

Stephen Friedman Gallery

**Jeffrey Gibson:
DREAMING OF HOW IT'S
MEANT TO BE**

**5-6 Cork Street
London
W1S 3LQ**

Friday 19 January –
Saturday 24 February 2024

Private view:
Thursday 18 January, 6-8pm

Gallery hours:
Tuesday–Friday, 10am–6pm
Saturday 11am–5pm



Stephen Friedman Gallery is pleased to present *DREAMING OF HOW IT'S MEANT TO BE*, a new UK solo exhibition by Jeffrey Gibson.

Gibson (b.1972, Colorado, USA) fuses his Choctaw-Cherokee heritage with references that span club culture, queer theory, fashion, politics, literature and art history. The exhibition showcases an ambitious new body of work including large-scale multi-media works, sculptures, punching bags and paintings on paper. In April 2024 Gibson will be the first Indigenous artist to represent the United States with a solo pavilion at the 60th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia.

The artist's first exhibition at the gallery celebrates the breadth of his multi-faceted practice, which is characterised by vibrant colour and pattern. Gibson is renowned for his use of geometric abstraction, inspired by North American Indigenous aesthetics and craft. Combining artisanal beadwork, leatherwork and quilting with narratives of contemporary resistance, the artist harnesses the power of material to activate overlooked narratives, while embracing the presence of historically marginalised identities.

Gibson's new hyper-visible mixed media works, on view for the first time, introduce a more expressive form of mark making than has been seen in the artist's painting to date. Sweeping gestural strokes, some of which are made with Gibson's own hands, counter the hard-edge graphic shapes that comprise each undulating pattern. Gibson's layering of these elements invites the gestural marks to permeate the foreground, allowing viewers to experience the archaeology of each painting, a technique that is mirrored in the patterning and beadwork of the two new punching bags featured in the exhibition.

Vintage objects extend the surface of the multi-media works, continuing Gibson's interest in the intersection of aesthetic histories and questions of authorship. In *I FEEL REAL WHEN YOU HOLD ME* (2024), Gibson incorporates a vintage belt buckle and pinback button into his composition and selected text. Collected intuitively by the artist, the texts in this body of work focus on humanity and peaceful action as well as the vast complexity of love.

Gibson also incorporates text in his own version of Victorian era Native-made objects, which were originally created to appeal to the taste and aesthetics of the period. By embracing these objects that were once viewed as kitsch, Gibson acknowledges their significance and contemporary resonance. *I NEED TO BE IN YOUR ARMS* (2024) is portal-like, adorned with beaded forms depicting faces and snakes, selected for their symbolism of undetermined identities, transformation and healing.

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Contact Us

For press enquiries please contact:
press@stephenfriedman.com

For sales enquiries please contact:
sales@stephenfriedman.com

For further details please contact:
info@stephenfriedman.com

Social Media

Facebook:
Stephen-Friedman-Gallery

Instagram:
@stephenfriedmangallery

Twitter/X:
@SFGalleryLondon

Two towering, beaded sculptures continue Gibson's exploration of figurative representation employing materials generally used in the creation of dance regalia by Indigenous people through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Using thousands of stacked bone pipes, Gibson creates forms that are intentionally indeterminate. These figures do not signal any specific culture or aesthetic and, like his previous works, are seen by the artist as proposals for future, hybrid identities.

Speaking about *DREAMING OF HOW IT'S MEANT TO BE*, Gibson says, "Dreaming can often seem like a privilege. Through our dreams, we're able to envision a different reality, and that's an idea that I've approached with this body of work and by incorporating vintage objects—like a form of dreaming, Indigenous design employs symbol, in addition to abstraction, as a strategy to visualise what happens next. In challenging times, dreams are our ability to imagine in a way that's not compromised."

Notes to editors

Jeffrey Gibson

Gibson was born in 1972, Colorado, USA and he currently lives and works in New York's Hudson Valley.

In February 2024, Gibson's solo exhibition opens at the Sainsbury Centre in Norwich, UK. 'Unravel', a group exhibition featuring Gibson at the Barbican Centre, London, UK, opens in the same month. The artist currently has a major solo exhibition at Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, US. Gibson will represent the United States in the 2024 Venice Biennale, opening to the public on 20 April.

Recent solo exhibitions include 'THE SPIRITS ARE LAUGHING', Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2022); 'This Burning World', Institute of Contemporary Art, San Francisco, California (2022); 'The Body Electric', SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico (2022), 'Jeffrey Gibson: They Come From Fire,' Portland Art Museum, 2022, and Frist Art Museum, Nashville (2023) in the United States.

The artist features in collections around the world including Denver Art Museum, Colorado; Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, Indiana; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts; The Museum of Modern Art, New York City, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Canada; Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington; Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Gibson has been recognised with numerous awards, including a 2019 MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, and he is currently an artist-in-residence at Bard College. Gibson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1995 and his Master of Arts in painting from the Royal College of Art, London, in 1998.

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Stephen Friedman Gallery is a contemporary art gallery that was founded in 1995 with a focus on representing exceptional artists from around the world. Since its inauguration, the gallery has been based in Mayfair, London. In October 2023, the gallery expanded and relocated to Cork Street. In November 2023, the gallery opened its first location outside the UK at 54 Franklin Street in Tribeca, New York.