

Welancora

Press Release

BLACKHEAD LYRICISM: Carl E. Hazlewood

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 12 4pm to 8pm

March 12- May 7, 2022

33 Herkimer Street

Brooklyn, New York

Masks and appointments are required
to enter the gallery



BlackHead Lyricism “ denotes the presence of an element of Black joy and creativity that persists, even during uncertain political and social times. The word BlackHead, appears in many titles of works I’ve done over the past several years. He is mostly me – and others like me. It’s a non-figurative (signifying) way of animating my abstract art with references to a Black diasporic identity. It also allows generally, for a more nuanced and complex visual expression within contemporary art; a creative form and poetic counter to all the negativity and despair usually associated with historic Black life and experience – particularly in the last few years.”

--- Carl E. Hazlewood, 2022

Welancora is delighted to present *Blackhead Lyricism*, an exhibition of recent work by Guyanese artist Carl E. Hazlewood (b. 1951), a significant figure in the history of abstraction. The exhibition will run from March 12 through May 7, 2022. This is the artist’s first solo exhibition at the gallery.

The presentation will include one large, mixed media wall work assembled on site and inspired in part by the 19th century architectural features in the gallery space. The installation creates a confrontation between form, viewer and environment, which is an ongoing, signature combination in Hazlewood's work.

Steeped in modest materials, such as polyester, push pins, map pins and metallic string, form is foregrounded and the slippage between drawing, painting and sculpture places the work in a space that challenges the conventions of each medium, and forces the viewer to experience form on its own terms. Hazlewood explains, "Like a sculptor, I work to find "shapes" and "volumes", implied or actual. And like painting, the layering becomes an intuitive search for textures, color and form...I define edges, where things begin and end, where they may find relationships and multiple transitions against or into each other. I think of this as "drawing" the accumulation of parts into active and resonant connections. Then those "active" parts are pinned into a final configuration, something that feels properly "evocative" yet stable as plastic form."

Smaller more intimate works that suggestively beckon the viewer to experience content and form will be on view in the back gallery. One of the most exciting in the presentation is called *Small BlackHead Anansi in Space, 2022*, with what appears to be three round polyester swatches and one forming a pointed cylinder. Each swatch is presented in varying shades of yellow, grey, orange, black and red, layered on top and against one another with push pins. They seem to hover over the pictorial space, as if suspended in the cosmos. A profile of the shape-shifting, superhero Anansi the Spider borders the right side of the pictorial space, while the underlying canvas is painted in shades of green, orange and brown as Anansi's web of mesh is held in place with more push pins.

About the Artist

Carl E. Hazlewood, was born in 1951 in Guyana, South America. He received a BFA with honors, from Pratt Institute, and an MA from Hunter College, CUNY. Parallel to his studio practice, Hazelwood co-founded Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art in Newark, NJ in 1983. Recent honors include Fellowships and residencies from The Brown Foundation Fellows Program at the Dora Maar House, (administered by MFAH-The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston), Ménerbes, France, Summer & Winter 2018; The Bogliasco Foundation (Fellow) Liguria Study Center for the Arts & Humanities, Village of Bogliasco, Italy, Fall 2018; NARS Foundation; the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts; Headlands Center for the Arts; Yaddo; Vermont Studio Center; and the MacDowell Colony, among others.

A 2017 'Tree of Life' award grantee, his fifty-two feet painting installation, 'TRAVELER', was commissioned by the Knockdown Center, Maspeth, Queens, in 2017. As a curator and writer, he is the associate editor for NKA: Journal of Contemporary African Art (Duke University), and "The Arts Journal: Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Literature, History, Art and Culture of Guyana and the Caribbean", Georgetown, Guyana. He has written for many other periodicals, including Flash Art International, ART PAPERS Magazine, and NY Arts Magazine. Since 1984, he has organized numerous curatorial projects for a Aljira such as Modern Life (co-curated with Okwui Enwezor). His project on behalf of Aljira, "Current Identities, Recent Painting in the United States," was the U.S. prize-winning presentation at the Bienal Internacional de Pintura, Cuenca, Ecuador, in 1994. It traveled for three years to eleven other countries and museums in Latin America. Hazlewood has organized exhibitions for the Nathan Cummings Foundation, New York; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Hallwalls, New York; Artists Space, New York; P.S. 122 New York; and, co-curated "Aljira at 30, Dreams and Reality' for the New Jersey State Museum, Trenton (2014), among other venues. He has lectured in Art History at New Jersey City University, and was visiting artist/critic at various institutions, most recently, Ithaca College (2021), and Pratt Institute (2019). He's written catalogues for The Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois; The Cress Gallery of Art, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; The Ben Shahn Center, William Paterson University, NJ; The New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, NJ, the Samuel Dorsky Museum book/catalogue, "Andrew Lyght - FULL CIRCLE" (2016), and Terry Adkins: RECITAL', Tang Museum, Skidmore University (2017), Saratoga, NY and others.

Hazlewood's work has been seen in the EA/B, NADA, PRIZM, Volta, and Scope Art Fairs and June Kelly Gallery. BOMB Magazine, Hyperallergic, and the NY Times are among publications that have written about the artist. He was curatorial adviser for BRIC's project: 'The BRIC Biennial, Volume Two', Brooklyn, NY, Fall 2016. Currently, Hazlewood is in a long-term residency at ART CAKE in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

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Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Caption and Courtesy Information:

Small BlackHead Anansi, 2022, polyester, plastic mesh, acrylic, canvas, pigment ink, Hahnemuhle and other papers, oil pastel, map pins, push pins, metallic cord, 20 x 20 inches 50.8 x 50.8 cm

© Carl E. Hazlewood

Courtesy the artist and Welancora Gallery

Photo: Adam Reich