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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dalhousie Art Gallery presents *As We Rise: Photography from the Black Atlantic*, an international touring exhibition celebrating community, identity and power.

HALIFAX, NS – January 2023 – This February, Dalhousie Art Gallery will host *As We Rise: Photography from the Black Atlantic*. Organized by Aperture (New York) and curated by Elliott Ramsey of the Polygon Gallery (North Vancouver), the exhibition features a selection of photographs from the Wedge Collection of Dr. Kenneth Montague. The exhibition will be on display at Dalhousie Art Gallery from February 3rd to April 7th, 2024. **The opening reception celebration will take place on Friday, February 2, from 7:00 – 10:00 pm. Curator Elliott Ramsey and Wedge founding Director Dr. Kenneth Montague will be in attendance.**

The essence of community lies at the core of this exhibition. Dr. Kenneth Montague founded the Wedge Collection in 1997, Canada's largest privately owned collection dedicated to championing Black artists. The exhibition draws its name from a mantra often invoked by Dr. Montague's father: "Lifting as we rise." This phrase underscores the significance of translating personal success into communal well-being, advocating for reinvestment in the Black community.

This ethos of "lifting as we rise" expands the idea of family beyond close relatives. The exhibition seamlessly blends the familial with the familiar, as each photograph features Black subjects captured by Black photographers. Their authentic portrayal reflects a mutual and consensual gaze, creating a natural connection with the viewer.

The resulting imagery is diverse and heterogeneous, much like a family album. *As We Rise* explores the intersection of community, identity, and power, showcasing the nuanced strength, beauty, and vulnerability of Black life in each photograph.

The exhibition includes works by: Raphael Albert, Henry Clay Anderson, Tayo Yannick Anton, Liz Johnson Artur, James Barnor, Dawoud Bey, Arielle Bobb-Willis, Deanna Bowen, Jody Brand, Kwame Brathwaite, Sandra Brewster, Elliott Jerome Brown Jr., Vanley Burke, Mohamed Camara, Kennedy Carter, Jorian Charlton, June Clark, Michèle Pearson Clarke, Renee Cox, Erika DeFreitas, Jabulani Dhlamini, Stan Douglas, Louis Draper, Rotimi Fani Kayode, Samuel Fosso, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Courtney D. Garvin, Jérôme Havre, Barkley L. Hendricks, Leslie Hewitt, Ayana V. Jackson, Rashid Johnson, Aaron Jones, Anique Jordan, Seydou Keïta, Lebohang Kganye, Luther Konadu, Deana Lawson, Zun Lee, Oumar Ly, João Mendes, Jalani Morgan, Dennis Morris, Aïda Muluneh, Eustáquio Neves, Jamal Nxedlana, Lakin Ogunbanwo, J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, Bidemi Oloyede, Horace Ové, Gordon Parks, Dawit L. Petros, Charlie Phillips, Afonso Pimenta, Ruddy Roye, Athi-Patra Ruga, Abdourahmane Sakaly, Jamel Shabazz, Abdo Shanan, Malick Sidibé, Xaviera Simmons, Ming Smith, Paul Anthony Smith, Sanlé Sory, Eve Tagny, Texas Isaiah, Hank Willis Thomas, Mickalene Thomas, James Van Der Zee, Nontsikelelo Veleko, Ruby Washington, Ricky Weaver, Carrie Mae Weems, Kehinde Wiley



Dawit L. Petros, *Hadenbes*, 2005, from *As We Rise* (Aperture, 2021). Courtesy of the artist/Bradley Ertaskiran.

About Aperture

Aperture, a not-for-profit organization based in New York, connects the photography community and its audiences with the most compelling work and innovative ideas, in print, in person, and online. Established in 1952 by photographers and writers with the vision of providing "common ground for the advancement of photography," Aperture has evolved into a versatile, multi-platform publisher and a central hub for the photography community, locally and internationally.

The texts in this exhibition are adapted from the book *As We Rise: Photography from the Black Atlantic* (Aperture, 2021).

Opening Programs

Opening Reception

Friday, February 2nd, 7:00 – 10:00 PM

Dalhousie Art Gallery

Celebrate the opening of *As We Rise* with Dr. Kenneth Montague of the Wedge Collection and Curator Elliott Ramsey. The evening will feature a live performance from local DJ R\$ \$mooth inspired by the recently released LP, *As We Rise: Sounds from the Black Atlantic*, beginning at 8 PM.

Exhibition Talk & Book/LP Signing with Dr. Kenneth Montague and Elliott Ramsey
Saturday, February 3rd, 2:00 – 4:00 PM
Dalhousie Art Gallery

Join art collector, curator and founder and director of Wedge Curatorial Projects Dr. Kenneth Montague and *As We Rise* curator Elliott Ramsey for a presentation about the Wedge Collection, and the works that inspired this significant project on contemporary Black photography and its focus on Black portraiture. Dr. Montague will discuss the driving forces behind his establishment of one of Canada's largest private art collections exploring African diasporic and contemporary Black visual culture alongside Elliot Ramsey who will discuss the development of the exhibition and its tour in Canada and the US.

Following the talk, Dr. Montague will be signing copies of the publication, *As We Rise: Photography from the Black Atlantic* as well as the accompanying vinyl records, *As We Rise: Sounds from the Black Atlantic*. *As We Rise* catalogues and LPs will be available for purchase through Dalhousie Art Gallery and the King's Co-op Bookstore (6350 Coburg Rd, Halifax, NS B3H 2A1) throughout the exhibition run.

Admission to Dalhousie Art Gallery and associated events is free to the public. Gallery hours are Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday 11:00 am – 8:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. For more details, please visit www.artgallery.dal.ca. Media inquiries can be directed to Director/Curator Pamela Edmonds at pamela.edmonds@dal.ca.

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