

L.I.ART LUXE IMMO

CONTEMPORARY ART & LUXURY REAL ESTATE



JEFFREY GIBSON

Jeffrey Gibson lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He received a Visual Arts Grant from the Creative Capital Foundation in 2005; the Eiteljorg Museum Fellowship in 2009; and a Percent for Art commission by the Department of Cultural Affairs in New York City in 2010. His work has been featured and reviewed in numerous publications, including The New York

Times, The New Yorker, The Village Voice, The Boston, Globe, ArtNews, Art Lies and The Brooklyn Rail. His work has recently been included in exhibitions at The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Plug-In Institute of Contemporary Art; The Peabody Essex Museum; Participant Inc.; and will be included in upcoming exhibitions at The Museum of Art and Design; The National Academy Museum; and The National Gallery of Canada. He is a 2012 TED Foundation Fellow.

Your work utilizes abstraction to highlight and emphasize the complicated world we inhabit. How did you begin your career and realize your interest in these types of discussions?

I've always drawn, since I was a child. I painted in my bedroom when I was a teenager and then studied anthropology, psychology and painting during my first year of college. I went on to study painting at the Art Institute at Chicago for painting and worked as a NAGPRA research intern at the Field Museum in Chicago. That experience greatly influenced my thinking about translation, in particular, cultural translation in a museum. I went on to study at The Royal College of Art in London for my Master of Art degree. My tribe, The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, funded those years. It was beneficial to be out of the country. I had a lot of questions at the time about how to be an artist.

How would you describe the types of audiences that view your art?

Shifting back and forth, between both Native and non-Native audiences, has allowed me to grow as an artist. My work assumes very different meanings both formally and conceptually, depending on the context. Some audiences are able to see the influence of Native American objects and design, and other audiences understand it as formal abstraction. Experiencing this flux over the years has influenced the decisions that I make when making a piece of work. I play with the varying perceptions.

Can you speak more about the influences that these diverse viewers have on the creation of your pieces?

I realized how unrelated those two art worlds – Native and non-Native – have been historically. One is not consistently engaging with the other. Certainly throughout modern history, there have been these moments where these topics come into conversation. I guess it started with trying to figure out, 'Why is that? Why is it that they don't maintain an engagement with each other?' If someone doesn't see me or read my biography, I'm really just making an object that's going to take on meaning according to its context – especially with abstraction. If you are not aware of the conceptual concerns that are generated by abstraction, then you're really left to read them as purely formal. I started trying to figure out where my formal decisions were coming from. 'Is it possible to make abstract painting that actually has content embedded in it?' I started to think about the connection between celebrated modern painters, such as Picasso, and his relationship to non-Western cultures. I wondered, 'Is abstract painting found in historic Native American culture? – Yes.' It can be found on parfleche bags and tipi wrappers, drums,

quillwork, beadwork, and moose hair embroidery. All of these abstract languages, although they aren't paint, are very much like painting. They take three dimensional form, rather than painting on canvas or the wall. I started paying attention to those forms of abstraction.

I see the relationship you describe between these varying expressions of abstract painting. What is your position and interpretation of the term “abstraction” in your work?

My decision to visually fracture painted space reflects the fractured contemporary world that we live in. Time is no longer linear. Narratives are no longer linear.

Once I understood the multiplicitous histories that make up the grand narrative history that I was taught in school, the attempt became how to show multiple histories and fractured spaces on one surface or within one object. That's what my work has always been about. It's more about that dynamic than it is about the specifics of any particular story.

Your creations entitled TRADE continue to address the multiple histories that are experienced when utilizing “objects” rather than paintings. Please describe your process in constructing these pieces.

I had many old paintings and beginnings of paintings stored in the studio, some from my early years in New York. I wanted to “renew” them. I took them to the Laundromat and washed them on the hottest setting. They had this amazing texture to them. The canvas shrinks, but the paint doesn't. I began to cut them apart and then glued and stitched them back together. I painted over them as a way to unify them, leaving traces of the original paintings. The final collages were more objects than paintings – fragments, and remnants of something larger. The materials have a personal history while referring to other histories and ways of making.

What is your definition of “renewal” for these works, and why is it significant to your art as a whole?

For me, renewal is a process of transformation sometimes a physical one and sometimes the transformation is a shift in perception. When I am looking at historic Native American objects, I don't always know who the maker is, or the specific intentions. I've been very fortunate to see a lot of these objects, or 'meet these objects' in person. I began to see them as living rather than inanimate.

I ask – 'Where did it exist before? Who used it? How was it used?' There are objects that dance, objects that speak, that walk in ceremony, that sing, and so on. Can I really say that I believe that's possible? Am I capable of making something that calls these forces to come together into a work of art?

I hope so.

Theresa Barbaro

SOLO AND TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

Fall 2012 – Marc Straus Gallery, New York

Spring 2012 – One becomes the other, Participant Inc, NYC

Spring 2012 – One becomes the other, American Contemporary, NYC

2011 – 222 Shelby Street, Jeffrey Gibson, Santa Fe, New Mexico

2010 – Jeffrey Gibson and Jackie Saccoccio, The Shades, Samsøen, Boston, MA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Winter 2012 – Shapeshifter, Peabody Essex Museum, catalogue coming

2012 – Changing Hands 3, Museum of Art and Design, NYC, catalogue coming

2011 – Museum of Fine Arts, Recent Acquisitions, Linde Wing for Contemporary Art, Boston

2011 – Close Encounters, Plug-In Institute of Contemporary Art, Winnipeg

2011 – Recent Acquisitions, Denver Art Museum

2010 – Collision, Rhode Island School of Design Museum



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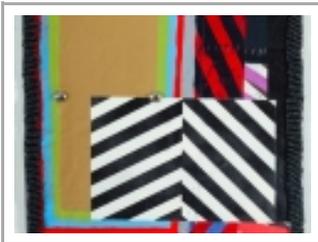
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