

REGGIE BURROWS HODGES AT KARMA, NEW YORK



Reggie Burrows Hodges, *For the Greater Good: White Ground*, 2019, acrylic and pastel on canvas, 80 × 96 inches; 81 × 97 inches (framed).

In Reggie Burrows Hodges's first New York solo show, which is on view at Karma, the artist brings together a group of new paintings centered on the expression of the human form.

Hodges builds his scenes up from the canvas, starting with a matte black underpainting before outlining his figures in acrylic and pastel to create the hazy forms that distinguish his work. By beginning with black, Hodges is able to approach the totality of the color also as a medium: blackness is the environment from which the scene arises, borne from the depths of the canvas. His figures' faces are circles of smooth black paint that express no distinguishing marks, his features softened to the point of indiscernibility. Despite the anonymity of his subjects, Hodges's scenes manage to capture distinct moments of life. He depicts the physical activity of dancers, hurdlers, runners, and cyclers, as well as those in repose as they rest upon a sofa or sit by a table, ruminating while they lounge. They are illusory moments of physical or mental exertion that are full of feeling. Hodges's paintings position the blackness of the canvas and the figures not as an absence or void, but as an immeasurable and fundamental fullness—of material and of life.