THE FIRE NEXT TIME!

JAMES BALDWIN'S 100th BIRTHDAY at BOLD TENDENCIES 31 July-4 August '24

BOLD
TENDENCIES

THE FIRE NEXT TIME!
JAMES BALDWIN'S 100TH BIRTHDAY
31 JULY – 2 AUGUST 2024

Acclaimed novelist, poet, essayist, playwright and activist James Baldwin (1924–1987) has inspired and influenced countless persons.

With his reach spanning the disciplines of visual art, music and literature, Baldwin's incendiary and insightful words made him a leading voice at the height of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s; to this day, they continue to show readers and campaigners a way forward in hope. Amidst a contemporary world defined by political, social and economic division, Baldwin's honesty and humanist commitment is timelessly relevant.

In celebration of James Baldwin's centennial year, Bold Tendencies presents a series of site-specific happenings to honour this iconic cultural figure and legendary writer. The five-day salute takes its title from the non-fiction work *The Fire Next Time* (1963), Baldwin's seminal twin letters on his Harlem Childhood and the omnipresence of evil in American society. Instrumental to the galvanisation of the US Civil Rights movement, the title of the book comes from a couplet in the African American spiritual, 'Mary Don't You Weep':

"God gave Noah the rainbow sign,
No more water, the fire next time!"

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

BOLD
TENDENCIES

ECHOES OF BALDWIN: THE WELCOME TABLE
Wednesday 31 July at 6.30pm

Reflecting on James Baldwin's legacy with the voices of tomorrow, *Echoes of Baldwin: The Welcome Table* takes the form of an evening of activations inspired by Baldwin's indomitable spirit and his firm belief in the power held by young people 'abandoned to the dream of safety…[but] unlike their elders [not so] very easily fooled'. Recognising the value and importance of young people's unbridled creativity, and their innate ability to challenge established norms, *Echoes* brings together 19 young artists, activists and writers to contribute their perspectives on contemporary issues through engagement with Baldwin's work. The participants work with organisations including the Black Cultural Archives Youth Forum, The Black State, Arquivo digital Negro, South London Latin American Forum, Flow Fridays, London LGBT Centre, and The Blacker the Berry.

'The Welcome Table' references the name given to a wooden structure on the veranda of Baldwin's final home in Saint-Paul de Vence: a vibrant abode and critical social centre for artists and intellectuals from around the globe. Hosting dinners coloured by conversation that flowed late into the night, Baldwin's table was so famed for its initiation of communion between some of the 20th century's greatest minds that it earned its own proper name. Across the years The Welcome Table played host to eminent visitors such as Nina Simone, Miles Davis, Stevie Wonder, Caryl Phillips and Maya Angelou, as well as members of the Baldwin family. *The Welcome Table* was also the name of Baldwin's final play: a semi-fictional enlivening of a conversation that took place there between Josephine Baker and Henry Louis Gates Jr. – 'a place of witness, where exiles could come and lay down their souls' (David Leeming) – a rich dramatic tapestry interweaving of the themes of race, gender, sexuality, nationality and exile. Carving out space for the new generation to respond and activate the work of Baldwin, through sound, photography and word, Echoes carries forth the key themes of RACE, HOME, NATION and LOVE; giving agency to young political voices.

Echoes is led by **Akhera Williams**, a poet and interdisciplinary creative based in South London. Having studied BA Geography at King's College London she combines concepts of space, place and community through her creative practice. In 2018, Akhera started the poetry collective Flow Fridays for young poets of colour based in the UK and since then has developed an online platform and a series of live events for sharing poetry. Akhera has been involved in youth art programmes at South London Gallery and The Museum of London, and since 2022 has been part of the Creative Learning team at Bold Tendencies.

BOLD
TENDENCIES

NYJO (NATIONAL YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA)
JAMES BALDWIN'S 100TH BIRTHDAY CONCERT
Friday 2 August at 7.30pm

With guest soloists Moses Boyd and Theon Cross
Curated by Lucy-Anne Daniels
Led by Musical Director Peter Edwards

For Baldwin, much of the organising drive of his career as a writer was to translate the story unheard in music, into what he called 'the disastrously explicit medium of printed language'. The power of music is central to Baldwin's novels, speeches, debates and spoken word; with jazz in particular explored as a route via which African Americans have brought themselves out of bondage. The genre is often framed in his texts as an avenue of self expression, salvation and catharsis, becoming a vehicle for commentaries on race, sexuality, power and trans-national identity in short stories such as *Sonny's Blues* (1957); novels such as *Another Country* (1962) and *If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974); and non-fiction works such as *Notes of a Native Son* (1955) and *The Fire Next Time* (1963).

Friday 2 August marks precisely 100 years since the birth of this monumental novelist and poet. We welcome 20 of the UK's leading young jazz musicians from NYJO (National Youth Jazz Orchestra) for a unique one-off performance, led by eminent bandleader Peter Edwards. Curated by Lucy-Anne Daniels, who leads vocals alongside Akin Soul and Rhianna Frimpong, NYJO take us on a musical journey that directly responds to a timeline James Baldwin's influence: beginning with the Harlem Renaissance, into the era of civil rights and LGBTQ+ liberation movements, through to his enduring and powerful legacy today.

Baldwin's eloquent, thoughtful and passionate awareness raising – his commitment to challenging America to uphold its purported values of equality and justice – speaks to our collective need to speak truth to power in a global climate still plagued by inequity and discrimination. Consisting of new commissions and arrangements of curated works; the programme brings together improvised music – all created by Peter, Lucy-Anne, and NYJO's Emerging Professional Musicians ensemble – interwoven with Baldwin's words performed as lyrics. The players of NYJO are joined in celebration by acclaimed guest soloists Moses Boyd and Theon Cross: forerunners of the London Jazz Renaissance, and both multi-award winning musicians.

BOLD
TENDENCIES

CREDITS

Peter Edwards
Musical Director

Lucy-Anne Daniels
Curator and Lead Vocalist

Theon Cross
Guest Soloist – Trombone

Moses Boyd
Guest Soloist – Drums

Akin Soul
Guest Vocalist

The Ensemble

Maya Mitra
Alto Sax/Clarinet

Benjy Sandler
Tenor Sax

Jared Meade
Baritone Sax

Olivia Cuttill
Trumpet

Sam Virdie
Trumpet – Sam Virdie

Lexi Turvey
Trombone

Julien Durand
Guitar

Tay Harvey
Bass

Pablo Barrios
Piano/Keyboard

Chris Davis
Drums

Rhianna Frimpong
Vox

Elysia Darrall
Vox

Sophia Kannathasan
Violin

Eve Abiodun
Violin

Laura Moisey-Gray
Viola

Nikki Moosavi
Cello

NYJO, also known as the **National Youth Jazz Orchestra**, is an organisation dedicated to making jazz and creative music – making it more accessible to early-career musicians, young people and audiences across the country. Throughout their activity, NYJO seek to create a meeting ground between the established and the experimental – the past, present and future – to build bespoke programmes which cater to lifelong and new jazz fans. With a primary focus on the professional development of emerging artists and their Learning Programme for under 18s, NYJO works in close collaboration with like minded partners to deliver projects that respond to local community needs and create an inclusive learning environment which centres the voices of young people. NYJO is proud to be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, and to work towards delivering ACE's 'Let's Create' strategy to make the arts sector more inclusive and reflective of modern Britain.

Peter Edwards (b. 1983) is a composer, pianist and musical director whose 'guileless, soulful music…[is] full of emphatic chording, Latin grooves and romantic, cinematic themes' (*Guardian*). He composes for stage and screen; directs the Nu Civilisation Orchestra; leads his own trio; and has worked with a diverse roster of artists within a variety disciplines. Alongside collaborations with acclaimed artists such as Courtney Pine, Mica Paris and Zara McFarlane, Peter was also commissioned to compose music for the 2017 New Music Biennial and composed a live score for 1926 silent movie *Body and Soul* as part of the British Film Institute's Blackstar Season. In 2023 Peter was selected as one of two artists to participate in the inaugural Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Jonas Gwangwa Music Composition Initiative.

Lucy Anne Daniels (b. 2003) is a natural performer, creative improviser and talented musician. Grounded in the vibrant sounds of gospel and jazz, the Leeds-native draws inspiration from singers such as Betty Carter, gospel duo Mary Mary and Amy Winehouse. Lucy-Anne became lead vocalist for NYJO in 2019 aged 16 and began studying jazz voice at the Birmingham Conservatoire the following year. Since then, she has performed at various venues and festivals across the country, most memorably a hometown gig which saw her return to the historic Leeds Town Hall. Fronting NYJO's 2021-22 national tour, 'Amy Winehouse: A Celebration of her Life

and Music', with musical director and trombonist Winston Rollins, Lucy-Anne also guested with the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra in December 2023, led by artistic director Britjazz saxophone great Tommy Smith.

Theon Cross (b. 1993) combines technical mastery, studio smarts, deep musical knowledge and expansive vision in his powerful and original playing, which has reinvented the tuba's place in modern music. A graduate of Guildhall school of music and an alumnus of the legendary Tomorrow's Warriors, Theon is as at home with ensemble jazz as he is when playing road marches, collaborating with grime stars or providing bassline pressure in reggae, afrobeat or soca setting. Alongside his work as an artist with two acclaimed albums to his name (*Fyah* and *Intra-I*), he was a core part of Mercury Nominated Sons of Kemet for 10 years and has played with the likes of Stormzy, Little Simz, Kano, The Smile, Matthew Herbert, Lonnie Holley, Angelique Kidjo, Jon Batiste and many more.

Moses Boyd (b. 1991) is a drummer, composer and producer, two-time MOBO Awards winner, recipient of The John Peel 'Play More Jazz Award' from the 2016 Gilles Peterson Worldwide Awards,and winner of the 2014 Worshipful Company of Music Young Jazz Musician of the Year Award. Moses has worked and collaborated with the likes of Lonnie Liston Smith, Ed Motta, Little Simz, Four Tet, Floating Points, Sampha, Zara McFarlane, Gilles Peterson and many more. Leading his own outfits, The Exodus and Solo Exodus, which infuses jazz, grime and electronic influences, Moses also releases music under his own label Exodus Records, and more recently has become a new resident on BBC Radio 1Xtra.

BOLD
TENDENCIES

NOTES ON A NATIVE SON
Saturday 3 August at 7.30pm

Caleb Azumah Nelson, Deborah Levy, Ekow Eshun, Liam Sangmuah, Mendez, Nicholas Boggs, Rhea Dillon with the London Review of Books

In this gathering we join forces with the London Review of Books to celebrate Baldwin in his capacity as an essayist like no other. Though Baldwin wrote novels, poetry, and for the stage and screen, it was his essays that primarily afforded him the accolade of one of the greatest writers of his time.

Baldwin began to achieve a national platform for book reviews in 1945, with his criticism platformed by publications including *The Nation* and *The New Leader*. His writing portfolio expanded with a critique of Harlem's worsening socio-economic conditions for *Commentary* – "The Harlem Ghetto" – with the essays 'Everybody's Protest Novel', which appeared simultaneously in *Zero* and *The Partisan Review*. Further acclaimed texts 'Preservation of Innocence' (*Zero*; often seen as a companion piece to 'Everybody's Protest Novel'), 'Many Thousands Gone' (*Partisan Review*; a scathing critique of fellow African American writer Richard Wright*)* and 'Stranger in the Village' (*Harper's Bazaar*; an exposition of his time spent in Switzerland) cemented his reputation as an equally acerbic and assiduous voice of his generation. Renowned for his unflinching willingness to delve into his own life to critically reflect upon the contemporary Black experience in America and abroad, Baldwin's compelling essays on race led to his emergence as one of the leading voices in the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s.

Baldwin's breakthrough essay collection, *Notes on a Native Son*, came in 1955. Exploring subjects ranging from the realities of 1940s Harlem to movies, novels, his relationship with his father and his experiences in Paris, the ten essays that comprise *Notes of a Native Son* capture the complexity of black life at the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement with 'straight from the shoulder writing about the problems of this troubled earth' (Langston Hughes). Effervescent with wit, and abounding with prophetic wisdom, Baldwin's impassioned essays remain an American classic – as powerful today as the date on which they were written, some 70 years ago. In celebration of Baldwin's indelible influence, resonant passages from Baldwin's greatest essays will be read and discussed by writers and artists inspired by his work, interspersed with personal testimony – from anyone who wishes to speak.

GLENN LIGON

"I went to Wesleyan University, in Connecticut, U.S., and in the African American literature course taught by Robert O'Meally..., James Baldwin was one of the authors we read. We read his novels, which he was arguably more famous for then.

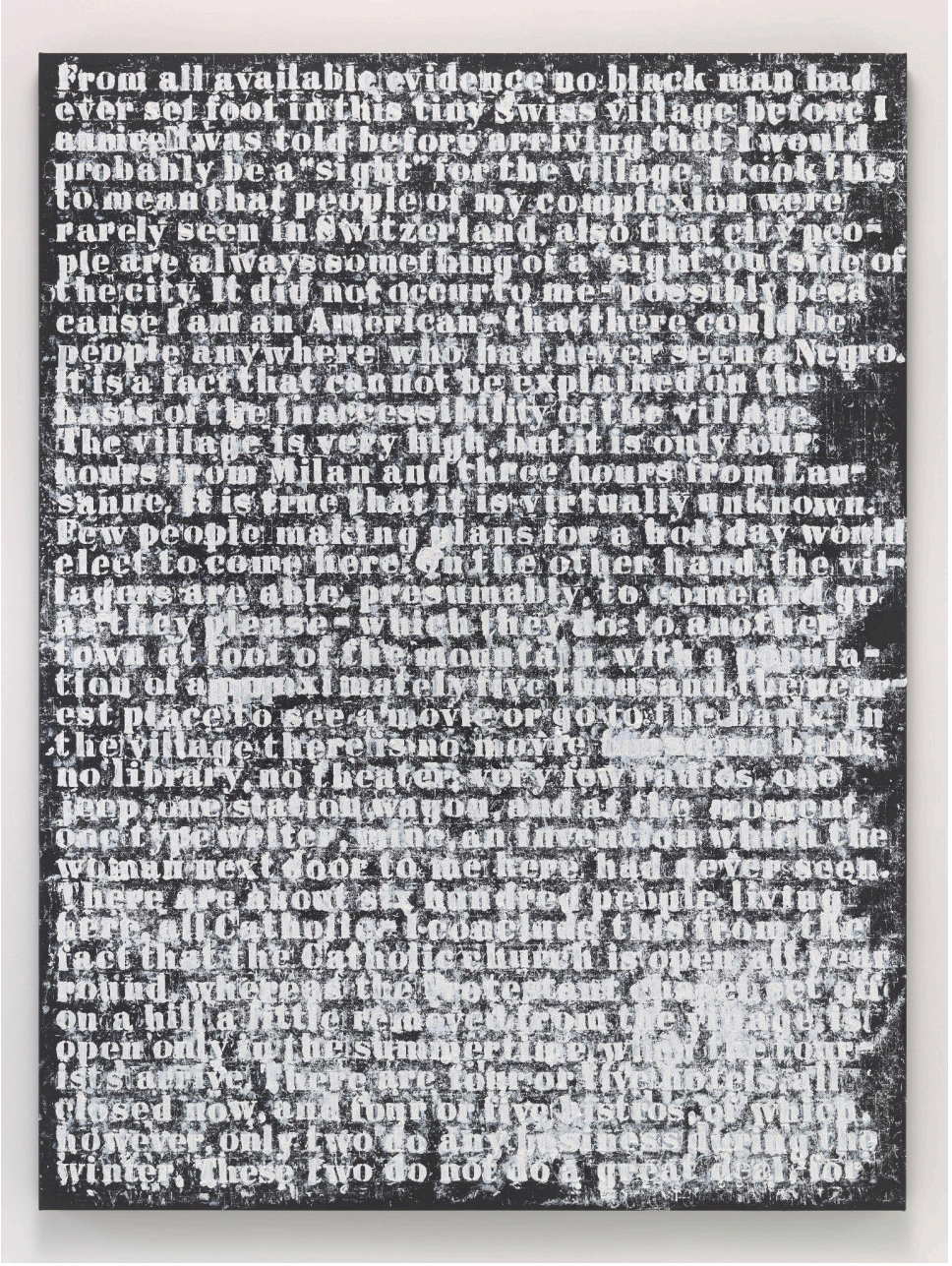
But I loved his essays because they were panoramic: a ten-page essay will discuss Baldwin's relationship as an African American to European culture and his relationship to Africa as an African American living in Europe. He left America to take a break from American racism. It was the 1950s and he was aware of Europe's colonies in Africa. He thought about that relationship and his relationship to America. He was thinking through big issues. I was very drawn to his essays because of that.

'Stranger in the Village' is the essay I have used the most. When I first started using the essay in the mid-1990s, Baldwin was not well known. Today, there are films about him and he is quoted often.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, he was considered a spokesperson for Black Americans. He was very famous; he knew about Malcolm X and knew Martin Luther King. But by the 1990s, he fell a bit out of favour. Baldwin's words were not as present in the culture as they are now, so the essay—which is from 1953—remains something I can return to repeatedly and find new meaning in, thinking about how it relates to where we find ourselves now.

When you are making a painting, you put a white gesso ground on the canvas and paint on top of it. Baldwin's essay, in some ways, is the ground on which I paint. I start with the text. It is the blank canvas. That's my relationship to that text now."

BOLD
TENDENCIES



GLENN LIGON
Stranger #94, 2022
Oil stick and black gesso on canvas
96 x 72 inches (243.8 x 182.9 cm)

Photographer Credit: Ron Amstutz
© Glenn Ligon; Courtesy of the artist, Hauser & Wirth, New York, Regen Projects, Los Angeles, Thomas Dane Gallery, London, and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.

Caleb Azumah Nelson (b. 1993) is a British-Ghanaian writer and photographer living in South East London. His writing has been published in Litro and he was recently shortlisted for the Palm Photo Prize and won the People's Choice prize. He was shortlisted for the BBC National Short Story Award 2020 for his story 'Pray'. He was selected by the Observer as one of the 10 Best Debut Novelists of 2021, and his debut novel *OPEN WATER* was chosen by the Booksellers Association as its Fiction Book of the Month for February 2021. *OPEN WATER* was published by Viking (UK) in February 2021 and by Grove Atlantic (US) in spring 2021. It was long-listed for the Desmond Elliot prize and the Gordon Burn prize, shortlisted for the Waterstones Book of the Year 2021 and won the Costa First Novel Award 2021. In February 2022 it was selected as Waterstones Paperback of the Month and longlisted for the 2022 Dylan Thomas Prize. It won Debut Fiction Book of the Year at the British Book Awards in 2022. Caleb's second novel, *SMALL WORLDS*, was published by Viking (UK) and Grove Atlantic (US), as well as internationally, in May 2023; it was long-listed for the 2024 Jhalak Prize and won the 2024 Dylan Thomas Prize. In April 2024, Caleb was selected for the inaugural Sunday Times Young Power List - named one of the '25 most inspiring people aged 30 and under in the UK and Ireland 2024'.

Deborah Levy (b. 1959) is a playwright, novelist and poet, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature,and was a Creative Arts Fellow at Trinity College, University of Cambridge, UK (1989–1991). Regularly contributing articles and reviews to newspapers and magazines including The Independent, The Guardian and the New Statesman, Levy is a former director and writer for MANACT Theatre Company, Cardiff, CYM. Her plays include *Pax* (1984) and *Heresies: Eva and Moses* (1985), and she is the author of a libretto adapted from Federico Garcia Lorca's play *Blood Wedding*. A collection of her plays, *Plays:1*, was published in 2000 by Methuen Drama. *An Amorous Discourse in the Suburbs of Hell*, a collection of poems, was published in 1990, and she wrote the screenplay for a short film *Suburban Psycho*, televised by the BBC in 1998. Levy is the author of three collections of short stories, including the International Fran O'Connor Award-shortlisted *Black Vodka* (2013), and seven novels, including the Booker Prize-shortlisted *Hot Milk* (2016). Her

'Living Autobiography' series – published by Penguin Books – comprises *Things I Don't Want to Know* (2014), *The Cost of Living* (2018) and *Real Estate* (2022).

Ekow Eshun (b. 1968) is a British-Ghanaian writer, editor, curator, broadcaster, and author of the memoir *Black Gold of the Sun*, which was nominated for the Orwell Prize for its exploration of race and identity. He writes for publications including the New York Times, Financial Times and Guardian, and has created documentaries for BBC4 and BBC Radio 4. Eshun was the first Black editor of a major magazine in the UK and the first Black director of a major arts organisation. He has curated exhibitions internationally, including 2023's critically acclaimed, landmark project *In the Black Fantastic* at the Hayward Gallery and the British Film Institute, and *The Time is Always Now*, a major study of contemporary Black portraiture at London's National Portrait Gallery. He is currently Chairman of the Fourth Plinth committee, overseeing London's most significant public art programme, and Creative Director of the Calvert 22 Foundation.

Liam Sangmuah (b. 1998) is a researcher and writer who lives and works in London. In all of his creative pursuits, Liam works to carry forth sentiments made accessible in a wide range of black cultural expressions, from contemporary music to visual arts and 20th century literature. Aside from his own creative writing practice, Liam is motivated to support independent artists and facilitate meaningful public interactions with contemporary art. Since February 2022, Liam has worked as a researcher for London based designer and artist Grace Wales Bonner, providing instrumental support across the artist's cultural outputs including her recent curatorial exhibition and publication at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Mendez (b. 1982) is a London-based Jamaican-British writer. Raised within the Jehovah's Witness faith, Mendez left the organisation while still a teenager. Upon receiving a manuscript of autobiographical fragments, Dialogue Books publisher Sharmaine Lovegrove (UK) challenged Mendez to find the fiction in their story, and the resulting novel, *RAINBOW MILK*, was published to rave reviews during the 2020 lockdown. *RAINBOW MILK* was

named one of the Observer's Top Ten Best Debuts for 2020. It was shortlisted for the Gordon Burn Prize, the Jhalak Prize, the Polari Prize, in the Fiction Debut category of the British Book Awards, and for the LAMBDA Literary Award in Gay Fiction. Mendez is currently adapting the novel for a TV series. Mendez is a regular contributor to the London Review of Books and has also written for British Vogue, The Face, Attitude, Esquire, Times Literary Supplement, Poetry Foundation, the Guardian and the Brixton Review of Books. They are working on their second novel.

Nicholas Boggs is a writer and independent scholar who rediscovered and co-edited a new edition of James Baldwin's collaboration with French artist Yoran Cazac, *Little Man, Little Man: A Story of Childhood* (Duke, 2018). His work has been supported by grants and fellowships from the NEH, the Leon Levy Center for Biography, the Whiting Foundation, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the Gilder Lehrman Center and Beinecke Library at Yale. His literary biography, *James Baldwin: A Love Story*, is forthcoming from Farrar, Straus & Giroux in the U.S., Bloomsbury UK, and Editions Seuil in France. The recipient of a 2023 Creative Nonfiction Grant from the Whiting Foundation, Boggs is currently resident at the Camargo Foundation, Cassis, FR, during which he will be researching the life and work of Camargo's founder – artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill. Boggs will spend the autumn 2024 as a Fellow at the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, US.

Rhea Dillon (b. 1996) is an artist, writer and poet. Through her practice she examines and abstracts the 'rules of representation' as a device to undermine contemporary Western culture, seeking to continually question what constitutes the ontology of Blackness. Graduating from Central Saint Martins in 2019 and completing a course at the Institute of Art and Olfaction in Los Angeles, California, USA, Dillon's practice encompasses painting, video, photography, installation and olfaction. Dillon has recently presented the solo exhibitions *Gestural Poetics*, Soft Opening at Paul Soto, Los Angeles, US (2024); *The Black Fold*, Kunstverein Kevin Space, Vienna, AT (2023); *An Alterable Terrain*, Art Now, Tate Britain, London (2023); and *We looked for eyes creased with*

concern, but saw only veils, Sweetwater, Berlin (2023). Her work is featured in the 60th La Biennale di Venezia, as part of the group presentation by Berggruen Arts & Culture in Partnership with The Kitchen, Fondamento Diedo, Venice (2024). Published writings include *An Alterable Terrain*, Tate Publishing (2023); *Catgut – The Opera*, Worms Publishing (2023); and *Donald Dahmer*, V.O Curations (2021).

BOLD
TENDENCIES

LITTLE MAN, LITTLE MAN
A Story of Childhood
James Baldwin

First Edition displayed this weekend at Bold Tendencies

London: Michael Joseph, 1976

Equally enjoyed by readers and listeners of all ages, *Little Man, Little Man* is Baldwin's only book written for children: the story of a young Harlemite facing a world of grown-up adventures and realities. Described by the author as "a celebration of the self-esteem of Black children", the accompanying challenges and joys of coming of age as a "Little Man" with big dreams are explored over 120 pages. A presentation not only of life in the 1970s from a black child's perspective, the book also affords readers a fuller appreciation of the late, great writer's genius. The "experiential, enigmatic picture book that straddled the line between children's and adult literature" (*The New York Times*) is further animated by illustrations by visionary French painter Yorgan Cazac (1938–2005); who came to acclaim for his abstract paintings in Paris in the 1960s.

Little Man, Little Man was born out of Baldwin's nephew Tejan Karefa-Smart's appeal, "When are you going to write a story about me?" Following TJ as he gambols around his Harlem neighbourhood with his two most constant companions Blinky and WT, we encounter a host of colourful characters: the music-loving janitor Mr Man; his alcoholic wife Mrs Lee; and a reclusive neighbour Miss Beanpole.

Going out of print soon after its initial publication in 1976, the book has been gifted to a new generation with the 2018 edition published by Duke University Press. Co-edited by writers and researchers Nicholas Boggs and Jennifer DeVere Brody, with Cazac's original illustrations and an afterword by Baldwin's niece Aisha Karefa-Smart, Tejan's foreword opens the re-release of the "book of code" he cherished as a childhood gift from 'Uncle Jimmy'. With its reproduction, what might have been permanently dismissed as a meandering and comparatively apathetic to Baldwin's incendiary output for adults has matured into a timely recounting of growing up black within urbanity – prescient and accessible in its deployment of Baldwin's characteristic Harlemite Black vernacular style.

Tejan Karefa-Smart is a writer, photographer, artist and vocalist living and working in Paris.

Nicholas Boggs is a writer and independent scholar who rediscovered and co-edited a new edition of James Baldwin's collaboration with French artist Yoran Cazac, *Little Man, Little Man: A Story of Childhood* (Duke, 2018). His work has been supported by grants and fellowships from the NEH, the Leon Levy Center for Biography, the Whiting Foundation, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the Gilder Lehrman Center and Beinecke Library at Yale. His literary biography, *James Baldwin: A Love Story*, is forthcoming from Farrar, Straus & Giroux in the U.S., Bloomsbury UK, and Editions Seuil in France. The recipient of a 2023 Creative Nonfiction Grant from the Whiting Foundation, Boggs is currently resident at the Camargo Foundation, Cassis, FR,; during which he will be researching the life and work of Camargo's founder – artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill. Boggs will spend the autumn 2024 as a Fellow at the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, US.

Yoran Cazac (1938-2005) was a visionary French painter with an outsider artist's temperament. Having left home at a young age, with no formal training, Cazac moved to Paris, where he enjoyed precocious success in the art world of the 1960s as an abstract painter. By the early 1970s Cazac was living in Tuscany with Beatrice Mathews, whom he married in 1972. For the next several decades, living hand to mouth, but with uncompromising ferocity, Cazac painted from nature—mystically inflected landscapes of Tuscany, and of India, where he lived with his family, and later, of the sea and cliffs in Normandy. He also created haunting rock sculptures. Cazac's friendship with James Baldwin, the godfather of his son, Balthazar, was an enduring bond, with the author writing the catalogue notes for Cazac's 1977 show in the Orangerie of the Château de Maintenon.

BOLD
TENDENCIES

NOTHING PERSONAL
James Baldwin & Richard Avedon

First Edition displayed this weekend at Bold Tendencies

New York: Atheneum, 1964
SIGNED by Avedon and (Jimmy) Baldwin

In 1963, former high school friends James Baldwin and Richard Avedon came together to produce the “chilling, engrossing” monograph Nothing Personal – a “masterpiece” and singular embodiment of the heartbreaking and magnificent multiplicity of the American experience. Each then at the height of their careers – with Avedon one of the world’s most famous photographers; and Baldwin a best-selling novelist, essayist and leading literary voice in the American civil rights movement – the former’s photographic portraits are joined with the latter’s explosive writing, in an original layout by designer Martin Israel.

Avedon’s lifelong commitment to the civil rights struggle was enriched by his friendship with Baldwin; within the monograph the duo’s shared vision of the exceptional within the real convenes. Avedon’s subjects range from civil rights icons to intellectuals; politicians to pop singers to ordinary Americans. Beatnik legend Allen Ginsberg contends with representatives of the American Nazi Party; whilst Malcolm X is squared against General Eisenhower. The haunting loneliness of residents in a mental institution, is contrasted with the visceral capture of an embracing mother and child.

Carefully juxtaposed, cropped and tightly sequenced, Avedon’s photographs are interspersed with fragments of an essay by Baldwin, divided into four parts. Offering a critique of a society that is disconnected, unjust and divisive, Baldwin’s testimony is at once highly personal and collectively pertinent: his narration of his own experiences – for instance, his harassment by a racist police officer in his native New York City – comes to stand as a powerful metaphor for a contemporary world in the midst of an existential crisis. Yet Baldwin, like Avedon, ends his work with the inescapable need for – and power of – love.

Coalescing the sublime and transcendent with the brutality, theatre, innocence and confusion that constitutes the racist, sexist, sexy, impossible love and loneliness that make up humanity; both Avedon and Baldwin end their work with the message of the inescapable need for, and power of, love – enduringly relevant from the 1960s to the present day.

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

Richard Avedon (1923–2004) was born and lived in New York City. He attended DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, where he co-edited the school's literary magazine, *The Magpie*, with James Baldwin. He was named Poet Laureate of New York City High Schools in 1941. Aged 22, Avedon began working as a freelance photographer, quickly becoming the lead photographer for *Harper's Bazaar*. In 1965 he joined *Vogue*, where he worked for more than twenty years. In 1992, Avedon became the first staff photographer at *The New Yorker*, where his portraiture helped redefine the aesthetic of the magazine.

Widely credited with erasing the line between art and commercial photography, his brand-defining work and long associations with Calvin Klein, Revlon, Versace, and dozens of other companies resulted in some of the best-known advertising campaigns in American history. These campaigns gave Avedon the freedom to pursue major projects in which he explored his cultural, political and personal passions. He is known for his extended portraiture of the American Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam war and a celebrated cycle of photographs of his father, Jacob Israel Avedon. In 1976, for Rolling Stone magazine, he produced 'The Family', a collective portrait of the American power elite at the time of the country's bicentennial election. From 1979 to 1985, he worked extensively on a commission from the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, ultimately producing the show and book *In the American West*.

Avedon's first museum retrospective was held at the Smithsonian Institution in 1962. Ensuing major museum shows include at the MoMA (1978 and 2002), the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (1970), the Amon Carter Museum of American Art (1985), and the Whitney Museum of American Art (1994). His first book of photographs, *Observations*, with an essay by Truman Capote, was published in 1959. He continued to publish books of his works throughout his life, including *Nothing Personal* (1964), *Portraits 1947–1977* (1978, with an essay by Harold Rosenberg), *An Autobiography* (1993), *Evidence 1944–1994* (1994, with essays by Jane Livingston and Adam Gopnik), and *The Sixties* (1999, with interviews by Doon Arbus). He established The Richard Avedon Foundation during his lifetime

BOLD
TENDENCIES

THE LISTENING ROOM: LA MAISON JIMMY
2–4 August 2024

Bold Tendencies inaugurates The Listening Room, a special project for our 18th artistic programme, COMMUNION. Researching and reconstructing the record collections of iconic cultural figures, The Listening Room invites audiences to select and play from a curated collection of records in our Straw Auditorium.

Harking back to an age before mp3 players, smartphones and headphones, before listening to music was an algorithmic and largely solitary activity, The Listening Room is an act of celebration and gathering. Spilling over from late night to day, and back through to night, The Listening Room holds at its heart one of the most important aspects of music – the sense of community between artist and audience, between one listener to another. The Listening Room seeks to empower visitors with a sense of ownership and belonging, uplifting common enjoyment and appreciation of music, fostering interpersonal connections over a shared love of various musicians, singles and albums.

Presented in honour of the 100th birthday of the late, great, poet-prophet James Baldwin, La Maison Jimmy draws upon the author's prolific record collection. With reference to the LPs and EPs found in Baldwin's final home at Saint-Paul de Vence after his death, our selection foregrounds those of particular biographical and/or literary pertinence to the polymathic writer. Just as Baldwin's South of France home was a site of respite, rejuvenation and revelry for the author and his friends, The Listening Room seeks to provide space for the carving out of collective nostalgia. From Bill Withers to Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington to Diana Ross, we gather around Baldwin's collection in the spirit of community, friendship, and conversation-making.

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

BOLD
TENDENCIES

We are grateful to the many colleagues, artists, thinkers, writers, musicians, and friends and family of James Baldwin who have made this programme possible.

With special thanks to

Beatrice Cazac

David Linx

Duke University Press

Ikechukwu Casmir Onyewuenyi, Curatorial Assistant, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

James Martin, Executive Director, The Richard Avedon Foundation

Joshua Chuang, Director of Photography, Gagosian New York

Nicholas Boggs

Penguin Books

Sam Kinchin-Smith & The London Review of Books

Tara Phillips & La Maison Baldwin

Tejan Karefa-Smart

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

BOLD
TENDENCIES

Bold Tendencies 2024 is generously supported by

Selfridges & Co
Henry Moore Foundation
Bloomberg Philanthropies
Art Fund
The Ashley Family Foundation
Southwark Council
The Mila Charitable Trust
London Review of Books
British Council
Steinway & Sons
Vaughan Williams Foundation

In partnership with

CASS Art
Southby Productions
Penguin

With thanks to the COMMUNION Founding Friends

Juliet Barclay
Edmund Barry
Kevin Barry
Lena & Nathalie Baume
Brian Boylan
May Calil & Tom Dingle
Janine Catalano
John Cavanagh
Sadie Coles
Carolyn Dailey
Ronojoy Dam
Isabella de Sabata
John & Emma Donnelly
Maryam Eisler
Sue Grayson-Ford
Vivienne Guinness
Caroline Issa
Marcelle Joseph
Caroline Karim-Kassar
James Lingwood & Jane Hamlyn
Fatima Maleki
Penny Mason
Naomi Milgrom
The Naomi Milgrom Foundation
Theo & Fiona Nzegwu
Anne Pitcher
Susan Spindler & Peter Brown
Sara Stewart
Christoph & Marion Trestler
Felicity Waley-Cohen
Don Weniz

& those who wish to remain anonymous

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG

BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

BOLD
TENDENCIES

Bold Tendencies is a not-for-profit arts organisation established in the rooftop spaces of Peckham's Multi-Storey Car Park in 2007. It has transformed a disused building in the heart of South London into an iconic, much-loved place of culture and assembly with spectacular views out over the city and pioneering architecture project Frank's Cafe. Supporting a new generation of creative voices alongside acclaimed international artists, it delivers an ambitious annual programme of experimental Visual Arts, Creative Learning and Live Events open to the public, offering access, participation and enjoyment of the arts for everyone.

Bold Tendencies Team

Hannah Barry
Artistic Director & Chief Executive

Diana Córdoba Barrios
Creative Director & Deputy Chief Executive

Tom Kelly
Head of Operations & Production

Charlie Mills
Senior Curator & Producer: Visual Arts

Misty Ingham
Senior Curator & Producer: Creative Learning

Toby Taylor
Audience Development & Engagement Lead

Katrina Nzegwu
Programme Research Lead

Riccardo Pillon
Associate Curator: Live Events

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

BOLD
TENDENCIES

Delina Melaku
Creative Learning Coordinator

Esme Wedderburn
Creative Learning Facilitator

Alfiah Brown
Creative Learning Facilitator

Maya King-Dabbs
Engagement Assistant

Jonny Keen
Engagement Assistant

Amelia Azura Mielniczek
Engagement Assistant

Majo Sandoval Alfonso
Engagement Assistant

Mitzi Clarke
Back of House Assistant

Simon Whybray
Graphic Design

Oscar Maguire
Visualisation

Bold Tendencies Board

Ronojoy Dam
Linda Hewson
Helen Newman
Zia Zareem-Slade

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM

BOLD
TENDENCIES

More and Better!
Your generosity allows us to bring a world-class Visual Arts, Creative Learning and Live Events programme to Peckham. We cannot do the work we do without our supporters.

Join our COMMUNION Friends
or pledge early support for our 2025 programme Déjà vu.
If you'd like to get involved please ask for information at the Kiosk or email us info@boldtendencies.com.

FLOORS 7–10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM