

Press Release

# Alvaro Barrington

## *Soul to Seoul*

14 February—12 April 2025

Thaddaeus Ropac  
Seoul Fort Hill  
2F, 122-1, Dokseodang-ro, Yongsan-gu, Seoul



Alvaro Barrington, *NHC 2024/Mangrove Sunset (L10)*, 2024.  
Acrylic and Flashe on burlap in cedar wood frame. 43 x 93 cm (16.93 x 36.61 in).

*Art is about learning how to be, Painting is about what's in front of you, it's about learning to see.*

Excerpt from Alvaro Barrington's  
'Artist's Statement', December 2024  
[Link to Full Artist Statement](#)

Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to present *Soul to Seoul*, Alvaro Barrington's first exhibition in Korea. This exhibition brings together a body of work conceived for London's Notting Hill Carnival in 2024. The two-day event celebrates Caribbean culture through music, dance and food. Invested in exploring how art can participate in and be a part of larger conversations about culture, Barrington has collaborated with Notting Hill Carnival annually from 2019, by creating a new series of works installed on one of the floats, which parades along the Carnival

route. Through this collaboration, Barrington explores further his expanded notion of painting and display, in which he incorporates a variety of media, experiments with different techniques and shows his works in non-traditional settings.

Exploring how art can be an active part and a reflection of the Carnival culture, each year Barrington develops a new body of work, which dresses the Mangrove Steelband performance truck and responds to their annual theme. For Notting Hill Carnival 2024, the artist produced a series of works on different scales depicting the Caribbean landscape inspired by the theme 'Odyssey – Enchanted Voyage'. Each painting features the artist's impression of a sun setting over the horizon.

Drawing on his experience of growing up in the Caribbean and the work of artists including Etel Adnan (1925–2021), Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011), Henri Matisse (1869–1954), as well as some of his contemporaries, including Joe Bradley and Peter Doig, the works blend the artist’s personal memories with art-historical references.

The body of work shown in the exhibition also references quilt-making techniques and the Caribbean history of artistic expression through fabric and sewing. Burlap canvases – which the artist uses frequently in his work – have been collaged together to dictate the composition of each of the paintings. Adding different fabrics to the reverse of the burlap, which was then assembled using a custom hanging system, the installation at Notting Hill Carnival resembled a patchwork composed of painted sunsets and organic shapes on one side, and vibrant colours and textures on the other. The artist thereby created a comprehensive experience, where the truck was dressed for the viewers outside and the performers inside. Through the rhythmic repetition of shapes, colours, fabrics and their dynamic arrangement inspired by music and dance, Barrington creates an ode to the beauty of the Caribbean landscape and culture.



Alvaro Barrington, *NHC 2024/Mangrove Sunset (Y7)*, 2024.  
Acrylic and Flashe on burlap in cedar wood frame.  
117 x 117 cm (46.06 x 46.06 in).

Considering himself primarily a painter, Barrington is known for his expansive use of materials, motifs and techniques which reference his own memories and cultural influences from music, visual culture, and art history. Using unconventional materials – from concrete and burlap to brooms and musical instruments – his works evoke the sounds and colours, as well as the social and political backdrop of his early life in Grenada in the Caribbean and Brooklyn in New York. The artist’s commitment to community has brought his work into unexpected spaces. As well as his collaboration with London’s Notting Hill Carnival, he has contributed artwork to the UK’s Glastonbury Festival and an East London basketball court.

[Link to the artist’s CV](#)



Alvaro Barrington, *NHC 2024/Mangrove Sunset (R16)*, 2024.  
Acrylic and Flashe on burlap in cedar wood frame.  
171 x 139 cm (67.32 x 54.72 in).

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