

'WHITE GIRL' BY MILLIE WILSON, b. 1948 Arkansas Lynne Hobbs Nov. 2016



Wilson describes her work as Modernist art, with references to surrealism and minimalism. She is interested in visual and language-based artworks that disrupt generally-believed cultural history. Her work is very contemporary in that it is irreverent and sensationalistic and directly related to 'queer' humor. She challenges assumptions about class, gender, race, and power relationships.

This piece was gifted to Palm Springs Art Museum in 2014.

White Girl represents a huge-scale fetish wig, one of three that were commissioned in 1995 for SITE/Sante Fe, the first biennial of contemporary art in the U.S. All of the materials used in the mixed-media construction are deliberately fake: synthetic hair, fabric and objects found in thrift stores that decorate the hat. The elaborate hairstyle reflects a traditional Native American hairstyle of the 'two-spirit' person which is a tribal designation for individuals who feel that they embody both masculine and feminine characteristics. There is also a clear reference to the artifice of European aristocratic fashion and that era's political revolutions (think Marie Antoinette), which is believed to be a direct reminder of shifts in power relations.

Sources:

<http://arttattler.com/archiveblondbeauty.html>

PSAM Catalogue

Wikipedia

*Art in America*, September 1994

Daniell Cornell