

The Green Gallery

Gaylen Gerber

November 1 – December 14, 2014



Gaylen Gerber, *Support*, n.d., oil paint on *A-mantsho-na-tshol* or *Inap* (snake headdress), Baga, Nalu, Landuma, Pakur, or Bulunits Guinea, 20th century, wood, pigment, stand, 80 x 20 x 20 inches

The Green Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition by Gaylen Gerber.

Gerber's practice has long focused on the normative aspects of visual language: the way we, as part of a shared culture, accept certain forms, colors and situations as institutional, or we take them for granted as impartial common ground. These visual norms act as grounds for all other forms of expression and we use them to register difference and create meaning.

Gerber's work often acts as the contextual ground for the expression of other artists. In this exhibition, Gerber continues to examine the role of the contextual ground in the interpretation of art and to foreground the background or context as an expressive element itself. In some instances, Gerber's work is used as the ground for other artists' expression and in turn, he also uses other artists' work as a normative ground against which his, and by inference, our own expressions can be recognized.

As a result, everything in the exhibition is acknowledged as alternately both support and expression. This overt conflation of roles directly confronts the permeability between these distinctions and it is precisely the shifting relationships between characterizations that is central to understanding Gerber's *Supports*.

Gerber's *Supports* in this exhibition acknowledge the process of art coming from art with the artist's expression being as much action as object. While Gerber's work is attentive to the qualities of each object as well as the gesture of representing them as art, his attitude towards existing objects differs from most artistic uses of readymades. The objects in Gerber's *Supports* are not simply repurposed or copied; rather Gerber's *Supports* are fundamentally normative works of art. They belong to the realist tradition in art that is inclined towards accepting the world as it literally is and deals with it accordingly. They might even be seen as part of the tradition of *trompe-l'oeil*, but Gerber's imposition of the ground onto the object fundamentally amends our understanding of the original object so that his *Supports* reflect a multiplicity of perceptions, among them the recognition that seeing is often synonymous with obscuring. For example, the traditional patina that helps define the Lobi bench has been replaced by an alternate one in Gerber's *Support*. The associations of this patina are explicit in the history of the monochrome and other aspects of the bench become apparent. The implications are existential and paradoxical: the everyday is reaffirmed, yet given its transitory quality, the significance of pursuing that repetition seems tenuous and sometimes absurd.

Gerber has exhibited widely including recent projects at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Kunstverein Ruhr, Essen; and The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago. This is his third exhibition with The Green Gallery.

For further information contact John Riepenhoff at john@thegreengallery.biz or call 414-226-1978. <http://www.thegreengallery.biz>

The Green Gallery, 1500 N Farwell Ave, Milwaukee WI, 53202