

For Immediate Release
November 11, 2022

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

Jamal Cyrus:
Long to Go

November 12, 2022 – January 7, 2023

Artist's reception
Saturday, November 12, 1–4pm

Inman Gallery is pleased to present ***Long to Go***, a solo exhibition of new work by **Jamal Cyrus**, on view November 12, 2022 – January 7, 2023. Please join us **Saturday, November 12** for an all-day open house, with the artist present from 1:00-4:00 pm. An artist talk between Cyrus and writer **Amarie Gipson** will take place Saturday, December 3, at 1:00 pm.



Jamal Cyrus, *Sstrum*, 2022
Helmet conch shell, wood, carpet, speaker stand, tambourine
jingles, corn grits, India ink
75 x 18 x 15 in (190.5 x 45.7 x 38.1 cm)

Utilizing both exhibition spaces, ***Long to Go*** features new, cross-disciplinary work by Cyrus, including denim and papyrus-based two-dimensional works, as well as sculpture and installation showcasing Cyrus' rich material practice. Included in the exhibition are collaborative drawings by Cyrus and Dawolu Jabari Anderson, a fellow former member of Otabenga Jones & Associates. This will be Cyrus' fourth solo show at Inman Gallery.

As Cyrus says, ***Long to Go*** explores the "two-mindedness" of Black America, which possesses a dual African and American past. The show's title signifies a longing to return to or connect with ancestral Africa, as well as signaling a long road that still lies ahead toward freedom, equality and justice for Black Americans in the U.S. Cyrus' practice has always centered around the notion of reviewing and re-viewing Afro-diasporic history through a nuanced lens. He aims to look again and bring to light the cultural narratives and figures who have been overlooked, ignored, or censored by the establishment.

In the spring of 2018, Cyrus was awarded a travel grant sponsored by BMW (the BMW Art Journey), which presents awarded artists with the opportunity to create a journey designed to transform their approach to art-making. During his travels in the summer of 2018, Cyrus sought to learn about the influence that migration and displacement have had on the expressive practices within the African Diaspora. This 45-day trip took him to four continents, seven

countries, twelve cities and left him with a set of experiences and a repository of information that has proved to be pivotal in Cyrus' career. Cyrus' artistic practice has afforded him a form of self-education, as well as an education for the viewer, as he continues to explore the themes of Black Atlantic migration and the function of music in Black culture.

The works in Cyrus' 2019 Inman Gallery exhibition *Currents and Currencies* offered the first evidence of the research and insights afforded him by his Art Prize journey. This show also debuted Cyrus' use of denim as a signature material in his artistic practice. In the artist's words, he is attempting with denim "to use the materials and format of the quilt to document aspects of Black political history." Three years later, we see the continued development and mining of these rich travel experiences in the works on view in the current show.

Long to Go is accompanied by a thoughtful essay written by Houstonia magazine writer Amarie Gipson. Below is an excerpt from her writing for the exhibition brochure:

"Chants, moans and cries for deliverance" are what Civil Rights leader Wyatt T. Walker considers to be the bedrock of Black music traditions. From the fields and churches of the plantation South to the bars and clubs of the nation's urban hotspots and beyond, a longing for freedom is at the heart of our culture.

In *Long to Go*, Cyrus continues his investigation of Black spirituality and resistance, asking questions about history without the expressed need for solutions or answers. The exhibition's title is a double entendre that points to the tension between the presence of freedom in Black life and the continued pursuit of it. It's a phrase that can either taunt or motivate you. At all once, it conjures a deep sense of longing alongside a reminder of the distance from liberation. Black American culture is created at the crux of this tension. The struggle for equity and equality has lived alongside our Afrofuturist desire to dwell beyond the constructs of global oppression. It is the liminal space where political resistance, spirituality and aesthetics converge."

Jamal Cyrus (b. 1973, Houston, TX) received his BFA from the University of Houston in 2004 and his MFA from the University of Pennsylvania in 2008. He has won several prestigious awards, most recently the Driskell Prize, awarded by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA (2020). Cyrus was also a member of the artist collective Otabenga Jones and Associates, active from 2002 to 2017. He lives and works in Houston, TX.

Last month, *Jamal Cyrus: The End of My Beginning* opened at the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson. This marks the third installment of Cyrus' museum survey, which originated at The Blaffer Art Museum, University of Houston in 2021 and continued on to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles in 2022. The exhibition was organized for MMA by Ryan N. Dennis, Chief Curator and Artistic Director of the Center for Art & Public Exchange (CAPE).

For the artist's full biography, visit www.inmangallery.com.

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