

Gabrielle Brown

Gabrielle Brown is a visual artist and a multifaceted creator who is constantly seeking new ways to tell stories through her paintings and sculptures. What she creates reflects her views on the human condition and the relationship we have with ourselves, our companions, nature and God. She has shown her work at Art Basel Miami and is showing work in galleries both in Montreal and the United States.

Gabrielle utilizes many folk art materials including wood and various paints. Her work retains a 'naive' quality and often meshes between painting and sculpture. She sheds light on how we suffer as humans but contrasts the subjects with uplifting symbols, actions and words.

"I am definitely a strong believer in a universal creative force that exists in me and in all living things. For me it shines through my spirit and whenever I create I feel that I am a vessel for something much greater and that it is working through me. It is fascinating to think that the oneness, the roots of creation and the essence of love that exists in all living forms is what leads me through what I create."



Be still for the wind of the spirit is moving casting out what does not bear fruit and keeping what gives life, 2020

JC: An issue most artists are conflicting with today is online presence. As one of these artists, I'm slowly figuring my relationship to the online platform. But I am concerned, mostly for the way the art is being looked at. When you share your work online, do you feel there is a loss of impact?

GB: I think that there are many ways of looking at it, on one hand sharing your work through social media opens you up to people that may never have the opportunity to see your work. Even though it is seen and experienced through a device there is still opportunity to feel what is being said in the work, and in my opinion the energy will always transcend even if its not in person. On the other hand I do agree with you and I feel that it is very easy for art to be under appreciated and that is partially because of how fast pace social media is. Often art is looked at too quickly, I feel that it's rare for someone to take time with a piece of art since they are looking at it through their screen. Also it's tricky for me because most of my work is very detailed and its hard to fully capture that detail in a photograph and have it move people the same way that it would in person. So ya, it definitely goes both ways for me, there is gain and loss in sharing art online.

JC: To further that question, which aspects would you improve about the online space if everyone in the world is getting their artwork from phone or computer screens?

GB: If I was going to improve the way that we view art online I would like to see artists have the ability to create their own virtual exhibit where they could design the space themselves and upload their artwork in whichever way they wish to do it as they would in real life. I feel it would be great to enhance the virtual experience of how we look at art and give people a more realistic and memorable experience. Also I think for the artist it would bring their work to a whole new level which is exciting and it would definitely be something I would do.

ocean mother takes care of all her children, 2020.



JC: At a glance, I would consider your work as contemporary folk art. Your narrative, your stories become the soul of your work. Whether they are real, dreamed, or imagined each piece becomes a storybook, where do you personally see narrative in your work?

GB: Well I would say because the narrative in my work comes from my spirit it is hard to pinpoint where I see it. I feel that each piece in its entirety has a story from beginning to end. So sometimes if I start with a landscape there is a story being told in that landscape even before I place any subjects over it. But I will add that when I do add subjects the narrative becomes stronger as I am putting a piece of myself into the work and it becomes like a big mirror reflecting back at me.

JC: There's a theme of this higher power in your work. Most artists have different definitions of where the creative force comes from, where does it come from for you?

GB: I really like this question, I am definitely a strong believer in a universal creative force that exists in me and in all living things. For me it shines through my spirit and whenever I create I feel that I am a vessel for something much greater and that it is working through me. It is fascinating to think that the oneness, the roots of creation and the essence of love that exists in all living forms is what leads me through what I create. It is so special and I hold that close to my heart

JC: Most of your narratives in the works take place in a certain environment. Dali, amongst the other surrealists, often used this void or liminal space for scenes to take place. What does this utopian space of hills or rivers have to do with the stories told within them?

GB: The landscape where the subjects dance upon set a tone and a feeling for what is to take place. It creates an energy that balances out whatever the subjects are doing and to me it is crucial for creating emotion and movement in a piece.



we must accept one another's truth in order to be collectively free, 2020



By the skin of the scorpion I shall rise like the sun to holy ground, 2020

JC: What does it mean to define yourself as a naive artist?

GB: For me being a naive artist is to make work in a very free and loose way. It is about embracing a childlike approach in the way that forms are played with and in the way that you tackle subjects. Over time I have realized that the more I make art from my inner child the more stoked I am during the process and also it leaves me very satisfied with the outcome.

JC: Artists seem to always vary their messages. Some messages are completely outward and others directly a self-reflection. So, lastly, as an up and coming contemporary artist, what is your mission to your audience? And with that, do you feel like the work you are making is answering this question? Why or why not?

GB: My mission to my audience is to be as honest as I can with myself because when I am present and listening to my spirit it reflects in my work and that is essentially what my viewer connects to. The stories in my work are my way of reaching out in hopes that it will speak truth to someone and that they can interpret it to suit their life and get what they need from it. I think the more real I am with myself, the more I let go of who I think I am and what I should be doing the more capable I am in creating work that speaks to my audience. I feel that everyday I am faced with this question and as with life itself all I can do is try my best. So, I can't fully say that what I make is answering that question as it is always a yin and yang thing and there is always a battle with the ego and the higher power within. It is something I will never fully know, but what I do know is that I can strive for the truth within me and to keep my ego in check so that my spirit can speak clearly in my work.

Thank you to Gabrielle, and to the readers.

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