

:: GRANT WAHLQUIST GALLERY

Nyeema Morgan: horror horror

11/2/18 – 1/12/19

Grant Wahlquist Gallery is pleased to present “horror horror,” an exhibition by Nyeema Morgan. The exhibition will run from November 2, 2018 through January 12, 2019, with an opening reception on Friday, November 2 from 5 – 8 pm.

“Suffering is the corporeal imprint of society and the object upon human consciousness: ‘The need to let suffering speak is a condition of all truth. For suffering is objectivity that weighs upon the subject ...’ (Lambert Zuidervaart, quoting Theodor Adorno, Negative Dialectics, ND 17–18)

Political violence, the extra-ordinary assertions of common people and the productive/reproductive hand of the artist are the subject matters that concern us in this eclectic group of artworks by multidisciplinary artist Nyeema Morgan. Human suffering is real and it is an epistemological necessity to acknowledge suffering if we are to know truth. The aesthetics of the non-identical are an unscripted interaction between differing aesthetic patterns and classifications, arranged into “constellations” around subject matter. This arranging or rearranging of logically derived forms, expressively malleable gestures and memetic legibility unlocks the historical structures that limit the identity of objectified human beings to the boundaries proscribed by classification.

In Morgan’s exhibition “horror horror” membership within identical sets and near-identical series offer objects—and objectified human beings—an opportunity to express identity in spite of the limitations of object-hood. Identity first occurs to us in our thoughts (“all X are X”); societal exchanges then force us to impose identity onto objects (“any barrel of X is worth any 12 bushels of Y”). We then find identities for ourselves by analogy with objects as deficits, credits and assets to our communities. In all these cases, identity unifies, but it also suppresses the diversities and differences that make beings, thoughts, subjects and objects real.

These prints, drawings and sculptures are parts within identical sets and near identical series. These sets and series are families that individual works simultaneously belong to and vanish beneath. To think is to identify, and the semblance of identity always exists within thought itself, even in its attempt to identify truth. Identity is overcome by testing its heterogeneous object against the unity of our conception of it. This collision forces thought to surpass itself and forces us to acknowledge our consciousness of our own nonidentity.

Minute, representational rendering in multiple mediums and materials collides with a discursive, meta-critical treatment of subject and relationship in each group of permutations. The difference between pictorial and discursive representation—like the difference between analog and digital representation—is a function of “off” and “on.” Analog representations present continuously variable properties like minutely modulated shading, carefully modeled contours, and subtly shifting hues. Digital representation on the other hand, is discrete; a

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drawing either is or is not a copy of such and such a book. In Morgan's work there is no ambiguity about the subject matter of her representations: they are not "more or less" representations of a given object.

These objects are hybrid representations: pre-labeled but not pre-interpreted, symbol-filled arrays, arranged into larger and larger arrays rhizomatically relating back upon identity and non-identity. We are constructed as objects of social use with no possible existence outside of a social existence. We were ultimately "made for each other." Our objectivity can never be eliminated or replaced entirely by subjectivity, but object-hood is an historical, provisional and relational phenomenon. As such it can and will change. Even in our object-hood we can never be fully known, but we can and should be fully honored in our difference and non-identity.

"horror horror" is an exhibition defined by antagonisms, identifications, reproductions and technical masteries. Exposing these antagonisms points us towards their resolution and a thoughtful relationship between subject-matter, object-matter and concept.

- Mike Cloud, painter and Associate Professor at the School of the Art Institute Chicago

Nyeema Morgan earned a B.F.A. from the Cooper Union School of Art, New York and an M.F.A. from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco. Morgan's solo exhibitions include the Staniar Gallery at Washington & Lee University, Lexington, Virginia; the Rotunda Gallery/BRIC Arts Media Bklyn, Brooklyn; The Bindery Projects, St. Paul, Minnesota; and Art in General, New York. Her work has been shown in group exhibitions at The Drawing Center, New York; the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine; the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Grant Wahlquist Gallery and Galerie Jeanroch Dard, Paris. Morgan's work is in the collections of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Maine, and the Menil Collection, Houston (in collaboration with William Cordova and Otabenga Jones and Associates). She has participated in residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture; Shandanken Projects at Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, New York; the Lower East Side Print Shop, New York; The Drawing Center; and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace Program. She is a recipient of a Painters and Sculptors grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation and an Art Matters grant.

The gallery is located at 30 City Center, Portland, Maine. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11 am to 6 pm, and by appointment. **Please note the gallery will be open by appointment only November 21 – 24 and December 26 – January 5.** For more information, visit <http://grantwahlquist.com>, call 207.245.5732, or email info@grantwahlquist.com.