

i-D

CULTURE

new exhibition stutter examines the way we consume imagery



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On the eve of their debut exhibition opening, we talk to artist Kingsley Ifill and curator Tom Beard to find out the concepts and inspirations behind their new exhibition.



Artwork by Kingsley Ifill

Curated by photographer and filmmaker Tom Beard, and staged at Camden's Cob Gallery, Stutter is the latest offering from British artist Kingsley Ifill. Combining the easily recognisable icons of mass media with his own personal photography, the exhibition is an investigation into the way we consume images, and their wider influence on societal perceptions: our dreams and fears, obsessions and desires. Using a variety of artistic processes, Kingsley transforms images sourced from the web - from mugshots to corporate trademarks - into large, expressive paintings, elevating the language of our immediate visual culture into high art. On the eve of the exhibition opening, we talk to both artist and curator, to find out how it's all going.

What's the concept behind the show?

Kingsley: Apparently when Man Ray asked Eugène Atget if he could feature some of his photographs in his magazine, Atget said to him "Don't put my name on it, these are simply documents I make". Goya's black paintings were painted directly onto the walls of his house. Diluting two parts, with three parts will give you less parts but more parts. You can read about concepts, you can talk about

them too, you can sit in a room and think about them and then tomorrow forget about them. Why do we do the things we do? Action, reaction consequence. I know that you know, that he knows, what she knows, but how do I type it when the alphabet on my keyboard has turned into five rows of Xs?

What is the significance of the word Stutter?

K: As a word it seems to vibrate and contain movement. Ssssstutter. An in between stage during an attempt to express something whilst simultaneously considering the possibility that the result will be incomprehensible. But you know what I mean, right?

From inception to installation, how has it been working together?

K: The work has grown. The majority of my life I've worked on my own, rarely with any critic or input from other people. It's been nice to have a fresh set of eyes about.

Tom: I'm very similar; I hoard my images so this is my process, actually talking through our processes and ideas has been quite cathartic!

What's been the greatest challenge in putting everything together?

K: We made a book to accompany the show. Lots of back fourth between everyone involved. But it got there in the end. Other than that, everything went smoothly. We planned in advance, so any bump got evened out without any trouble.

What is it you want viewers to take away?

K: A spring in their step with a stone in their boot.

What can we expect to see in the exhibition?

K: There's a painting which includes Prince Harry and Kate Middleton. I'm interested in the development of photography and the role it's playing in the evolution of human reality and perception of ourselves. What's real, what's fake, what's the difference. On this occasion, equally mirroring the image to art on a whole. Painting and photography. I found the photo somewhere on the internet. Where and how, I can't remember. It first struck me that someone had obviously sat down and laboured to get it looking how it looked. Like it could be real. Who? Anonymous. "Don't put my name on it, these are simply documents I make", as Atget said.

What are you most proud of?

K: Stutter, Mutter, Mumble.

Given it's his first solo show, Tom what did you want to convey about you as an artist?

Tom: So much of the build up to this show has been based in discussion as Kings said earlier so much of the build up has been going back and forth talking through our processes - finding out about each others philosophies behind the workings - we share a love of photography but approach it from very different angles so I for me its great to just talk more openly about work - we have a good gang of other artists around us at the moment, who I really respect and they have had a strong input to I'd say. The works speaks for itself I'm just lucky that I've been able to introduce this first show..

K: I saw Tom's short film Rags and I really felt an appreciation for his eye. I'd hope that in curating the show Tom could say the same thing about me. We've had many long nights up talking about photography and art. And I look forward to many more.

What's next?

K: I'm part of a group show, which opens at the end of the month at PM/AM in London. Other than that, I've no idea. Stay alive and keep working.

T: I'm in development for my first feature film, which we hope to shoot spring/summer next year.