

# Press Release

# Brooklyn Museum



yasiin bey (American, born 1973). *Alamayehu and yasiin*, 2015.  
Courtesy of The Third Line. © The Third Line

## The Brooklyn Museum Presents the U.S. Debut of Artist yasiin bey's Newest Recording, *Negus*

On the 20th anniversary of the seminal *Black on Both Sides* album, which was released under the stage name Mos Def, *Negus* is presented as a listening installation that is only available at the Museum November 15, 2019–January 26, 2020

Tickets now available at:

[www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/yasiin\\_bey\\_negus](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/yasiin_bey_negus)

The Brooklyn Museum is proud to present *yasiin bey: Negus*, a time-limited listening experience featuring bey's new studio recording, *Negus*. This is the first time the recording will be heard in the United States, and will debut in the artist's hometown of Brooklyn. bey designed the multi-track recording as an installation to encourage people to be fully present while listening to it. The recording is not available in any digital or analog mediums. *Negus* (pronounced *neh-goose*) contains all new material that has been uniquely arranged for the Brooklyn Museum. The installation will also include artworks by Ala Ebtekar, Julie Mehretu, and José Parlá created in collaboration with bey specifically for the presentation, as well as a musical compilation by the celebrated Ethiopian pianist Emahoy Tsegué-Maryam Guèbrou. Accompanying the works is a large textile mural by bey that features collaborative elements with the perfumery Fueguia 1833 and tributes to important historical figures, including Henrietta Lacks, Nipsey Hussle, and others.

*yasiin bey: Negus* at the Brooklyn Museum is the latest in a series of listening installations the artist has presented around the world. Recorded in London in 2015 and produced by Lord Tusk, Steven Julien, and ACyde, *Negus* was first presented in Marrakesh in February 2019, then in Hong Kong and Dubai in March 2019. Each listening installation has been tailored to its unique environment.

*Negus* means “king” or “ruler” in Ge’ez, an ancient Semitic language of Ethiopia, and bey associates the term with people who are noble. The recording’s accompanying visual features a portrait of Prince Alämayyähu, a nineteenth-century Ethiopian prince and the son of King Tewodros II. Alämayyähu continues to serve as an inspiration for contemporary Ethiopian artists.

Born in Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, yasiin bey is a multidisciplinary artist. He has been making hip-hop music since 1994, and first gained national attention in 1998 with the release of *Black Star*, with Talib Kweli, and his subsequent solo album, *Black on Both Sides*, in 1999. Throughout his career, bey has balanced music with acting, appearing in films such as *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* (2005), *16 Blocks* (2006), *Be Kind Rewind* (2008), and *Bamboozled* (2000), among others.

The U.S. premiere of *yasiin bey: Negus* falls on the 20th anniversary of bey’s *Black on Both Sides* album. Since its inception, hip-hop has grown into one of the most quintessentially American art forms of the last century, and *Black on Both Sides* is widely recognized as one of the genre’s most important albums. bey, who also made music as part of the duo Black Star, with Talib Kweli, is perpetually at the forefront of hip-hop, pushing its boundaries and creating albums that serve as blueprints for the development of new possibilities within the genre.

Entry to *yasiin bey: Negus* is hourly, starting at 11 am during Museum hours, with 75 tickets available each hour. The installation runs November 15, 2019–January 26, 2020. Listeners will be asked to secure their mobile devices in locked bags upon entering the gallery, ensuring that there are no distractions and encouraging visitors to be fully present. The listening installation is part of the Brooklyn Museum’s focused effort to present a wide spectrum of artistic mediums and forms of cultural expression.

“Few American art forms have grown to be as globally influential as hip-hop, a genre which was largely crafted on the streets of New York City,” says Lauren Zelaya, Director of Public Programs at the Brooklyn Museum. “We’re excited to present yasiin bey’s groundbreaking work within the genre, in a way that is uniquely designed for Brooklyn Museum visitors.”

*yasiin bey: Negus* is a timed ticketed experience. Brooklyn Museum Members receive free ticket(s) based on membership level. Benefits include priority access; free general admission for one year; and discounts on Museum programs, dining, and shopping. To learn more about Membership, visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org/join](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/join); call 718.501.6326; or email [membership@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:membership@brooklynmuseum.org).

Tickets are now on sale. Prices are as follows: Wednesday through Friday, timed tickets cost \$20 for adults, \$12 for seniors/students ages 13 and up, \$8 for children ages 4–12. Children ages 3 and under are free. On weekends, timed tickets cost \$25 for adults, \$16 for seniors/students ages 13 and up, \$10 for children ages 4–12. Children ages 3 and under are free. For more ticketing information, please visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/yasiin\\_bey\\_negus](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/yasiin_bey_negus).

*yasiin bey: Negus* is organized in collaboration with The Third Line and is curated by Lauren Zelaya, Director of Public Programs, Brooklyn Museum. This iteration of the *Negus* suite was co-produced by Lord Tusk and Steven Julien.

**Brooklyn Museum**