

James Fuentes is pleased to present a solo exhibition of Purvis Young, concurrent to a solo presentation at Salon 94 Freemans. The exhibition will include works in various media including assemblage, painting, drawing, and paintings on found objects made between 1983-1991.

Purvis Young (1943–2010) was an artist from the inner-city Miami neighborhood of Overtown. Described variously as a storyteller, an Urban Expressionist, and a self-taught artist, his works blend collage and painting, making use of found materials and household objects, often referencing his experiences living in the south. Having always made drawings, Young began making paintings in the 1960s. Witness to the context of the Vietnam War and the spirit of large-scale protest against it, he painted populated scenes on scraps of wood gathered from the city's streets and vacant lots. Young considered his art-making a means of protest. He attached his panels to the fronts of abandoned buildings, and around 1972, having learned of the murals created by artists in Detroit and Chicago, he started the large-scale outdoor project known as Goodbread Alley, filled with innumerable paintings.

Much of Young's prolific output contains literal depictions of his surroundings (figures in action, or the city in a state of deterioration), yet he also drew from a much vaster, sometimes imagined realm of imagery. Over time certain motifs frequently recurred, oftentimes repeatedly within a single work—pregnant women, trucks, horses, warriors, eyes, angels, slaves, boat people, prisoners. Young was also ecologically concerned, a major reason for his recycling of discarded and found materials—including plastic bottles, boxes, receipts, lumber, even television sets—well before such a tendency became popular in the mainstream of contemporary art. In his own words, "When the world quiets down, I'll quiet down."

The exhibition is drawn mainly from the Sacks Family Collection. Selig Sacks was first introduced to the work of Purvis Young in 1985. In 1987 Sacks and Barbara Gilman helped to organize Purvis Young's first solo show in New York at the Ricco/Maresca Gallery. Recently Sacks established the Purvis Young Study Center at the Lighthouse ArtCenter in South Florida. Young is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the American Folk Art Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Smithsonian's Corcoran Gallery of Art, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the High Museum of Art, among others. In 2018 The Block Museum mounted a solo exhibition for Purvis Young, and more recently Young was featured in *History Refused to Die* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Young is currently featured in a significant solo exhibition at the Rubell Family Collection in Miami, and in May ICA Miami will feature his drawings in a solo show.

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