated. “We Are Family” notably features a piece from Derrick Adams’ acclaimed “Family Portrait” series, in which the artist painted 10 oil portraits on burlap canvas inspired by vintage snapshots from a family photo album, and which Adams created with, in his words, “a sense of kinship and family and love and ceremony and ritual.”¹

Co-curators Drake and Owens state: “We Are Family” embraces intersectionality, avoids saccharine sentimentality, and repudiates an archaic (and oppressive) ideology of “family values.” In this group exhibition, the modern family is visible and celebrated across social constructions of class, race, sexuality, and gender, in order to impart a sense of what Cornel West refers to as “non-market values of love, care, and trust,” which inspires our longing to belong to both born and chosen family.

ABOUT THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF ART

Founded in 1982 by artists, scholars and patrons of the arts, including Andy Warhol, the New York Academy of Art is a cultural and educational institution that combines intensive technical training in the fine arts with active critical discourse. The Academy believes that rigorously trained artists are best able to realize their artistic vision. Through major exhibitions, a lively speaker series, and an ambitious educational program, the Academy serves as a creative and intellectual center for all artists dedicated to highly skilled, conceptually aware figurative and representational art.

1. Kenney, Nancy. “In highly personal portraits, an artist speaks up for his native Baltimore.”
The Art Newspaper, August 12, 2019.



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New York Academy of Art



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Participating Artists

Derrick Adams

John Ahearn

Amy Bennett

Patty Chang

David Antonio Cruz

Amy Cutler

Bernadette Despujols

Eric Fischl

Sedrick Huckaby

David Humphrey

Shona McAndrew

Erin Riley

Bernardo Siciliano

Kathia St.Hilaire

Hugh Steers

Alison Elizabeth Taylor

Rigoberto Torres

Liu Xiaodong



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