

Jessica Jackson Hutchins: *The People's Cries*
November 2 – December 22, 2017

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to announce *The People's Cries*, an exhibition of new work by Jessica Jackson Hutchins. The exhibition—the artist's second solo show with the gallery—advances her recent explorations in stained and fused glass. *The People's Cries* will feature two 40 foot-long skylights filled with Hutchins' fused glass panels, as well as a number of sculptural floor pieces incorporating both glass and ceramic.

Known for transforming household objects into dynamic sculptural installations through the addition of ceramics, paint, and found materials, Hutchins' practice examines the artistic potential of the everyday. In her mixed-media assemblages, Hutchins uses quotidian objects and creates collages from ordinary detritus, selecting and arranging the materials to articulate and accentuate their inherent emotional and narrative content. Rather than sentimentalizing skill or private labor in the studio, the work instead champions the latent qualities and common uses of materials, refiguring them in often playful and unexpected ways that surprise and provoke the viewer while eliciting a sense of recognition and at times unsettling familiarity.

In this new body of work, Hutchins furthers her exploration of the mutual existence of art and daily life through glass. The imagery in her windows and sculptures, inspired by rock song lyrics, resistance symbols, phrases seen on placards at protests, and a range of other sources, reflects on and embodies the emotions evoked by recent news as well as historical opposition movements. These source elements emerge organically as Hutchins works and shapes the glass, getting lost in the process of making. The resultant pieces have a sensory and psychologically-charged quality—the physical manifestations of the artist's response to the tumultuous social and political dynamics of the day.

Hutchins' experimental approach extends and subverts our expectations of the material possibilities of glass, demonstrating the contemporary and political potential of a medium that is often seen as traditional and decorative. In Hutchins' hands, illuminated glass, usually associated with religious iconography and formulaic patterning, offers instead a vibrant and engaging montage of individual and collective protest. Experienced through both natural and artificial light, portraits of activists like Angela Davis and phrases such as "Power Up" and "Mercy for the Innocent" are imbued with a spiritual presence, refracting the language of resistance—the "people's cries"—throughout the gallery.

Hutchins became interested in working with stained glass following a visit to an abandoned Christian Science Church in Pendleton, Oregon while scouting locations for the 2016 Portland Biennial, curated by Michelle Grabner. The church's stained glass oculus was missing three out of eight panels, and Hutchins was inspired to fill in the gaps with new glass works. Having never worked with the material before, the usually ceramic and paint-based artist collaborated with a stained glass fabricator to translate her drawings and designs into glass. This experience motivated Hutchins to pursue further study of the medium, and she soon received a six-month residency at the Bullseye Glass Studio in her home base of Portland, Oregon.

While at Bullseye, Hutchins began to experiment with glass techniques. Rather than leading glass together – as is typically done to make stained glass – the artist uses a process called glass fusing. Using a scoring tool, Hutchins cuts sheets of colored glass by hand and then layers and arranges them to create compositions, adding paint and glass bits to create detail and texture. This glass is then fired in a kiln and melted together, resulting in a slightly blended effect. Displaying the breadth of the artist's experimentation with the material, *The People's Cries* includes fused glass windows, door fragments, and free-standing sculptures.

"I found myself working in this beautiful new medium at the time when the political climate in the United States was beginning to change drastically," said Hutchins. "I believe it is part of my job to be able to expose a raw nerve to whatever our culture is suffering through and let all that into the work; the beauty and pain and the outrage. The sensory extravagance (the gorgeousness!) of colored light was as overwhelming as the political upheavals and injustices. The presence of light embodied by color really does create a kind of hallowed space. So that perhaps, this could be the salve of hopefulness that we need right now."

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

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Jessica Jackson Hutchins (b. 1971 in Chicago) lives and works in Portland, Oregon. Hutchins' expressive and intuitive studio practice produces dynamic sculptural installations, collages, paintings, and large-scale ceramics that often transform everyday household objects such as furniture and clothing. Hutchins has recently had solo exhibitions at the Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, OH (2016); the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (2014); the Hepworth Wakefield Museum (2013); the Broad Art Museum in East Lansing, MI (2013); and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, MA (2011). Significant group exhibitions include the 55th Venice Biennale, *The Encyclopedic Palace* (2013) and *The Whitney Biennial* (2010). Her work has been incorporated into public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Margulies Collection, Miami; and the Portland Art Museum, Portland. Hutchins holds a BA in Art History from Oberlin College and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Hutchins will be included in the forthcoming publication, *Vitamin C: Clay and Ceramic in Contemporary Art* published by Phaidon.

The People's Cries will be on view from November 2 through December 22, 2017 at the Gallery's 507 West 24th Street location. For more information about Jessica Jackson Hutchins, please contact Gallery Director Kelly Woods at kelly@boeskygallery.com or 212.680.9889. For press inquiries, please contact Aga Sablinska, PAVE Communications and Consulting, at aga@paveconsult.com or 646.369.2050.

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