

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ERIN CLULEY GALLERY

Lovie Olivia: *Loose leaf*

August 23 – September 27, 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday, August 23, 5 – 7pm



Lovie Olivia, *Keeper*, 2025, mixed media collage on vintage file folder, 21 ¼ x 17 in. (framed)

Erin Cluley Gallery is pleased to announce *Loose leaf*, an exhibition of new works on paper by Houston-based artist, Lovie Olivia. Comprising nine new collages—constructed from aged file folders, domestic objects, and public records—the artist’s latest exhibition draws sociocultural and familial significance out of her archive of found materials. Manipulated through a variety of artistic techniques, these materials become containers for Olivia’s distinct storytelling. *Loose leaf* contends with the legacies of queer, black women in the American south, and the interconnectedness of the self to nature and systems of control. Against rising factions of historical revisionism and nationalism, Olivia’s work presents a liberating and resistant counternarrative.

Olivia’s artistic practice begins before the act of creation, sourcing historical and archival materials from estate sales, antique markets, and public monuments. The artist reclaims these objects through a breadth of artistic methods—including drawing, painting, and printmaking—to create sensitive records of underrepresented Southern cultures. These mixed materials are dyed, punched and scored, then compiled into works that are at once assemblage, and sensitive portraits of queer, black women. Compositionally, Olivia’s

collages negotiate what is seen and what is not: their layers reveal and obscure figures, paralleling the complicated visibility of black bodies in American culture.

The works in *Loose leaf* demonstrate Olivia's ability to excavate forgotten histories and aesthetic beauty from disparate materials. Her collages recreate the act of discovering and exploring physical archives, the revelations in uncovering hidden narratives. *Monstera* (2025), a small-scale paper collage, features a series of silhouetted figures recessed inside layers of cut paper and mixed-media elements. In this work, a cobalt-blue folder holds a series of flattened surfaces with cropped portraits of posed bodies, written text, and geometric patterns. The body in Olivia's work is connected innately to its compositional framing and the histories embedded in the archival materials she employs.

Loose leaf displays the artist's complex visual vocabulary and its use of gestures, marks, and data while expanding this vocabulary into new sculptural realms. Her collages reimagine the utilities of liberation, resistance, and obscurity animating types of survival for marginalized bodies that endure outside of institutional control. Repeated visual motifs suggest a continuum between queer, black women's bodies and the history of their representation in art and culture. Seen together, the work in Olivia's new exhibition pieces together the elements of found archival records with literal and ideological glue.

Loose Leaf will be the artist's first solo presentation with Erin Cluley Gallery. It will be exhibited concurrently with *Gather*, an exhibition of work by Dallas-based artist Zeke Williams.

Lovie Olivia (b. 1975; Houston, TX) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Houston, TX. Olivia creates paintings, collages and sculptures that are an assembly of found and articulated objects. Their work mines the insufficient archives of Black, Queer, and Womanist experiences and reimagines possibility through rich strata of memory, gesture, and speculative improvisation.

Olivia's work is featured in numerous private and public collections including Project Row Houses, National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian Institute, University of Texas Austin, and the Houston Intercontinental Airport. She is the recipient of multiple individual artist awards in Houston and the broader Texas region.

Her work has been exhibited widely in venues such as the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Frist Museum, The Phillips Collection DC, Vanderbilt University, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston Museum of African American Culture, Art Pace, The Station Museum, Project Row Houses, TSU University Museum Clamp Gallery NY, and 1969 Gallery NY. Olivia shows exclusively with Erin Cluley Gallery, Dallas, TX and Tinney Contemporary, Nashville, TN.

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Erin Cluley Gallery is a contemporary art gallery representing emerging, mid-career, and established artists from Dallas and the United States. The gallery presents a provocative program of artists working in both traditional and alternative forms including painting, sculpture, new media, photography, sculptural installation and public intervention.

In 2014, Erin Cluley Gallery ignited a creative movement in West Dallas acting as a hub for visual arts and community engagement. After nearly five years on Fabrication Street, the gallery has moved its operation to Riverbend – a development in Dallas' Design District celebrating the intersection between culture and commerce.

From April 2021 to November 2024, Cluley opened and operated Cluley Projects – a satellite location in West Dallas acting as an incubator space focusing on regional artists and providing a platform for discovery and mentorship.

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