

Derosia

Kern Samuel

IM

September 9–October 10, 2026

Derosia is pleased to present *IM*, an exhibition of new work by Kern Samuel. The nine works in this show are governed by a logic of difference in which shapes and textures vary between works that draw on a range of sources, from personal narrative to cultural history to metaphorical materiality to poetic formalism. Though custom often asks us to understand groupings through similarity, Samuel presents an exhibition of work thoroughly dependent on the heterogeneity of its components.

In three unframed works, cut, dyed, sewn or otherwise shaped textiles hang freely from the wall. Constructed from a grey wool safety blanket and military grosgrain ribbon, *Backstroke* is a reference to the flags common in competitive swimming. The work is installed on the wall, wrapped around itself in the form of an infinity symbol. *Red Banner* is a patchwork of wool from an old hunting jacket and an African mud cloth, hung from an indigo-dyed shibori banner. Pieced and assembled with materials and techniques from an array of cultural histories, the work is a metaphor of sorts for the process of creolization.

Many of Samuel's works can be viewed as a record of iterative decisions made in response to the details of his context or the physicality of his medium. In a sense, one thing leads to another. *Double Knee* began as off-cuts of coated canvas Samuel acquired in the English countryside this summer. With indigo and raw umber pigments, these scraps took on the likeness of denim and Samuel used this fabric to construct *Double Knee*, working from an existing pair of pants (produced in collaboration with Paloma Wool in 2022) as a template. The stained canvas could only provide a portion of the material needed, so Samuel used raw canvas and the fasteners from the 2022 pants to complete the piece. Samuel allows slow development to be directed by materials or by coincidence as much as by the subjective will of the artist.

Three small works on panel, *Death Mask*, *Another Spiral*, and *Gateway*, represent the results of extensive material experimentation. DuPont styrofoam, pink moiré taffeta, expired insects, iron metallic surfacer, compostable produce bags, orange pith and pigments are pushed and pulled to create images that are equal parts intentional and residual.

The exhibition's title, *IM*, references the Individual Medley in competitive swimming, an event in which four different strokes are required to complete one race. Samuel's framed collages *Lane Four* and *Lane Five*, present green and white continuous feed paper deconstructed to reference the T-shaped lane lines of a swimming pool. One collage features white T-lines built up by additive layering while the other reveals dark gray T-lines through subtractive cuts in the surface. A final framed work, *Lifeguard*, presents DuPont styrofoam thinned by hand to fit exactly into a preexisting frame. The painted and rusted edges between the shapes emphasize the shape of the cross within the composition.

Kern Samuel (b. 1990, Mount Hope, Trinidad and Tobago) lives and works in Hudson, NY. Recent institutional exhibitions include The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2026); MoMA PS1, Queens, NY (2024); Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany (2022); The Africa Center, New York (2022); and White Columns, New York (2022). Other solo and group exhibitions include Soft Opening, London, UK (2025); Bad Water, Knoxville, TN (2025); Art Basel Statements with Derosia (2024); Croy Nielsen, Vienna, Austria (2024); Derosia, New York, NY (2023 & 2022); the bunker, Santa Monica Mountains, CA (2022); Bodega (Derosia), New York, NY (2021); Gallery Aferro, Newark, NJ (2019, 2018); Theresa A. Maloney Art Gallery, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ (2018); and Jeffrey Stark, New York, NY (2017). *IM* is Samuel's third solo exhibition with the gallery.