

JENNIFER LAUREN

GALLERY

Thoughts and Utterances: Threading together the narrative of life

20 Arlington Way, London, EC1R 1UY
25 – 28 October 2018



Building on the success of its last three exhibitions, the fourth **Jennifer Lauren Gallery** offering features three artists from across the world, all sharing their memories in an explosion of colour, line and form – **Ben Wilson**, known as the chewing gum man, from the UK; **Garrol Gayden** from LAND Gallery in New York and **Robert Fischer** from Geyso20 in Germany. With two artists working out of supported art studios, and one artist working to his own rules, this diverse exhibition draws on the Gallery Director's interest in text within artwork, its legibility and its purpose. Director Jennifer Gilbert said:

"Ever since my degree I have been interested in how text is used within artwork, and whether messages are subtly or openly made through this medium. Within my own artwork, text has played an important part, highlighting the unspeakable in suggestive but not overly obvious ways. These three artists use text and symbols in varying ways to either explain or narrate their ideas, or in Robert Fischer's case we, as the audience, are left to make our own decisions on what his symbols and letters are perhaps meant to illustrate."

The Jennifer Lauren Gallery is excited to bring these three artists together, two of which are being shown in the UK for the first time, enabling audiences the opportunity to explore the narratives within the artworks from their own personal viewpoint. Each

Contact: Jennifer Gilbert, info@jenniferlaurengallery.com, +44(0)7890 075 890

JENNIFER LAUREN

GALLERY

artist's own unique line quality, layering of mediums and use of colour, has its own story to tell.

Ben Wilson (b.1963) is an English wood carver creating huge wooden sculptures both in his garden in London and also in Finland, Australia and the USA. However, he is better known as the chewing gum man, where, since 1998, he has created tiny works of art painted onto chewing gum that he finds on the pavement. Initially, these pieces brought him unwanted attention from the police, but because he is not defacing private property and merely painting discarded rubbish, he was found to not be breaking the law. He continues this form of art to this day, having created over 10,000 paintings here and in Europe, with the majority in Muswell Hill in London, near where he lives.

To create the chewing gum paintings Wilson first heats the chewing gum with a small blowtorch, then coats the gum with three layers of acrylic enamel. He uses special acrylic paints, finishing each with a clear lacquer seal. His subject matter ranges from animals and portraits; to random ideas that pop into his head; to requests from the public specifying something they might like. No payment is taken for these. Although Wilson attended art school, he did not like the overanalysing from the tutors and so dropped out and has been creating work ever since, powered by his own passion and drive.

LAND Gallery's **Garrol Gayden** (b.1960) creates work that focuses on drawings based on New York City's seaside amusement park Coney Island. The Brooklyn based artist first visited Coney Island at the age of seven, and, since starting at LAND Gallery in 2005, Gayden has remained pre-occupied with this trip and his ride on the park's 'Spook-a-Rama'. He lays out old photographs of this ride on the desk in the LAND Gallery studio, where he works each day. Garrol has said of his work and the ride,

"I want to tell him, Big Gregory, my brother, how much I could draw right here. Wahoo wahay. I like to draw Spook-A-Rama, Laurel and Hardy, Hardy and Laurel. I could draw and I could draw. I am a good artist, there is nothing ain't wrong with his hands. That's right. I am not nervous and tense anymore. I see them up there everyday day, Laurel and Hardy, Hardy and Laurel. It happens all the time. Spook-A-Rama is a famous ride, I didn't want to ride it in the first place, you know what I mean."

From the age of five, Gayden was fixated by the television and drew not only the characters from popular TV shows, but layered this with the letters and words he saw on the screen too. The use of text interwoven with figurative drawings remains the signature look of his artworks to this day. His self-taught abilities and densely saturated layered compositions are truly mesmerising. Gayden is a very talkative man, chatting about his work whilst drawing (both to himself and to others) and these phrases often become incorporated into his artworks.

In contrast **Robert Fischer** (b.1976) who attends Geyso20 in Germany, is unable to communicate about his artwork, leaving the centre, and the audiences viewing his work, to make their own judgments. Since 2004, Fischer has attended the art studio two days

Contact: Jennifer Gilbert, info@jenniferlaurengallery.com, +44(0)7890 075 890

JENNIFER LAUREN

GALLERY

a week, taking several weeks and sometimes months to complete one piece. Again this is in stark contrast to Gayden who creates a drawing every week and UK based Ben Wilson who completes several small paintings a day on chewing gum.

Fischer works in a combination of pencil, crayon and felt pen. It is said that he begins his drawings with a graphic framework that reminds audiences of houses, building plans or machines. He then covers his artworks with lines, letters, and symbols, with several of the letters appearing seemingly backwards on the paper. As with Gayden, his work changes with the layers that are added and lots of the initial structures in Fischer's work disappear under opaque or heavy darker layers.

Listings Information

Dates: 25–28 October 2018

Pop-up Venue: 20, Arlington Way, Islington, London, EC1R 1UY

Launch Night: 25 October 2018, 6–8:30pm

Opening times: Friday – Saturday 12–5pm, Sunday 12–4pm

FREE entrance

With thanks to Sophia Cosmadopoulos from LAND Gallery, Rachel Cohen from NAP Projects and Nina Roskamp from Geyso20 for their help in liaising with the artists for this exhibition.

Image by Ben Wilson, showing the scale of his chewing gum works

About Jennifer Lauren Gallery

The aim of the Jennifer Lauren Gallery is to champion and exhibit self-taught and overlooked artists who create works outside the mainstream art world and art history. It aims to showcase undiscovered talents, as well as internationally recognised artists commonly seen as Outsider Artists, whose authentic, raw and honest work speaks for itself. Jennifer Lauren Gallery holds pop-up exhibitions across the year – check the exhibitions section of the website for further details. <http://www.jenniferlaurengallery.com>

LAND Gallery is a day programme for adults with developmental disabilities based in Brooklyn, New York. LAND nurtures the talents of participating artists, while integrating individuals into the community as professional artists. <https://landgallery.org/>

Geyso20 people is a centre in Germany where artists with disabilities have the freedom to work independently to develop their own artistic language. <http://geyso20.de/>

Contact: Jennifer Gilbert, info@jenniferlaurengallery.com, +44(0)7890 075 890