

“Flesh and Blood”

John U. Abrahamson

“Flesh and Blood” was the hardest and yet easiest series for me to paint of my entire career. Hardest due to the brutal nature in which I viewed the mirror. Easiest in so far as the flow was natural, unstudied and for the first time born of only my sketches. My past work was usually the result of working from photographs or working directly into paint without any pre-sketches at all. Because of this I find “Flesh and Blood” to be perhaps the most honest I have done to date.

The majority of the paintings consist of oils on gesso coated print paper. I developed this method as an extension of my journal writings thus the paintings and the central installation work are, in my mind, one piece.

While creating the vocabulary for “Flesh and Blood” I chose to depict the human form in a way that seemed more in line with my mental state and other conceptual themes I wanted to explore than the idealized bodies of my past work could communicate. A chance encounter at the DeYoung Art Museum in Golden Gate Park with a stunningly beautiful woman supplied another important visual element for this series. She was in a wheelchair with both arms amputated at the mid-biceps, bone protruded from the tapered muscles at the end of each of her amputated appendages. To me, as a muse, She was perfect and transcendent.

“Flesh and Blood” is catharsis. From the blood letting and flesh harvesting needed for the installation work to the subjects I gave form to in paint culminating in the destruction of 15 years worth of writings. An artist in midlife contemplating the waste, sloth and slowly approaching mortality of his life framed by moments of self flagellation. My figures seem to have a resigned appreciation of their own personal hells.

John U. Abrahamson Resume

Solo Exhibitions

2010

Bert Green Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA

2000

Circle Elephant Art, Los Angeles, CA

"Power and Pain" Club TWILO, New York, NY

1994

"The Dark Works" John Thomas Gallery, Santa Monica, CA

1993

"In the Beginning...." Project Art Gallery, Vancouver, B.C.

1992

John Thomas Gallery Santa Monica, CA

1991

Gallerie Sloan Scottsdale, AZ

John Thomas Gallery Santa Monica, CA

1986

"New Horizons Gallery Atlanta, GA

Wallscales Gallery Atlanta, Ga.

1985

Multicultural Arts Gallery San Diego, CA

Group Exhibitions:

2009

Bert Green Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA

"The Damned Show" Tagnet Gallery, Detroit, MI

"LA to OC Emphasis Extreme" Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, Santa Ana, CA

2008

"Carnivora" C-POP Gallery, Detroit MI , L'Imagerie Gallery Los Angeles, CA

"The Dirty Show" Detroit, MI

"Transgression" Paul Booth's Last Rites Gallery, New York, New York

"New Blood Rising" Fuse Gallery, New York, NY

"Fantastic Contraption" Device Gallery, La Jolla, CA

2005

"Fetish Artists" Echo Gallery, Chicago, IL

2004

"One Night Stand" ARTworksf, San Francisco, CA

"Art Soup" ARTworksf, San Francisco, CA

Gallery Artists, Circle Elephant Art, Los Angeles. CA

2003

Gallery Artists, Circle Elephant Art, Los Angeles. CA

2002

Gallery Artists, Circle Elephant Art, Los Angeles. CA

2000

"Artrotica Y2K" Oakland Art [dot] Com, Oakland, CA

"One Night Stand" SOMArts Galery, San Francisco, CA

"Year 2000 Exhibition" Galery Route One, Pt. Reyes, CA
1999
"Working from the Figure" at the Arts Benicia Gallery, Benicia, CA
"1999
All Media Exhibition" Beckstand Art Gallery, Palos Verdes Art Center, Palos Verdes, CA
St. John's Religious Art Festival" Goethe Hall, St. John's Lutheran Church, Sacramento, CA
"3-Dimensional Contemporary Exhibition" San Jose Art League, San Jose, CA
1998
"Surrealism and Fantasy" at the ARTwork Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"One Night Stand" at the SOMAR Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Group Show at Mamone Galleries, San Francisco, CA
1997
"Art Hell" at Gallery OBoy, San Francisco, CA
"Skin Deep" at the Bridge Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"Six" Inaugural show at the Belcher Studios Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"Similar Differences" at the SOMAR Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Group show at the Mamone Galleries, San Francisco, CA
"First" Inaugural exhibition at the Todd Kaplan Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
1996
"Artist's Toys" ARTwork Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"Art Hell" ARTwork Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"One Night Stand" ARTwork Gallery, San Francisco, CA
"After Midnight" Tatistcheff/Rogers Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
1995
"New Directions '95" Barrett House Gallery, Hudson River Valley, New York Curator: Mattew Drutt,
Associate Curator of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.
"Love in a Taxing Time" John Thomas Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
1994
Project Art Gallery, Group show, Vancouver, B.C.
1993
"Persistence of the Human Image" Art Space Gallery, Fresno, CA
"Victim(izer)s" John Thomas Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
"The Realm of Surrealism" San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA
"Contemporary Artists of the Nothwest" Boise State University, Boise ID
Oklahoma State University, Group show, Stillwater Oklahoma
"Issues of Color and Gender" Tarleton State University, Stephenville, Texas
1992
"Scene & Unseen" Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, N.M.
John Thomas Gallery Two person show, Santa Monica, CA
The Art Institute of San Diego Group show, San Diego, CA.
School of Bayonne Group show, New York, N.Y.
1991
Art Institute of Southern California, Two person show, Laguna Beach, CA
Religious Art Festival" Santa Monica, CA
Recent Classical Encounters" IMC Gallery, Irvine, CA
1990
"Oppression: 4 Voices" John Thomas Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
"Enigmatic Messages" John Thomas Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
John Thomas Gallery Two person show, Santa Monica, CA

Gallerie Sloan Two person show, Scottsdale, AZ
1989
Artworks Gallery Group show, Riverside, CA
"Art Dealers Invitational" Brand Library, Grendale, CA
John Thomas Gallery Group show, Santa Monica, CA
John Thomas Gallery Group show, Fullerton, CA
1988
Art Institute of San Diego Group Show, San Diego, CA
John Thomas Gallery Group show, Fullerton, CA
G. Lea Gallery Three person show, Orange, CA
1986
"Atlanta Gallery Association Exhibition" Atlanta, GA
New Horizons Gallery Three person show, Atlanta, GA
1985
Art Institute of San Diego Group show, San Diego, CA

Museum Exhibitions

1999
"Small Works" Sonoma Museum of Visual Art, Santa Rosa, CA
"Art Equinox: A Regional Survey of Contemporary Art" Curator: Gregory W. Bell, Associate Curator and
Exhibition Designer at the Tacoma Art Museum, Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, Great Falls, MT
1996
"Angeli" Riverside Art Museum, Group show, Riverside, CA
1994
"New American Talent" Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Group show, Austin, Texas
1993
"Loss and Remembrance" Riverside Art Museum, Group show, Riverside, CA
The Fine Arts Institute of San Bernardino County Museum Group show, Redlands, CA
"Daylight Fantasy, The Night's Dark Side" Riverside Art Museum Group show, Riverside, CA
Crocker Art Museum Group show, Sacramento, CA
1992
The Fine Arts Institute of San Bernardino County Museum Group show, Redlands, CA
1990
"Classic Elements" Group show, Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA.
1989
"Sacred Symbols/New Visions" Group show, Riverside Art Museum, Riverside, CA

Bibliography

ImagineFX -Print (UK) Digital arts issue 55 March 2010
Tatuaz Magazine-Print (Poland) Spring 2010
Abort Magazine -Digital (Canada) Subculture/music/art, issue 14 Dec. 2009
2D Artist Magazine -Digital (UK) Digital arts mostly, December 2009
"Carnivora" The Dark Art of Automobiles Baranybooks/Scapegoat Publishing New York, NY
"Device, Volume I, Fantastic Contraption" Idea and Design Works LLC San Diego, CA
"Gothic Art Now" Collins Designs, New York, NY
"Migrainexpressions" Word Metro Press, San Francisco, CA
"Digital Painters" Rage Publications
Osaka Popstar's "Devil Dog" show (Up coming)