

MARTOS GALLERY

Love, Sam

Tyree Guyton

November 1 – extended through January 12, 2020

Martos Gallery is pleased to present *Love, Sam*, Tyree Guyton's first New York solo exhibition at Martos. This exhibition will present new and old work by Guyton including portraits, assemblages, and works from Guyton's famous door series *Tyree's Doors*, as well as works on paper by Guyton's grandfather and mentor, Sam Mackey.

The name Tyree Guyton may conjure references to his long-standing *Heidelberg Project*, which began in 1986. This impressive landmark is recognized as one of the most influential art environments in the world, and Guyton its pioneer; incorporating large installation works into an urban community, which ultimately cast a spotlight on poverty and neglect. However, Guyton has always maintained his studio practice.

At the age of nine, Guyton's grandfather gave him his first paint brush – it became his magic wand. Together they would drive around the city of Detroit looking for things to turn into art. He imbued a sense of whimsy in Guyton while encouraging him to trust his instincts.

Guyton's work speaks to a history of objects, places, and people. His portrait series, referred to as "Faces of God," shows how multihued faces all share one thing in common: large choppy teeth. Guyton says the inner man is always smiling no matter the circumstances of your life. Paint and assemblage are married to transcend Guyton's work into a conceptual practice. You can find traces of avant-garde figuration in Guyton's drawings and Guyton poignantly uses found objects like toilets, fountains, and flags while mining his constant desire for social change and awareness. For Guyton, trinkets become both artifact and art. And if a face can be a window to the soul, then Tyree Guyton is a gatekeeper.

For *Love, Sam*, Guyton pays tribute to Sam Mackey; Guyton's friend, mentor and a man who taught him how to mix colors and reminded him to always clean his brushes.

When I gave the paintbrush back to my grandfather at the age of 88, he began to draw and paint displaying a great sense of play and rhythm. He created until his last breath at the age of 94. I never forgot that.

– TG

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Tyree Guyton (b. 1955 Detroit, MI) studied at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, Michigan; he received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Art from the College of Creative Studies in 2009, and an Honorary Doctorate of Human Letters from the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in 2016. He currently lives and works in Detroit, MI.

Selected exhibitions include: “2+2=8: Thirty Years of Heidelberg”, MOCAD, Detroit, MI (2018); “Paradise”, Night Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2018); NADA Miami, FL (2018); “What Time Is It? Tyree Guyton, New Work”, Gallery DAAS, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI (2015); “Spirit”, Inner State Gallery, Detroit, MI (2014); and “Faces of God on Fire”, Cue Foundation, New York, NY (2013)

Selected public collections include: the Detroit Institute of Arts, MI; University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, MI; Perez Museum, Miami FL; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY.