



*Oladélé Ajiboyé Bamgboyé, Defining Self Sufficiency, no. 6, 1993*

## Oladélé Ajiboyé Bamgboyé

OCT 26 – DEC 16, 2023

**THOMAS ERBEN GALLERY**

**NEW YORK, USA**

Thomas Erben Gallery is thrilled to present historically significant works from the '90s by British artist Oladélé Ajiboyé Bamgboyé. The lens-based artist (b. 1963, Odo-Eku, Nigeria) is part of a group of Nigerian/ British artists – including Rotimi Fani- Kayode, Yinka Shonibare, Chris Ofili and the theoretician Olu Oguibe – who made their mark in London during that decade. Critically supported, Bamgboyé's work was included in Catherine David's Documenta X (1997) as well as many exhibitions foundational to the now central discourse around our relationship to "the Other", the history and lingering effects of colonialism, and a more expansive reading of Modernism. These include, among others, In/Sight – African Photographers 1940 – Present, Guggenheim (1996); Johannesburg Biennale (1997); Die Anderen Modernen, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (1997); and The Short Century, MCA Chicago and traveling (2001).

The exhibition is organized around three distinct yet interrelated bodies of work. A group of seven, large scale, silver gelatin photographs collectively titled Defining Self Sufficiency (1993) portrays the artist in his Glasgow kitchen. Un- precedented within the history of African self-portraiture, Bamgboyé comfortably photographs himself in the nude, multiple times present in his images with the use of overlaid exposures. Surrounded by his quotidian domesticity, the artist exudes a level of ease and content, countering our usual projections onto the "black male body", while his manifold presence points towards a multiplicity of selves.

[ . . . ]

The gallery first included Bamgboyé in an exhibition in 1998, and presented solo shows in 2000 and 2002 with subsequent inclusions in group shows. After a self-imposed hiatus by the artist, we are now very excited to revisit Bamgboyé's important contributions to contemporary postcolonial theory and criticism as it pertains to cultural, ethnographic, political, and economic processes and social conflicts.