

SAMUEL LEVI JONES

Conscious Intuition

May 11 – June 17, 2023

Opening Thursday, May 11, 2023, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Artist in conversation with Danny Dunson: Saturday, May 20, 12:00pm



Samuel Levi Jones, *Conscious Intuition*, 2022-23.

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York is pleased to announce *Conscious Intuition*, a solo exhibition by Samuel Levi Jones that highlights the artist's practice of abstraction as a means of transformation. Featuring works composed of pulped encyclopedias, law and medical textbooks, and US flags, the exhibition critiques authoritative systems. As the artist explains, this deconstruction and reinterpretation is driven by "a desire to create a space where information, that encompasses all, coexists, without fear, so that the pendulum stops its violent swing from one extreme perspective and back again."

48 Portraits (Underexposed) (2012), an important early work and Jones's first foray into the use of pulp, will be on view, marking the first time the work will be shown in its entirety on the East Coast. Inspired by Gerhard Richter's 1972 work by the same name, and its notable exclusion of women and people of color, Jones printed on pulped encyclopedia paper portraits of prominent African American figures across disciplines—24 women and 24 men—who, despite their achievements, were not included in the 1972 Encyclopedia Britannica. The images are underexposed, inviting viewers to look more closely at these individuals, their accomplishments, and the authoritative volumes that ignored them.

This foundational work will be complemented by a selection of new works that see Jones developing his practice of transformation through abstraction across forms and mediums. *Trojan Horse* (2023), a sculpture composed of pulped encyclopedia pages and coated in pulped law book covers, is displayed resting atop its shipping crate. The sculpture appears ready to be returned to sender and prompts an inquiry into how ideas and information are circulated. Named for the famed symbol of false victory, the stone-like form on its imposing plinth recalls the equestrian statue genre, creating a parallel to the dialogue surrounding public monuments. New paintings made from pulped book covers are obscured to varying degrees, while stars and stripes peek through in *Conscious Intuition* (2022-23), a triptych made of pulped US flags. The inclusion of these recognizable elements serves as a reminder that society cannot move forward equitably without acknowledging its flaws.

Jones's continued innovation in the use of pulped materials is exemplified by his first major sculptural installation, *The Library of Alexandria* (2023), which was conceived during a recent residency at Dieu Donn e and will be presented for the first time. The work is composed of vintage bookshelves in-situ sparsely populated by sculptures cast in the shape

of encyclopedias. These volumes are rendered illegible, a reminder of the histories excluded from the educational canon.

About the Artist

Samuel Levi Jones is inspired by questions of authority, representation, and recorded history. The artist is known for challenging historical and contemporary power structures through the act of taking apart "source" material, generating new perspectives from which to grapple with society's ongoing ignorance and apathy. Jones's practice centers on physically undoing objects associated with systems of power and control, often rearranging deconstructed books into grid-like compositions that expose their flaws and question their assumed command of the truth. As he explains, "I am ultimately thinking about information that is selectively left out." His works examine urgent questions of how oppression is embedded in systems of law enforcement and education, as well as industries in medicine, athletics, and fine art.

Solo exhibitions include *The Empire is Falling* at The Dayton Contemporary, Ohio; *Left of Center* at the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, Indiana; and *Unbound*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, New York. Recent museum exhibitions include *Art of California: Greater than the Sum*, SFMOMA, San Francisco, California; *Duro Olowu: Seeing Chicago*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; *Infinite Blue* at the Brooklyn Museum, New York; and *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection* at the Smart Museum at the University of Chicago, Illinois. His work can be found in museum and public collections such as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California; Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas and Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington. In 2014, Jones was the recipient of the Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize, an annual award presented by The Studio Museum in Harlem, whose past recipients include prominent artists such as Leslie Hewitt, Glenn Ligon, and Lorna Simpson.

Jones was born in Marion, Indiana, in 1978, and lives and works in Indianapolis, Indiana.

HIGHLIGHTS:



Samuel Levi Jones

Conscious Intuition, 2022-23

Pulped law book covers, pulped US flag, and stars from US flag on canvas

Triptych, each: 30 x 30 x 2 ½ in (76.2 x 76.2 x 6.3 cm)

(GL15706)



Samuel Levi Jones

Trojan Horse, 2023

Pulped encyclopedia pages and pulped law book covers, crate

Sculpture: 6 x 57 ¼ x 56 ⅝ in (15.2 x 145.4 x 142.6 cm)

Sculpture on crate: 17 x 62 ⅝ x 62 ¾ in (43.2 x 157.8 x 159.4 cm)

(GL15987)



Samuel Levi Jones

Untitled, 2022

Deconstructed and pulped encyclopedias and law books with cotton and abaca

30 x 22 in (55.9 x 76.2 cm)

Framed: 37 x 29 x 2 in (94 x 73.7 x 5.1 cm)

(GL15818)



Samuel Levi Jones

Fissure, 2023

Deconstructed and pulped law books and history books on canvas

30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)

(GL15973)



Samuel Levi Jones

Holding Space, 2023

Deconstructed and pulped law book, medical books, and bound newspaper covers on canvas

60 x 50 in (152.4 x 127 cm)

(GL15961)