



Paintings by Taylor White: A Stream of Consciousness Made Visible

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by Mary Gregory

Taylor Anton White's solo show in Bellport, Long Island began as an Instagram sighting. MARQUEE PROJECTS gallery director Mark Van Wagner noticed White's artwork online and decided to make a purchase. After a second art purchase, Van Wagner knew he had found an artist worth representing. The Virginia-based artist's second solo show with the Long Island gallery, "1991 Plymouth Voyager, Like New," opened on July 28 and runs through August 26, 2018. Afterwards, his art becomes part of a group show [G Gallery](#) in Seoul. His work then travels to Berlin for a solo show at [Galerie Kremers](#) from September 26 to October 28, 2018.

"In 2016, I noticed his work on a social media art site," Van Wagner said in a recent telephone interview. "So I went ahead and bought a piece, and when it arrived I was so thrilled. It was so much better in person than what I'd seen online. So, I bought another one ... I knew Taylor was one artist I wanted to snag."



"Mom Combs My Hair, Mom Buys Me Rustlers" by Taylor A. White, 2018. Acrylic, oil, charcoal, spray paint, airbrush, stitching on canvas, 61 x 65 inches. Photo by Mark Van Wagner. Courtesy MARQUEE PROJECTS.

[Taylor Anton White's](#) work is a perfect fit for [MARQUEE PROJECTS](#), Van Wagner said, because he and his wife, co-director Tonja Pulfer, are committed to finding and nurturing talented, emerging artists. "I love the underdog. I want the person who doesn't have the resume. I don't care about Yale. I don't care about Harvard. I don't care about Instagram. I just want to show good work."



Installation view of "1991 Plymouth Voyager, Like New" at MARQUEE PROJECTS. Photo by Mark Van Wagner. Courtesy MARQUEE PROJECTS.

White's idiosyncratic, humorous, dense and layered multimedia paintings were a perfect fit aesthetically for [the gallery](#) as well. "I love exploration of materials, and he exemplifies that," Van Wagner said. "He's sewing and repurposing old artworks into new works. He's got elements of collage. He's got spray paint. He's got garbage. He's got every sort of element that you could imagine."

Characterizing White's work as a stream of consciousness made visible, the gallerist noted that the artist has "this beginner's mindset, this very fresh way of looking and approaching a canvas anew each time."



"Steamy Steamy You Got It" by Taylor A. White, 2017. Acrylic, oil, charcoal, spray paint, fabric, stitching on canvas, 46 x 42 in. Photo by Mark Van Wagner. Courtesy MARQUEE PROJECTS.

That freshness may very well spring from the artist's approach to making paintings. Everything is fair game and White finds spontaneous inspiration all around him.

"Sometimes I can overhear a conversation or see a segment of an image that I'm interested in and that becomes a catalyst," White said in a telephone interview from Berlin. "That causes the other dominoes to fall ... I'm not necessarily referencing some external source, or place, or person, or memory. Sometimes they start with that, and then I allow myself to just wander off and get lost. I look at a painting as a record of that."

"I'm attracted to images that are confusing to me, and I'm interested in making images that are confusing to people," he continued. "A device that I commonly use, to do that, is to use very happy, fun, joyous, enthusiastic looking colors jammed against very violent marks, or marks rendered in a very violent manner. I like how those two seem to clash with each other. An image that feels like it rests right on the edge of something that's both lethally serious and completely absurd; that's right where I want all of my work to sit."



"Two Bit Sparkle Master" by Taylor A. White, 2017. Acrylic, oil, charcoal, spray paint, airbrush, stitching on canvas, 88 x 66 inches. Photo by Mark Van Wagner. Courtesy MARQUEE PROJECTS.

White likes to up the ante by putting rules and restrictions in place as part of his art making practice. “I’m fairly conservative with the use of art materials. I don’t mean that from some kind of environmental consciousness ... I’m interested in using that as a restrictive device,” he said. “For instance, what is in this room around me? Let’s grab some things, maybe containers of paint and broken pencils... It’s challenging. It’s hard to do. It allows me to surprise myself.” The process, he says, reveals the artistic potential in everything.

Dichotomy, incongruity, chaos and humor all come through in White’s work. Canvases carry snippets of text, loops of string, and cartoon colors, and often come with titles that sound like the punch line of a joke.

“The titles are as random and collaged as the artwork,” said Van Wagner. He cited *Mom Combs My Hair*, *Mom Buys Me Rustlers* and *Steamy Steamy You Got It* as highlights of the show. Addressing the same topic in his interview, White explained that he has “always had this interest in the absurd and absurd humor.”



Taylor A. White, creating a site-specific work at Marquee Projects. Courtesy MARQUEE PROJECTS.

The interest goes back to childhood and strengthened him during his years as a U.S. Marine. “Art, I think, allowed me to return back to what I was before my time in the military,” he said. “Just making art and the permission that you have to do this thing. It’s completely subjective and so freeing ... It’s sort of like, here: now, I’m home. This is who you are. This is who you always were.”



Taylor A. White and Mark Van Wagner at MARQUEE PROJECTS. Courtesy MARQUEE PROJECTS.

BASIC FACTS: “1991 Plymouth Voyager, Like New—Paintings by Taylor A. White” is on view July 28 through August 26, 2018 at MARQUEE PROJECTS, 14 Bellport Lane, Bellport, NY 11713. www.marqueeprojects.org

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