

David Uzochukwu Makes Museum Debut in Memphis with *Bodies of Water*

First museum exhibition by the Austrian-Nigerian artist opens in Memphis before traveling to the Weisman Art Museum



David Uzochukwu, *Styx*, 2021

Press images can be found [here](#).

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (June 10, 2026) – The Memphis Brooks Museum of Art announced today the opening of [David Uzochukwu: *Bodies of Water*](#), the first museum exhibition of work by the [Austrian-Nigerian photographer and filmmaker](#). The exhibition will be on view from June 10 through Sept. 27, 2026.

A rising international artist, Uzochukwu has developed a visually arresting practice that brings together photography, film, mythology, fantasy, and histories of migration and belonging. In *Bodies of Water*, 22 photographs present hybrid beings, part human and part animal, who inhabit surreal, dreamlike landscapes. Adorned with fins, scales, and other features, these figures are equipped to survive and thrive in challenging waters.

The resulting images evoke the adaptability and resilience of diasporic communities navigating environments often marked by hostility and exclusion. Within these imagined worlds, Blackness resists simple definition. It is fluid, shifting, and vibrantly alive.

“Not only is *Bodies of Water* my debut museum exhibition, it brings images informed by diasporic thinking across the Atlantic into dialogue with the dense cultural memory of Memphis,”

said Uzochukwu. “I’m deeply grateful for the invitation to let the work unfold new meanings in a city so profoundly shaped by Black expression and resistance.”

The exhibition is curated by Efe Igor Coleman, an independent curator and scholar specializing in African diasporic art. Coleman formerly served as Blackmon Perry Assistant Curator of African American Art and Art of the African Diaspora at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art. She holds a Ph.D. in History from Yale University, with a certificate in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

“David’s work brings together African, European, and American mythologies with a deep care for place, memory, and history,” said Igor Coleman. “To present this exhibition in Memphis—a city shaped by the Mississippi River, by creativity, and by generations of resilience—feels especially powerful. In these works, water carries stories of movement, transformation, loss, and return. It is especially fitting to share them at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, an institution deeply connected to the city and the many histories that flow through it.”

With *Bodies of Water*, Memphis’ art museum continues its work of presenting ambitious contemporary artists at pivotal moments in their careers. By organizing Uzochukwu’s first museum exhibition, the museum introduces Memphis audiences to an artist whose work is gaining increasing international attention while helping establish a new chapter in his career.

A series of public programs will accompany the exhibition. On Wednesday, June 10, the Black Art Collective will host [First Edition](#), an elevated dinner celebrating the exhibition and debuting its accompanying catalogue, with an opportunity to meet the artist and curator. On Saturday, June 13, the museum will host a community celebration to mark the opening of the exhibition, followed by a special edition of [Art & Aperitifs](#) during which Igor Coleman will lead a discussion with Uzochukwu.

Following its Memphis debut, *David Uzochukwu: Bodies of Water* will travel to the Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where it will be on view from October 16, 2027 through January 2, 2028.

Major support for *David Uzochukwu: Bodies of Water* is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support from Molly and Jason Wexler, Dr. Linda Tharp, the Black Art Collective, and the Pride Collective. The exhibition catalogue is supported by Furthermore: a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund. The Black Art Collective is presented by Bank of America.

First Edition is led by a generous host committee, including Sudhir Agrawal, Gloria and Kenneth Boyland, Chiquilla and Eric Brown, Nelda and Tyrone Burroughs, Trevia Chatman, Donald Comer, Dr. and Mrs. Reginald Coopwood, Sharon Devine Harris and Jeff D. Harris, Kimberly and Elliot Perry, Valerie and Carl Person, Linda Ivy Rosser and Glenn Rosser, Edith Kelly Green Thompson, Belinda Watkins, and Harlem’s Fashion Row.

All exhibitions at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art are underwritten by the MBMA Exhibition Fund: Lead support provided by Kay Clark, and Maggie and Milton Lovell, with additional

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For more information, visit brooksmuseum.org.

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About Memphis Art Museum

Opening in December 2026 along the Mississippi River, Memphis Art Museum is the reimaged home of the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art. As a 123,500-square-foot cultural campus, it offers expanded galleries, abundant public spaces, and new studios for learning and creativity. Designed as an open invitation to the city, the museum serves as a home for creativity and community, where Memphians and visitors gather, connect, and experience the power of art through world-class architecture, a rooftop sculpture garden, and year-round cultural programming.

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