

Theta

Omari Douglin

MOD (Montage Ontology Domain)

April 1 - May 7, 2022

Theta is proud to present a solo exhibition of new paintings by Omari Douglin following his participation in the gallery's inaugural three-person show, *Deathbound and Sexed*, last year.

An episodic narrative compresses and expands around a network of animated figures. In a Gothamesque cityscape of encoded color fields and contrasts, the artist sets the scene for a standoff, an altercation, or a friendly exchange between characters whose roles have yet to be defined. Parallel storylines run through diptychs, while environmental abstractions construct a realm of uncertain binaries.

Douglin assembles his cast of characters into montages: chopping and screwing, blending iconography from memory and the imaginary. Faces and silhouettes that echo fragments of popular culture are variously formalized, wherein one sketched figure might encounter the vivid morph of a whole. Cartoon protagonists like Johnny Bravo and a Powerpuff Girl are painted Black, transforming impressions of both role and character, and reflecting Douglin's own determination of relatability.

A sense of urgency fuels the work, carrying figures from one scene into the next. Riders on motorbikes travel down the block of a composition, while comic eyes dart across the gallery, bearing witness to ongoing developments. As Black Hulk awaits a confrontation with Gangsta Spongebob, small exchanges occur between canvases—an auburn-haired damsel, a mysterious Baby Ghost—injecting scenes with plot twists, and stirring further questions about the evolution of roles in new contexts.

Douglin's painted language reinterprets an index of icons, grounded by relationships. The ensemble effect of these avatars of the screen and city streets produces a depth in Blackness.

Omari Douglin (b. 1992, Brooklyn, NY) lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his BFA from The Cooper Union in 2015, and his MFA from Bard College in 2019. Recent group and solo shows include: *Apple in the Dark*, Harkawik, New York (2022); *Their Private Worlds Contained The Memory of a Painting that had Shapes as Reassuring as the Uncanny Footage of a Sonogram*, curated by Sedrick Chisom, Matthew Brown, Los Angeles (2022); *Stanley and Marta's Holiday Fête*, Stanley's, Los Angeles (2021); *Mother and Child*, Friends Indeed, San Francisco (2021); *Deathbound and Sexed*, Theta, New York (2021); *Gluteus Maximus, Mrs.*, New York (2019).