



Enrico Riley, *Together 2*, 2022, oil on canvas, 58 x 54 in

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## Enrico Riley

### *Stand*

September 10 – October 29, 2022

#### OPENING RECEPTION

Saturday, September 10, 2022, 5–8 pm

#### ARTIST TALK AT 6 PM

Enrico Riley in conversation with Connie Choi,  
Associate Curator at The Studio Museum in Harlem

#standexhibition #jenkinsjohnsonprojects #jenkinsjohnsongallery  
#enricoriley @rileyenrico @jenkinsjohnsongallery

Jenkins Johnson Projects is pleased to present Enrico Riley's solo exhibition *Stand*. The exhibition explores the materiality of paint and the expressive potential of painted images in relation to issues around identity and visibility. This is Riley's second solo exhibition at Jenkins Johnson Projects.

The exhibition will be accompanied with a catalogue featuring an essay by Connie Choi, Associate Curator, Permanent Collection, The Studio Museum in Harlem. The opening reception will be on Saturday, September 10 from 5-8 pm. During the reception, Riley will be in conversation with Choi from 6-7 pm to talk about the exhibition and his artistic process. This event will be live on the Jenkins Johnson Gallery's Instagram (@jenkinsjohnsongallery). And **on the West Coast**, selected works by Riley will be on view in the atrium of the Minnesota Street Project from October 1 - 29, 2022. There will be a special talk between Riley and composer and Stanford Professor Jonathan Berger in the atrium on October 12 from 6-7 pm (see more information about their collaborative opera below).

Riley's new series of paintings investigate the agency of bodies moving through space with dance. The artist uses formal techniques to expose the issues surrounding mobility through the flattening and abstracting of figures within a liminal space. Riley's new body of work is inspired by and expands on the rich and complex traditions of hip-hop and other forms of street dance and in particular the way these activities allow individuals to expand their presence in space. This new series is a result of the artist thinking about hip-hop, break dance, and rap culture of the 1980s and 1990s and reflecting on the significance of these expressions on American culture. The artist uses a vibrant palette of monochromes such as magentas, greens, and yellows to highlight the role fashion played, with sneakers and polo shirts turning into identity markers. The result on the canvas is an homage to energy and expression. Building space through color and absences, Riley invites the viewer to question the ephemerality of the body.

Flattening the space and abstracting the figures, Riley mixes forms, bodies, colors, and atmosphere, to visualize how bodies can become vehicles of colors. Loosely thinking about the California Light and Space artists, Riley's work carries a strong impression of color light that floods out of his canvases into the space. The simplicity and ease of the painted forms suggest a range of attitudes and, at times, contradict themselves in unexpected ways. For example, Riley often depicts the human form accompanied by complicated shadows which create a glitch in the perceptual space, making

the bodies solid or light — and always in flux. Blurring the line between figuration and abstraction, Riley invites the viewer to keep an open mind and reading of his paintings, and to reflect on dance as a form of personal, social, and political expression.

Concurrently with Riley's solo exhibition, his captivating paintings will provide the visual canvas for the opera *The Ritual of Breath is the Rite to Resist*, which premieres at the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth on September 16 & 17 and travels to Stanford University on October 14 & 15. The interdisciplinary opera, produced and commissioned by the Hop and co-commissioned by Stanford Live, responds to the murder of Eric Garner. Braiding music, text, visuals and movement, the work invites audiences to rise up against the theft of Black breath and to meditate on our shared humanity. The highly collaborative work was initiated by Riley and composer and Stanford Professor Jonathan Berger in 2017. There will be a special conversation between Riley and Berger taking place at Minnesota Street Project on October 12.



Enrico Riley, *Together IV*, 2022, oil on canvas, 58 x 54 in

Since 2017, *The Ritual of Breath is the Rite to Resist* has expanded to include a creative team of pioneering artist-activists: poet and Dartmouth Professor Vievee Francis, director Niegel Smith '02, conductor Kamna Gupta, soprano/choreographer Neema Bickersteth, and choreographers Jawolle Willa Jo Zollar and Trebien Pollard. The team has been inspired by the healing practices of survivor mothers who have lost their children to police violence, and co-social impact directors Dr. Shamell Bell and Gwen Carr (Garner's mother) who are guiding the work of community action. For more information on the opera visit [www.hop.dartmouth.edu/ritual](http://www.hop.dartmouth.edu/ritual)

Enrico Riley (b. 1973, Westbury, CT) is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Rome Prize in Visual Arts, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Purchase Prize in Painting and holds the George Frederick Jewitt Professorship in Art at Dartmouth College. Riley has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the American Academy in Rome, the University of New Hampshire, and Jenkins Johnson Projects. He has participated in group exhibitions at "State of the Art 2020" at Crystal Bridges Museum of Art and "Black Bodies on the Cross" at The Hood Museum. His work is in institutions including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Hood Museum, and Nasher Sculpture Center. Enrico Riley has an MFA in painting from Yale University and a BA in Visual Studies from Dartmouth College. Riley lives and works in Vermont and New Hampshire.

For more information on this exhibition please contact the gallery at 212.629.0707 or [info@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com](mailto:info@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com).

Jenkins Johnson Projects Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am- 6pm and by appointment.

Minnesota Street Project Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am- 5pm.

Jenkins Johnson Projects is accessible by B and Q lines via public transportation and is a 20-minute walk from the Brooklyn Museum.

All images courtesy of Enrico Riley and Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco and New York.  
[www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com](http://www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com)

