

The Green Gallery

Gaylen Gerber

November 1 – December 14, 2014



Gaylen Gerber

Support, n.d.

Oil paint on bench, Lobi, Ivory Coast, Africa, 20th century, wood
48 x 20 x 9 inches

Chairs with three legs are made exclusively for use by men and are most often used by elders (chairs with four legs are made exclusively for use by women). The chairs are carved from a single piece of wood and over time with use the pieces acquire a patina that is highly valued. The chairs are often passed down from generation to generation of the same family. Sitting close to the ground, with an arching back, this chair would have been revered for its age, and its ability to support and serve as a seat for wisdom.



Gaylen Gerber

Support, n.d.

Oil paint on *Support/Giotto's Dream, for Gaylen*, Gaylen Gerber with Jeni Spota, 2007
14 x 12 x 1½ inches

Spota's paintings from the *Giotto's Dream* series depict her interpretation of scenes from the 1971 film *The Decameron* by Italian director Pier Paolo Pasolini. Spota illustrates the vision of the main character, Giotto, which evokes the spiritual iconography of the Renaissance with Giotto's vision serving as the driving influence for Spota's own vision. Various expressive relationships among the figures of Spota's paintings make each painting feel almost impenetrably dense while the repeated iconic imagery of Giotto's dream ties each painting to mysticism. The density of Spota's paint application also turns each image into a personal object of veneration.



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 serpent was originally used as a headdress that represented the spirit *A Mantsho-na-Tshol* or *Inap*. With the help of a supporting framework, the towering polychrome decorated headdress is held on the shoulders of a dancer who is concealed beneath a raffia skirt. The dancer moves rapidly among onlookers, shaking and twirling around to create confusion and agitation during the performance. Although the ultimate uses of the headdresses are uncertain, it's believed that it is used in protecting male initiates at circumcision; it is also used during droughts as well as appearing at funerals in groups as a male and female pair. It is thought that the serpent itself symbolizes reconciliation between opposites, between the aquatic world and the jungle, between east and west, or between the two halves of the village.

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

