

Jason Benson

Minuterie is a dying cock

November 3–December 16, 2018

The Earth keeps turning, night and day, spit-roasting all the tanned
Tired icebergs and the polar bears, which makes white almost contraband.
The biosphere on a rotisserie emits a certain sound
That tells the stars that Earth was moaning pleasure while it drowned.
The amorous white icebergs flash their brown teeth, hissing.
They're watching old porn videos of melting icebergs pissing.
The icebergs still in panty hose are lesbians and kissing.
The rotting ocean swallows the bombed airliner that's missing.
—Frederick Seidel, "Poem by the Bridge at Ten-Shin"

Recently my husband has been making mosaics—those tessellated forms of picture-making used in every major religion's place of worship, a permanently fractured rendering of piousness and symbolism. Mosaics adorn spaces of reverence; they are the pebbled floors upon which sacred feet patter; they are my mom's favorite home craft; they comprise the idiosyncratic artist environments of the the South (where we live) like Howard Finster's Paradise Garden.

The mythological, narrative bent of mosaics is present in my husband's new works. For *Minuterie is a dying cock*, he was particularly inspired by the Egyptian Sun Myth which goes like this: The Sun God Ra would travel the sky by day and would die every night, banished to the underworld where he became a corpse. Once in hell, corpse Ra would have to battle through the river of the underworld to emerge, the next morning, reborn, to become the sun again. Cloudy days and rain were seen as instances of Ra losing the battle against hell. This sort of simplistic but deeply emotional understanding of the passing of time, the occasional failure of the sun, and the spatial beauty of its circular travel reverberates through Jason's works.

From the vastness of fables through time and cultures to the smallness of the shards of failed ceramics we have made together, between the tenderness of love and sex and the inconceivable backdrop of environmental doom is where you will find the works in this exhibition. Aroused chimeras framed with encrusted junk drawer goodies, memorials to tender ones like Forrest Bess, pieces of glass, garbagey bits found on dog walks, and references to the ancient all collapsing and crashing together in a circular whirl. This exhibition is an invitation to let yourself die from time to time like Ra, losing the battle against the currents of the underworld to reemerge as a less fixed version of yourself. To find a more empathetic humanity by embracing mortality, gazing into our underbelly and merging with it to become a complicated but more tender gender, lounging together in an ecologically damned world.

—Erin Jane Nelson

Jason Benson (b. 1987) lives and works in Atlanta, Georgia. Recent exhibitions include a solo exhibition at Atlanta Contemporary and group exhibitions at Et Al, San Francisco; Regards, Chicago; Exo Exo, Paris; On Stellar Rays, New York; Balice Hertling, Paris; Ellis King, Dublin; Bureau, New York; TG, Nottingham; Lodos, Mexico City; and Queer Thoughts, Chicago. He was co-director of Important Projects in Oakland from 2009–2014 and currently co-directs Species in Atlanta. This is his second solo show at the gallery.



Jason Benson
Enter the green, 2018
Mosaic, oil, and resin on masonite panel
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
JB035



Jason Benson
Involuntary self-immolation, 2018
Mosaic, acrylic, pastel, and resin on wood panel
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
JB038



Jason Benson
Nimrod sun, 2018
Mosaic, pastel, and resin on wood panel
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
JB039



Jason Benson
Harlequin moon, 2018
Mosaic, oil, and resin on masonite panel
30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)
JB037



Jason Benson
Saint of longevity, 2018
Mosaic, oil, pastel, collage, and resin on masonite panel
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
JB036



Jason Benson
Violence, 2018
Mosaic, pastel, and resin on wood panel
30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)
JB041



Jason Benson
Healthcare & Beauty, 2018
Mosaic, pastel, and resin on wood panel
30 x 30 in (76.2 x 76.2 cm)
JB042



Jason Benson
Shock portal, 2018
Mosaic, pastel, and resin on wood panel
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)
JB040