

SLG

PRESS RELEASE

ALVARO BARRINGTON: SPIDER THE PIG, PIG THE SPIDER

1 October – 21 November 2021

Main Gallery, Main Building

Free

Alvaro Barrington's South London Gallery exhibition is his first solo presentation in a UK institution. Extending his exploration into blending multiple cultural and visual references, he presents new works characterised by his adept use of a broad range of techniques and materials. In a bespoke installation for the SLG's main exhibition space, the wall colours are inspired by an abstracted idea of the sun rising and setting, with the left and right-hand walls of the gallery representing the global North and South respectively. Paintings made of concrete smeared onto exquisitely dyed Hermès blankets in the 'North' and on burlap in the 'South', are hung high on the walls to prompt associations with cloud paintings. These notional concrete clouds become increasingly dense in the transition from 'North' to 'South', a reference to countries in the global North offloading waste on their southern neighbours.

On the lower walls, a new body of work pivots around the idea of a relatively near future in which augmented and virtual reality have evolved to the point that people routinely choose which identity or character to adopt in different social and other situations, with digital and real life becoming completely intertwined. Works with distinctive frames made from concrete and aluminium in the 'North', contrasting with corrugated iron, painted and natural wood in the 'South', contain layers of painted, stitched, printed and digitally rendered elements. Trotters referencing the children's cartoon character Peppa Pig, Napoleon and other pigs featured in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, merge with spiders' legs inspired by the African folktale Anansi the Spider and Louise Bourgeois' bronze spider sculptures. These in turn are superimposed against backdrops ranging from the Brooklyn Bridge to a game map from *Super Mario World*. The threat and impact of climate change looms large throughout, with drawings made from charcoal – effectively burnt wood – punctuating the 'North' with the repetition of the letters ICU, short-hand for both 'I See You' and Intensive Care Unit.

Exhibition generously supported by Anastasia and Igor Bukhman, Sadie Coles HQ and Emalin.

Alvaro Barrington at SLG Central, 30 Old Burlington Street, London

Alvaro Barrington has produced a limited edition entitled *Spider the Pig, Pig the Spider, 2021* (Inkjet print on paper 70 x 80cm) for SLG130, a bespoke portfolio of prints by five celebrated international artists.

Barrington's print is divided into two versions, one of which features the words 'Spider the Pig', and the other 'Pig the Spider'. Together they reveal the title of the artist's 2021 exhibition at the SLG: 'Spider the Pig, Pig the Spider'.

The SLG130 prints are displayed at SLG Central, a pop-up space in the heart of Mayfair, to mark 130 years of the South London Gallery. The temporary gallery is open

21 September – 17 October, and as a part of the Cork Street Galleries' Frieze Week.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Alvaro Barrington

Alvaro Barrington is the child of Grenadian and Haitian migrant workers and was raised between the Caribbean and New York. Barrington's practice explores interconnected histories of cultural production. Considering himself primarily a painter, his multimedia approach to image-making employs burlap (hessian), textiles, postcards, clothing and cast concrete, exploring how such diverse materials can function as visual tools while referencing personal, political and commercial histories. Through this confluence of materials and subject, Barrington engages histories of music and painting associated with the Caribbean, the socio-political context of his childhood in 1980s New York, and London where he is currently based.

Recent exhibitions include MoMA PS1, Queens (2017); A Taste of Chocolate at Thaddaeus Ropac, London (2018); an ongoing Tt x AB collaboration with the painter Teresa Farrell; co-curation with Julia Peyton-Jones of the exhibition Artists I Steal From at Thaddaeus Ropac, London (2019); Galerie Thaddeus Ropac, Paris (2021 and 2018); Corvi-Mora, London (2020); Sadie Coles HQ, London (2021 and 2019); Emalin, London (2021, 2019 and 2018).

About the South London Gallery

The South London Gallery (SLG) was founded in the 19th century by philanthropist William Rossiter to 'bring art to the people of south London'. Today the gallery comprises its original site at 65 Peckham Road; the Fire Station which opened to the public in 2018; Art Block, a space for local children and families on Sceaux Gardens Estate and two permanent gardens.

The SLG has an international reputation for its' contemporary art exhibitions by established, mid-career and younger artists and programme of film and performance events. It's highly regarded, free education programme includes a peer-led young people's forum; family workshops; artist-led projects and commissions on local housing estates; and a BBC Children in Need-funded programme for looked after children.

PRESS CONTACT

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Address and Opening Hours

South London Gallery, Main Building
65–67 Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UH

South London Gallery, Fire Station
82 Peckham Road, London, SE15 5LQ

The gallery is open Tuesday – Sunday.
www.southlondongallery.org

Social Media

Twitter: [@SLG_artupdates](https://twitter.com/SLG_artupdates)

Instagram: [@southlondongallery](https://www.instagram.com/southlondongallery)

Facebook: [South London Gallery](https://www.facebook.com/SouthLondonGallery)

IMAGE SHEET

ALVARO BARRINGTON

SPIDER THE PIG, PIG THE SPIDER

1 OCT - 21 NOV 2021

Captions and Credits:

1. Alvaro Barrington, *ICU*, September 2021
Acrylic and concrete on canvas in steel artist's frame

City Life Series, X Freedom Tower, Spider Pig, September 2021

Acrylic on carpet behind printed photograph and spray-painted acrylic sheet in concrete and aluminium frame, photograph on paper

2. Alvaro Barrington, Installation view

3. Alvaro Barrington, *Carib Series, Marioworld 2, Spider Pig*, September 2021

Acrylic and yarn on burlap behind printed photograph and acrylic spray paint on an acrylic sheet, in wood and acrylic artist's frame.

Banana Fall on You, Green, September 2021

Oil and acrylic on burlap in artist's wooden frame

4. Alvaro Barrington, Installation view

5. Alvaro Barrington, *Raindrops, Light Grey Hermès*, September 2021

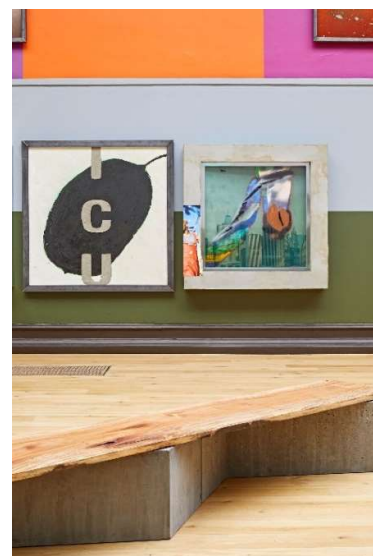
Concrete on yak woollen Hermès blanket in steel artist's frame

Raindrops, Orange Hermès, September 2021

Concrete on yak woollen Hermès blanket in steel artist's frame

Image credits: Andy Stagg

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