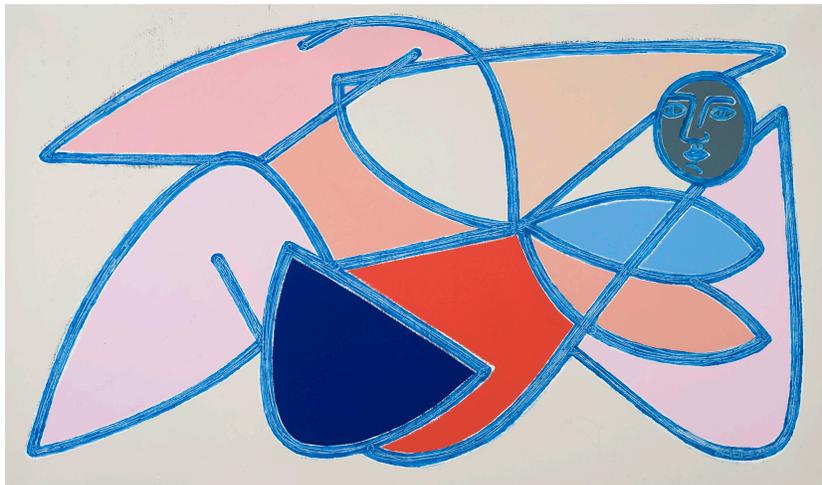


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A Full Course Meal

A Conversation With America Martin



America Martin. "Butterfly Woman" Oil & Acrylic on Canvas 45.75" x 76".

JA: What are some of the strongest influences on your work?

AM: Everything under the sun, you know like being alive &
The composer I'm listening to (currently Glen Gould),
The audio books I'm enthralled with
The bold shapes of David Park
The soft lines of Henry Matisse
The whimsy of Pablo Picasso
The romantic howl of Thomas Houseago
The composition of Romare Bearden
And on and on

JA: In your studio practice, how do you begin each new day? When starting and working on a new body of work, what are some of your considerations?

AM: I begin each day in the brief deliberation on whether to make coffee or Green tea, then the rest is easy. I just start moving - either finishing a piece / varnishing a work / putting up canvas / carrying buckets / lifting heavy things - just the usual. When starting a new body of work...Well I think of many things, but a new practice

I look forward to doing is choosing a very slender, all same color palette, and in those constraints find a full course meal - metaphorically speaking of course.

JA: How has working in such a vast array of mediums affected your practice? Which medium do you enjoy working with the most?

AM: I believe one must continually change the medium - At least I must. Ideas come and you think, well what if I painted on _____ ? Fill in the blank. Would it satisfy? Most of the time it does not (which is disappointing), and some if the time it does satisfy (which is a happy thing), but the problem with being an artist with a voracious aesthetic appetite is as soon as one thing works, I am dreaming of something new.

JA: How would you describe the space which women occupy in your work?

AM: The female form in my work is my terra ferma and the blue tent of the sky - I am almost bonkers -ly always made happy with capturing a nose, the angle of a hip - deciding to give a foot five or six toes. I started life drawing classes when I was a kid and the female form was a constant - the beauty of that landscape I am never bored by.

JA: Various animals such as birds, rabbits, and snakes often inhabit your work, frequently in composition with the female form, could you talk a little about their significance?

AM: Animals in my work help create the narrative i have in my mind when I'm making a piece. If it's a rabbit it can mean the woman is so chill that rabbits are willing to frolic about her. If it's a snake it can mean the woman is strong and able and is at cause over the wild ways of nature - or it just is compositionally nice to put a zig zag shape of a snake in the piece.

JA: Do you feel that your focus or interest has shifted over the years in terms of subject, or is it more of a continuity?

AM: When you do anything for many years - the process changes on you - and this is a blessing and can feel terrible and awkward when it happens but is needed - because it demands your focus to bend - allowing you to see new ways of seeing and making - and because the subject is essentially the same - it makes for an interesting look back over the years.

JA: The worlds that your work creates feel very warm and welcoming, do you have a certain feeling you wish to pass on to the viewer, or particular emotions in mind when making your work?

AM: That's cool to hear, thank you. Not to sound like a Pollyanna, but I find this life a very joyful thing - although I am well aware of the world and life's shadows and general lameness, I tend to focus on the positive. My intention is to create work that feels the way I feel when I see something Un-embarrassed and true - like a big foot or flowers - or hear the horn solo of Eric Dolphy. I know my tastes are simple and so I make what I'd like to see - the fact that I get to share what I make, that it becomes a communication between the work and the collector, well that's just the cat's pajamas, the bees knees and every other wonderful thing.