

The Antidote

January 28 – March 6, 2010

Opening Reception:

Thursday January 28, 6-8 pm

Featuring: William T. Wiley, Herb Jackson, Ulf Puder, Rina Banerjee, Jesse McCloskey, Aaron Johnson, and Tom Sanford

In the 160 years since French painter Paul Delaroche proclaimed "from today painting is dead", many scholars and critics of art have echoed his sentiments. As each new concept or movement in the visual arts comes to the fore, judgment is passed on all that came before it. In Delaroche's time, the advent of photography changed the usefulness of painting as documentation, in the 20th century, modernist painting transitioned paint from a representational two dimensional medium to art grounded in codes rather than images. In our contemporary culture of instant access and short attention spans, painting has once again reinvented itself.



Herb Jackson, *Veronica's Veil CXCVII*
Acrylic on canvas, 2009
60 x 48 inches

By examining the validity and variety of painting in the post-modern era, *The Antidote* shines light on paint's continued potential for innovation and influence. Uninhibited by traditionally expected technique, these artists have developed their own processes in order to best execute their contemporary concepts in this historically rich medium. *The Antidote* features new works painted for this exhibition by three generations of artists embracing paint as their medium of expression: William T. Wiley, Herb Jackson, Rina Banerjee, Ulf Puder, Tom Sanford, Aaron Johnson and Jesse McCloskey.

Joann Moser, Senior Curator of the Smithsonian American Art Museum says of William T. Wiley's work: "He has created a distinctive body of work that addresses critical issues of our time. Art, politics, war, global warming, foolishness, ambition, hypocrisy, and irony are summoned by Wiley's fertile imagination and recorded in the personal vocabulary of symbols, puns and images that fill his objects. His wit and sense of the absurd make his art accessible to all with multiple layers of meaning revealed through careful examination." Wiley's works employ a playful treatment of language and image, producing a nonlinear mix of words, gestures, and figures to convey his concepts.

William T. Wiley is in the permanent collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C. and many other important museums and institutions. Wiley was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship Award in 2004.

Herb Jackson's paintings are built up in many layers which are scraped off as they are being applied. Shapes and marks come and go as the painting develops to a hundred or more layers. There is an unmistakable dissonance between the luminous, often pearlescent colors and the raw sense of corrosion and violent gesture which Jackson's compositions and surfaces combine to convey. The final outcome is the result of a process of discovery Jackson says is similar to the life experience itself. Herb Jackson has had over 150 one-person exhibitions and his paintings are in the permanent

collection of over 100 Museums including The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York and The Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C. Jackson's work was included in the first exhibition of contemporary American art, curated by Donald Kuspit and presented in the former USSR in 1989.

Ulf Puder belongs to the first tier of famous graduates of the Leipzig's Academy of Visual Arts. Along with his peer, Neo Rauch, Puder has created a new vocabulary that combines the neo-realism prevalent in the former Eastern Germany with a surrealist bent. The artist skillfully balances comfort and ruin as well as reality and abstraction. His assemblage of squares, symmetrical triangles and rectangles each add a different texture to a controlled sense of imminent disaster. By locating his scenes on smooth, sandy plains or glassy lakes and recording them in soft grays and purples Puder's orderly chaotic world is both two and three dimensional, constructed and deconstructed, present and imagined.

Tom Sanford says of his work that he "hopes the subject becomes dated even before (He) finishes the painting". Using painting, a "slow food" visual medium, the artist creates advertisement like posters of the latest tabloid gossip. By juxtaposing tradition and our throw-away contemporary society, Sanford has created his own Modern-day history paintings.

Rina Banerjee is an Indian born New York based artist whose work explores the aesthetics of exotic beauty, physical illusion and ornamental object. Her imagery stems from her dual cultural history of both eastern and western art. Banerjee seeks to transform everyday objects (and their cultural identity), recreating their identity as a thing of beauty cultural gap. Says the artist of her work: "The global place is a garden made out of travel - both real and imagined - and is my illusionary world." Banerjee has exhibited her works in the Greater New York Show, PS1 MOMA, and at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY.

Jesse McCloskey's work is certainly representational, yet he considers himself an abstract artist. He begins each work by making several large colorful abstract paintings which he then cuts into hundreds of exacting abstract shapes. These small pieces of painted paper are then painstakingly applied to a stretched canvas, layer by layer, building up dimension, color, impact and design. Influenced by a childhood full of gothic New England legends, the final work is representational, haunting and mysterious and can be twenty to thirty layers thick.

Aaron Johnson's frenetic patterning, drips, psychedelic swirls and iridescent globs collage to create a singular apocalyptic universe of grotesque figures and carefully controlled painterly excess. Johnson creates a strikingly effective fusion of paint, process, and image that oozes evil. In his latest series of works, the artist takes on the old masters, reinventing an established vocabulary of imagery while creating a dichotomy of old/new, east/west, painting/design. New York Times art critic Roberta Smith says of the work: "if you look carefully it is all there in works that are visceral, beautiful and flamboyantly timely, which is saying a lot."



Jesse McCloskey, *Artist's Studio*
Vinyl paint paper collage mounted on canvas, 2010
24 x 30 inches

Aaron Johnson's work has been exhibited at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, CO, Art House Texas, Austin, TX and the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Peekskill, NY.

For more information:
www.ClaireOliver.com
Tel: 212.929.5949

Public transportation to the gallery

Take C or E train to W. 23 St., walk west to 10 Ave., then walk 3 blocks North to 26th street & 1/4 block west **OR** Take any north/south local train including C, E, 1, 9, F, V, N, R, W or 6 to the W. 23 St. stop, & take the M23 bus west to 10th Ave. then walk 3 blocks North to 26th street & 1/4 block west **OR** The M11 bus stops on 10th Ave. between W. 25th & W. 26th Streets.