

NICOLA  
VASSELL

MOSES  
SUMNEY

FEB. 3 —  
MAR. 5

*Opening* FEB. 3  
4-8pm

# BLACKALACHIA



Gallery Hours

Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm 138 10th Ave. New York, NY 10011

For press inquiries

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February 3 — March 5 2022

Nicola Vassell Gallery is pleased to present Moses Sumney: *Blackalachia*, a feature length performance film and photographic series created by the artist in the North Carolina stretch of the Blue Ridge Mountains during the summer of 2020. Sumney's auteurial debut highlights issues at the center of his interdisciplinary practice, including non-binary thinking, isolation, emotional introspection and historical Black cultural influence.

The film's title cites the relationship between Blackness and the Appalachian region, and the forced severance of the two, on which Sumney elaborates, "There is a history of Black people in Appalachia, there is a history of Black music being the foundation of bluegrass and country. There is a history of migration into and out of Appalachia. I'm so deeply invested in a reintegration into nature." This sincere contemplation results in "a performance piece about performance, framed by the gradual passage of the day into blue-black night."

*Blackalachia* is accompanied by a series of photographs, echoing the celestial tenor of the film, capturing the sublime North Carolinian landscape and include lyrical self-portraits as well as documentary vignettes. The film is a ruminative concert performed outdoors that serves as his latest album. Released in conjunction with the film, the album is aptly titled *Live From Blackalachia*. Just as Sumney's musical work radiates between genres, his artistic practice employs performance, photography, and dance to evoke contemplative, grandiose, and ethereal environments.

*Blackalachia* was released virtually in December 2021 and premiered at the Perez Art Museum Miami; Nicola Vassell Gallery is thrilled to debut it in New York.

## Moses Sumney

Raised between Ghana and Southern California, Moses Sumney is a singer, writer, and multidisciplinary storyteller, who studied creative writing and poetry at UCLA. In 2019, he received a SXSW special jury award for his video compositions and was awarded a Macdowell Fellowship for Artistic Excellence. In 2020, his first published essay, "Stateside Statelessness," appeared in *Fight of the Century* (Simon & Schuster), an immigration-centric anthology edited by Ayelet Waldman and Pulitzer-Prizer winner Michael Chabon. Sumney's critically acclaimed 2020 sophomore double album *græ* is described as a "conceptual patchwork about greyness".

It is his first work to be released since he relocated to North Carolina from Los Angeles.