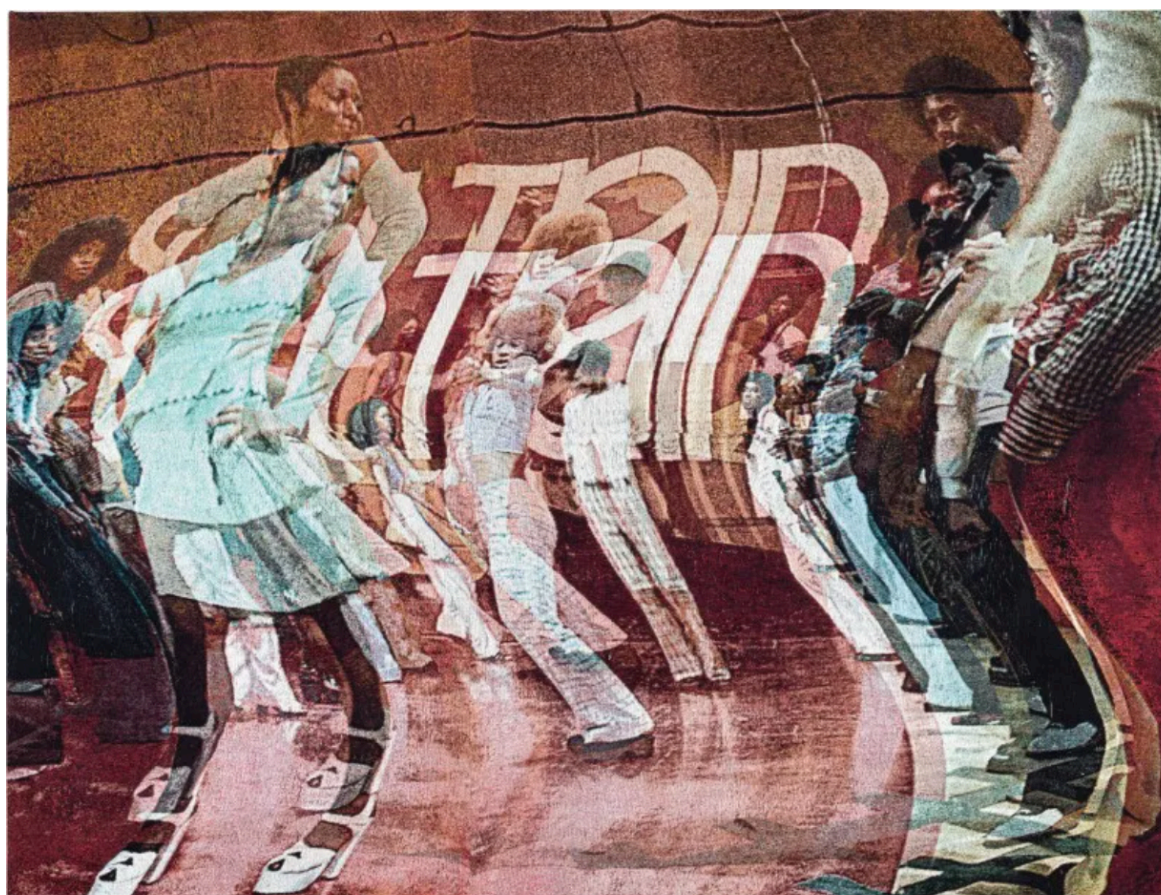




## Depicting Black Bodies in Motion, Noel W. Anderson's Tapestries Reinvent Images From Iconic TV Show 'Soul Train'

by VICTORIA L. VALENTINE on Nov 10, 2022 • 3:58 am

No Comments



NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Patsey," (stretched tapestry, 83.3/4 x 110 inches / 213 x 279.4 cm). | From the artist's studio

WORKING PRIMARILY WITH ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS, **Noel W. Anderson** reproduces images of police brutality, Black masculinity, and Black love on jacquard tapestries. He reinvents and manipulates both the images and the surfaces of the textiles, creating cinematic, painterly images.

The artist's latest series focuses on dancing and captures Black bodies in motion. Now on view, "[Noel W. Anderson: Electric Boogie, Help Us Find the Funk](#)" is a selling exhibition at Sotheby's in Paris.

“For me the tapestry...is merging painting, photography, print, and weaving into one synthesized event,” Anderson has said. “The other reason I like to use it is because as an African American male in a Western context, it’s very I think revolutionary for a male gender, especially a Black male to use what some might stereotypically call women’s work. And the question is what does it mean for an African American male to utilize women’s work to express the oppressions of a people.”

Born in Louisville, Ky., Anderson lives in Harlem and works out of a South Bronx studio. A former performance artist, he is a professor of printmaking in the Steinhardt Department of Art and Art Professions at New York University.

The title for the tapestry exhibition at Sotheby’s, “Noel W. Anderson: Electric Boogie, Help Us Find the Funk,” is drawn from two songs: the well-known hit “Electric Boogie” (1983) by Marcia Griffiths and Parliament-Funkadelic’s legendary anthem “Flash Light” (1977). The works feature dancers and performers from the famed television show Soul Train.

Broadcast nationally for more than three decades (1971-2006), Soul Train was created and hosted by Don Cornelius. A showcase for the latest and greatest in soul, R&B, disco, funk, and eventually hip-hop, the iconic program featured musical performances and a cast of dancers whose inventive moves were physically and rhythmically mesmerizing. Essentially a televised dance club, Soul Train was at its height in the 1970s and 80s.

Anderson explained how he transforms photographs, including images from Soul Train, into tapestries in which the hand is present. Individual fibers are worked, giving the textiles depth, character, and movement.

“We use brushes, combs, needles. The first level is I manipulate an image both analog and digitally. Then I send those images to my weavers. I have weaving guilds here in the States as well as in France that I work with. And we work to render these images in woven form, all photographic,” Anderson said in the video below.

“When we receive the tapestries, the weaving is really tight and what we do is we take...really just these needles and we stick them between the threads and start pulling the threads out. We try to replicate Black labor. We’re picking cotton in the studio. There’s a team of people who are working...in Black communities and in communities where people are struggling in general, collectivity is necessary.” CT

**“Noel W. Anderson: Electric Boogie, Help Us Find the Funk” is on view at Sotheby’s Place Beauvau in Paris, France, from Oct. 13-Nov. 10, 2022**

FIND MORE [about Noel W. Anderson](#) on his website

FIND MORE Sotheby’s [published a Q&A with Noel W. Anderson](#) about his practice, inspirations, and the selling exhibition



*In his South Bronx studio, artist Noel W. Anderson talks about transforming photographic images into woven tapestries. He says when he works the surfaces with a steel brush, the images are fuzzed and blurred evoking the painterly style of French artist Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947). | Video by Sotheby’s*



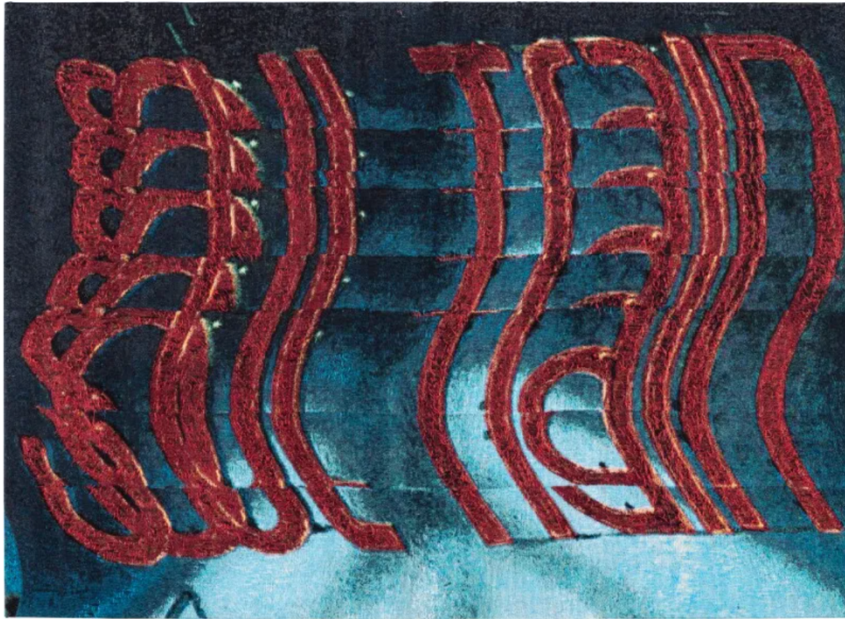


NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Couple dances down the soul train line," 2022 (tapestry, 84 x 114 inches / 213.4 x 289.6 cm). | From the artist's studio



NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Transformation Between the Tracks," 2022 (stretched tapestry, 70.1/4 x 50.1/4 inches / 178.5 x 127.5 cm). | From the artist's studio



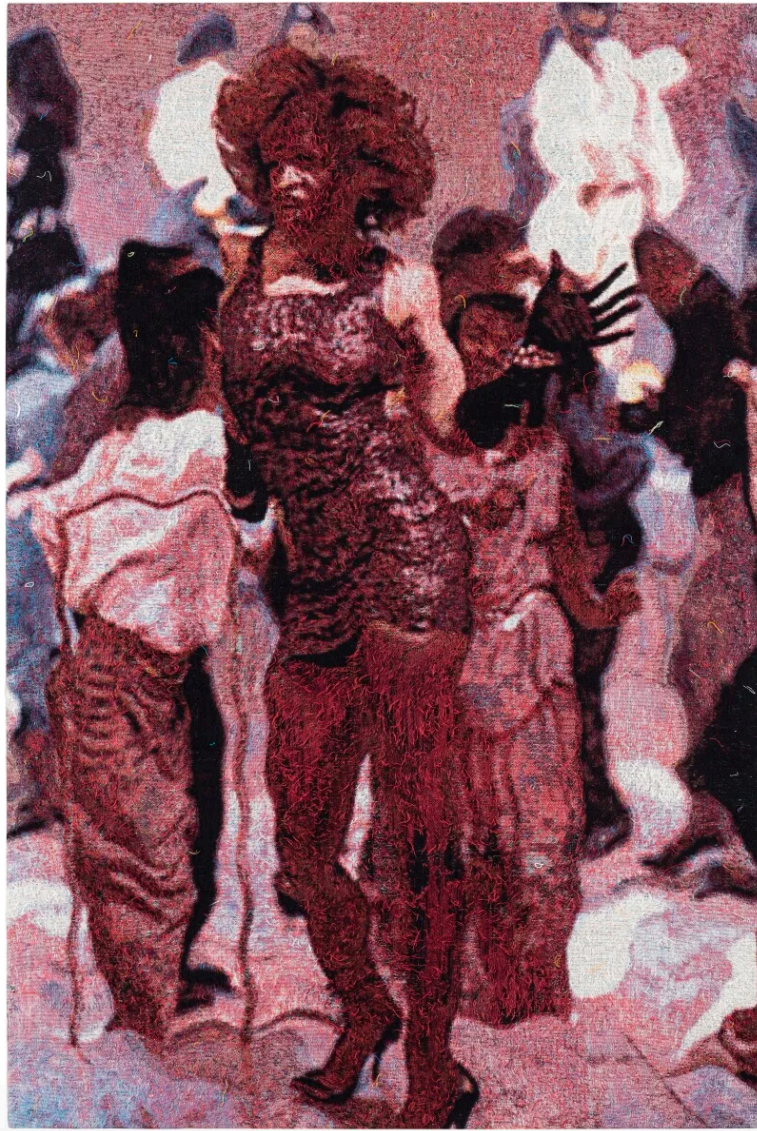


NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Descending Spirit Train," 2022 (stretched tapestry, 55.1/2 x 76 inches / 145 x 193 cm). | From the artist's studio



NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Funk Found," 2022 (stretched tapestry, 75.1/4 x 50.1/4 inches / 191 x 127.5 cm). | From the artist's studio





NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Rosie," 2022 (stretched tapestry, 75.1/4 x 50 inches / 191 x 127 cm). | From the artist's studio



NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Shout for Love," 2022 (stretched tapestry, 70.1/4 x 80 inches / 178.5 x 203 cm). | From the artist's studio





*NOEL W. ANDERSON, "Funk be kryptonite," 2022 (stretched tapestry, 50.3/8 x 70.1/2 inches / 128 x 178 cm). / From the artist's studio*