

Sikkema Jenkins & Co. is pleased to present *ANCESTRAL SUPERBLOOM*, a solo exhibition of new work by Jeffrey Gibson. This exhibition features a series of recent multimedia paintings, including large-scale painted elk hides, and a painted bronze sculpture edition. The title refers to the botanical phenomenon of the superbloom, during which a high volume of wildflowers blossom within an area at the same time. Gibson relates this explosive blooming to the vibrant saturation cultivated in his own work, and to the greater contemporary landscape of Indigenous artistic production and representation. *ANCESTRAL SUPERBLOOM* is on view September 6 through October 21, 2023.

This body of work sees Gibson, who is a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and of Cherokee descent, further engaging ideas of cultural and queer identity, authenticity, and artistic referentiality. His practice explores a hybridity of visual languages and creative lineages, challenging mainstream representations of Native American art and underlying essentialist narratives. Traditional methods of patterning, textiles, and beadwork are synthesized with repurposed objects, bold abstraction, and popular literary and musical references, disrupting ideas of Indigenous cultures as singular and fixed in time or place. Addressing the struggles and triumphs of marginalized communities past and present, Gibson's compositions reflects a vision of radical joy, queer affirmation, and collective perseverance.

The paintings on view in *ANCESTRAL SUPERBLOOM* evince the artist's full impulse towards density: of color, pattern, and atmosphere. Rigorous build-ups of surface yields a solidity of presence and a dimensional emphasis on the relationship between fore and background. Gradated shapes overlap and intertwine freely with razor-edged rows of diamonds and checkered plots. Rather than defining negative space, the gaps between these elements become apertures to the underlying layers and alternate interactions of line and form. Clashing color combinations and a gestural series of drips, pours, and scrapes intentionally play with the boundaries of conventional taste and design, thriving in the space between garishness and grandeur.

The painted bronze edition is a composite figure, melding the anthropological imagination with consumer aesthetics. The head, borrowed from a Toby-style mug, bears the stereotypical portrait of a stoic chieftain, complete with a ceremonial headdress; this image is juxtaposed with the caricatured garb of the body, adapted from a mid-century Precious Moments "Native American-style" figurine. The design and function of the bronze sculpture address multiple material and economic histories, underscoring the thorny lineage of American decorative objects and the larger relationship between Native art production and non-Native consumption.

Concurrent with *ANCESTRAL SUPERBLOOM* is the publication of *An Indigenous Present*, a monumental gathering of over sixty Native North American contemporary artists, musicians, writers, performers, and more. Initiated by Jeffrey Gibson, *An Indigenous Present* showcases diverse approaches to Indigenous concepts, forms, and mediums. This landmark volume foregrounds both individual practices and shared histories to present a visual experience centered around ideas of transculturalism and synchrony. *An Indigenous Present* is edited with an introduction by Jeffrey Gibson, texts by Philip J. Deloria, Adam Khalil, Zack Khalil, Kite, Layli Long Soldier, Jarrett Martineau, and Arielle Twist, and interviews with Candice Hopkins and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith. Available for purchase through DelMonico Books.

Jeffrey Gibson (b. 1972, Colorado Springs, CO) received a BFA in Painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1995) and his MFA in Painting from the Royal College of Art, London (1998). His work is currently on view in *Jeffrey Gibson: They Teach Love*, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art WSU, Pullman, WA (2023-24); *Indian Theater: Native Performance, Art, and Self-Determination since 1969*, Hessel Museum of Art, CCS Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2023); and *Jeffrey Gibson: THE SPIRITS ARE LAUGHING*, Aspen Art Museum, CO (2023). Recent major solo presentations include *This Burning World: Jeffrey Gibson*, ICA San Francisco, CA (2022); *Jeffrey Gibson: The Body Electric*, Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN, (2023) SITE Santa Fe, NM (2022); and *Jeffrey Gibson: They Come From Fire*, Portland Art Museum, OR (2022). Gibson has been the recipient of numerous awards, including a 2019 MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and his current artist residency at Bard College.

The Portland Art Museum, OR, and SITE Santa Fe in New Mexico, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, have officially announced that Jeffrey Gibson will represent the United States at La Biennale di Venezia, the 60th International Art Exhibition. Gibson will be the first Indigenous artist to have a solo exhibition at the U.S. Pavilion in the Biennale's 129-year history. The 2024 U.S. Pavilion is co-commissioned by Kathleen Ash-Milby, Curator of Native American Art at the Portland Art Museum and a member of the Navajo Nation, Louis Grachos, Phillips Executive Director of SITE Santa Fe, and Abigail Winograd, independent curator, and is co-curated by Ash-Milby and Winograd. Gibson will activate the interior and exterior of the U.S. Pavilion with a series of new and recent works that invite reflection on individual and collective identities, including sculpture, paintings, multimedia works and a site-specific installation in the pavilion's courtyard.

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UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

LOUIS FRATINO

OCTOBER 27 – DECEMBER 9