



BRITTANY TUCKER

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Born 1996, Brooklyn

Lives and works in Brooklyn

Education

2018 BA, Bard College, New York

Solo Exhibitions

2020 *Memoir 1*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles

2019 *Company*, Steve Turner, Los Angeles
SPRING/BREAK Art Show (with Four-D), New York

Group Exhibitions

2020 *Black Voices/Black Microcosm*, CFHILL, Stockholm, Sweden

2019 *Untitled*, Miami Beach (with Steve Turner)
Summer Fling, Kravets | Wehby Gallery, New York

2018 *Recognize you when she sees you...*, September Gallery, Hudson, New York
Saccharine, SoHo, New York
Rent Money, HOLO, Queens
I Love You Three-Fifths, Bard College Exhibition Center, Brooklyn
Stickbug Planet, The Glove, Brooklyn

2017 *Summer Works*, Studio X, Annandale-On-Hudson, New York

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

STEVE TURNER



Brittany Tucker: *Memoir 1*

June 20–July 18, 2020

Steve Turner is pleased to present *Memoir 1*, a solo exhibition of new paintings and drawings by Brittany Tucker, a New York-based artist who has been working in Vienna during 2020. As with past works, Tucker continues to juxtapose realistic self-portraits with cartoonish figures meant to represent whiteness. However in *Memoir 1*, she has added a new colorful element and has created a group of drawings which shed even more light on her thoughts and feelings. They are more raw than the paintings. In presenting them, it is as though Tucker is sharing her private diary. Uniting all the works is the sense of shame and guilt that black women deal with in America by trying to fit into a society that often shuts them out. According to Tucker, "the cartoon figure is a shame monster that's always there but never fully present."

Brittany Tucker (b. 1996, Brooklyn) received a BA at Bard College (2018). She has had solo exhibitions at Steve Turner, Los Angeles (2019) and SPRING/BREAK, New York (2019, presented by Four-D Projects). Tucker also recently presented works at *Untitled*, Miami Beach (2019, with Steve Turner) and at CFHILL, Stockholm (2020).



Memoir 1. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2020



Memoir 1. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2020



Memoir 1. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2020



Memoir 1. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2020



Untitled, Miami Beach. Installation view, 2019



Untitled, Miami Beach. Installation view, 2019

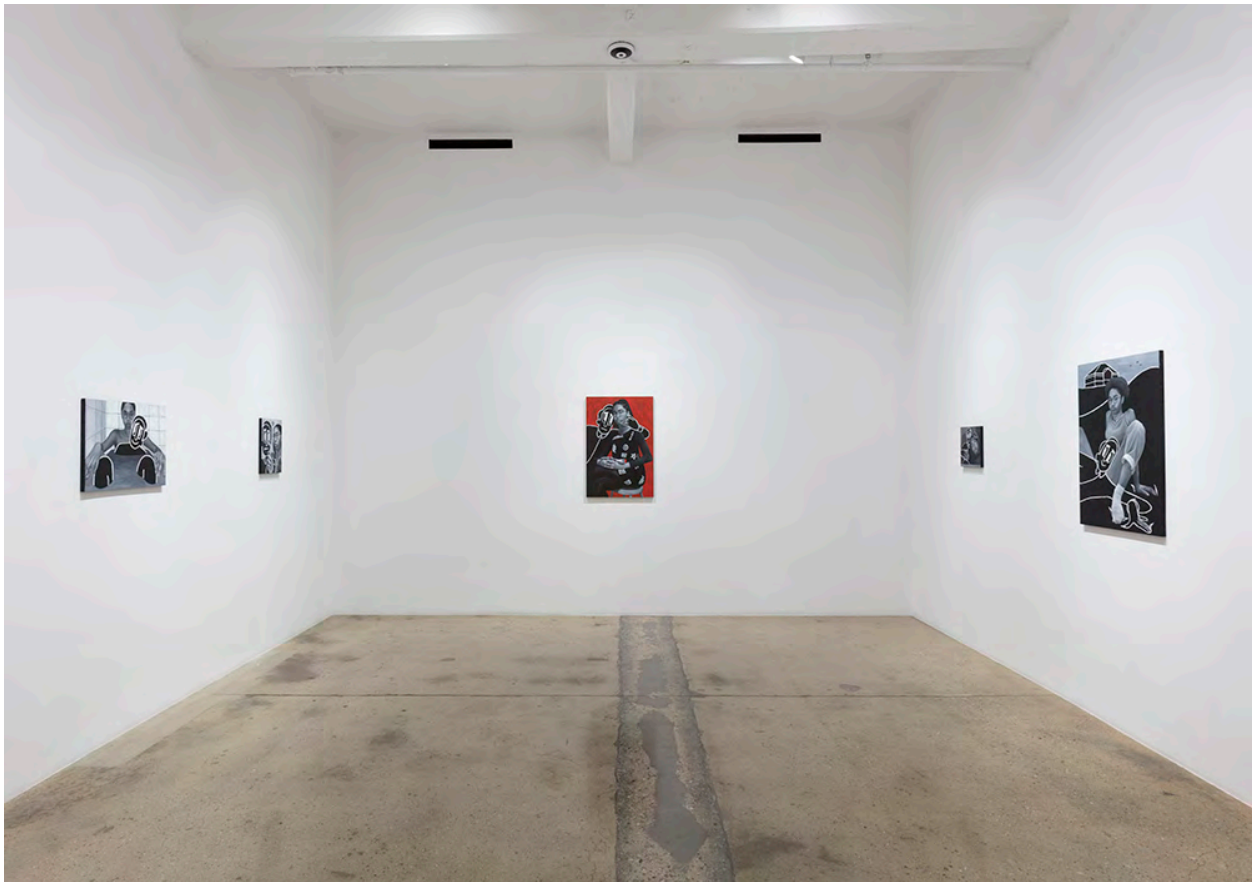


Untitled, Miami Beach. Installation view, 2019



Untitled, Miami Beach. Installation view, 2019

STEVE TURNER



Brittany Tucker: *Company*
July 20–August 24, 2019

Steve Turner is pleased to present *Company*, a solo exhibition by New York-based Brittany Tucker that consists of paintings combining the artist's likeness with that of a cartoonish image of a generic white man. Tucker misrepresents the white figure in order to address the uneasy relationship between American blackness and whiteness and to offset the stereotype characters from minstrelsy. By rendering herself realistically, she makes herself the primary subject while the white man is the joke of the painting.

Brittany Tucker (b. 1996, Brooklyn) earned a BA from Bard College. She had a solo exhibition at Spring/Break Art Show presented by Four-D Projects, New York. She currently has work included in a group exhibition at Kravets Wehby, New York. This is Tucker's first exhibition at Steve Turner, Los Angeles.



Company. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2019



Company. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2019



Company. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2019



Company. Installation view, Steve Turner, 2019



I Love You Three-Fifths. Installation view, Bard College Exhibition Center, Brooklyn, 2018



I Love You Three-Fifths. Installation view, Bard College Exhibition Center, Brooklyn, 2018



I Love You Three-Fifths. Installation view, Bard College Exhibition Center, Brooklyn, 2018

SELECTED WORKS



Composition 1, 2020
Oil on canvas
39 ³/₈ x 31 ¹/₂ inches (100 x 80 cm)



Drinking and Dating?, 2020
Oil on canvas
27 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 19 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches (70 x 50 cm)



Him, Me, and Minimum the Bear, 2020

Oil on panel

15 ³/₄ x 11 ³/₄ inches (40 x 30 cm)



Nightmare 1, 2020

Oil on panel

11 ³/₄ x 11 ³/₄ inches (30 x 30 cm)



Nightmare 2, 2020
Oil on panel
15 ³/₄ x 11 ³/₄ inches (40 x 30 cm)



Oops! I did it again, 2020
Oil on panel
15 ³/₄ x 15 ³/₄ inches (40 x 40 cm)



What about all the things you remember?, 2020
Oil on canvas
31 ¹/₂ x 23 ⁵/₈ inches (80 x 60 cm)



Wig, 2020
Oil on canvas
15 ³/₄ x 11 ³/₄ inches (40 x 30 cm)



American Gothic, 2019
Oil on panel
12 x 12 inches (30.5 x 30.5 cm)



Bath time, 2019
Oil on panel
18 x 24 inches (45.7 x 61 cm)



Can I Pay By Card?, 2019
Oil on panel
24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.4 cm)



Companion, 2019
Oil on panel
36 x 24 inches (91.4 x 61 cm)



Is it ok if Brittany sleeps over?, 2019
Oil on panel
14 x 11 inches (35.6 x 27.9 cm)



Portrait of the Artist Taking a Call, 2019
Oil on panel
36 x 24 inches (91.4 x 61 cm)



Sing it, Girl, 2019
Oil on panel
24 x 36 inches (61 x 91.4 cm)



The Times, 2019
Oil on panel
12 x 12 inches (30.5 x 30.5 cm)



Time Spent Avoiding the Eyes of Men, 2019
Oil on panel
36 x 24 inches (91.4 x 61 cm)



Two Taxpayers, 2019
Oil on panel
24 x 24 inches (61 x 61 cm)

SELECTED PRESS

Artist Brittany Tucker on What Comes After Representation

Shelley Holcomb | August 26, 2020



Brittany Tucker. Can I Pay by Card?, 2019.

Artist Brittany Tucker grew up with a respect for portraits instilled by her mother, an artist herself. Drawing on history and her training as a studio artist, Tucker creates paintings that combine her fully-rendered self-portraits with a cartoonish, generic figure of a white man. The misrepresentation of the white figure and the realistic image of the artist make Tucker the main subject and focus of the work, while the white man is relegated to the background, almost a joke.

We spoke with Tucker about using art as a tool for personal healing, historical reflection, and saying what needs to be said:

Shelley Holcomb (Curate LA): Ok, let's talk about where you're from, what you studied, and how your practice began.

Brittany Tucker: *I studied at Bard College for undergrad, in the studio arts program. I focused mainly on painting, but I did a little bit of everything. I graduated in 2018 and continued my studio practice in Brooklyn. Then I moved to Vienna.*

My mom is an artist. She was always doing portraits when I was growing up and still does.

Shelley: And have you always done portraits as well?

Brittany: *Yeah. The way that I grew up, I didn't go to very many museums — I mostly accessed art through what my mom was doing. And she has a very strong sense that portraiture is the highest level of art. So that was all she did and does. We have a very similar painting style. I mean, I do my own thing. My mom didn't have any training at all, but she does the same thing I do.*

Shelley: I'm noticing that in 2017 your work was much more colorful, then the colors sort of stop. Can you talk more about that?

Brittany: *I don't think anybody learns to just paint in black and white; I started by painting in color. Then I went to Paris and I saw a lot of masterful artwork and really got into the*

idea of making paintings like that. The black and white was meant to be an underpainting that just stayed how it was.

Shelley: Your work mixes caricatures and references to Renaissance paintings and works that are considered traditional canon [ie: “Olympia” by Édouard Manet] with realistic self-portraits. I’m curious about your process of putting yourself in the work.

Brittany: The question was always representation — like, how do I fit into the art world and where do I fit into the media?

What kind of message can my face send? When you’re growing up you see faces plastered everywhere to sell products. I was trying to figure out where I fit into all of that. So I was doing a lot of self-portraiture. I am trying to fit myself into different places and seeing what that looks like.

Shelley: Were you painting people in that style before this, or drawing doodles?

Brittany: No. Doodling was highly discouraged in my household. I was not doodling. As I said, my mom does realistic portraits — so when I’d show her a cartoon, she’d be like, “Okay, but when are you going to start really making art?”

Shelley: It looks like you are trying on these worlds, trying to fit yourself in, while mocking traditional work.

Brittany: Yeah, I am asking myself constantly: What comes after representation? What comes once we have a seat at the table — what do we do? What do we say? I knew that once I had representation, what I would do is make art about my life and the things that I was dealing with as a way to heal myself, and to experiment in a way that was safe. I got that through painting. I created this character of a white man, like an American business guy. The cartoon figure just became a way to explore myself in my paintings.

I think the question is: what are the things that I do for myself and what do I do as a performance for other people? Do I paint the portrait of myself for myself? That can feel good — painting yourself as an affirmation. Then there’s this other part of it, where I’m putting this cartoon guy in it. Suddenly it’s more of a message.



Brittany Tucker's Studio

Shelley: And to me, it feels like they're like it's kind of a "fuck you" to traditional modes of painting and moving through the art world. Can you talk more about what "I love you three-fifths" means in your artist statement?

Excerpt: "A cartoon finger in my mouth is akin to a so-called micro-aggression, and this hug wasn't always safe. Slavery in America began in 1619, it's four-hundred years later and I'm in love but it's hard to forgive you. You didn't do anything. Yet you benefit. Yet I wade through it. I was taught but I could've been told, I could've been told or I could've remembered. I could have remembered or I could have lived and died in it. I could have lived and died in it but I was taught instead. And you have your mommy read all of your essays for you before you turn them in. It's complicated. But I love you. I love you three-fifths. It's a compromise."

Brittany: Yeah. I guess it's about this feeling that I was dealing with then (in 2018) when I started that work.

Shelley: The drawings in "I Love You Three-Fifths" feel very childlike. There is one with a very typical child-like house drawing, you know, the family-in-the-yard drawing. Another drawing feels as if it were in a coloring book.

Brittany: Yes, that's definitely there. I was also using Crayola colors — these Crayola Slick Stix, which I regard as the highest artistic medium of all time. [Laughs] They are incredible. In one of the paintings, there's a house behind me — I was thinking about trauma, and when childhood ends and how. I wondered: how can I still access the person I was when I was a child?

Shelley: Looking at your work from 2019, I feel like it has become even sharper. The way you're painting yourself and the details — it's more representational, like photography. This one in particular seems like a selfie you took with a friend with a Snapchat filter.

Brittany: Yeah, that's the point. That's what I was trying to create.

Shelley: Just real life snapshots?

Brittany: [laughs] I wish I had a friend in the studio. I was just alone in my studio and I painted it. It's just me.



Brittany Tucker. What about all the things you remember?, 2020

Shelley: And was that the same idea for “Bath Time”?

Brittany: *That was inspired by Kara Walker’s “A Subtlety.” The idea of a mammy in general and how two people can care for each other.*

Shelley: Tell me more about the narrative in your work.

Brittany: *A lot of the time I try to confuse the narrative and make it ambiguous. I’m not that interested in it. Creating a perfect world where everything that’s white is black and white and everything that’s black is fully rendered — it’s more complicated than that.*

I tend to work on a painting by painting basis. Sometimes the work ends up cohesive because it was all made at the same time, like the work I made around the time I moved to Vienna — I was working on these drawings as a way to unpack. I’d moved to Vienna and was looking at pictures of when I was in New York and created the work in “Memoir 1.”

Shelley: Yeah, that work feels even more intimate, like you’re letting us really see you.

Brittany: *That was a difficult time in my life. It was after I graduated from college, and so it was hard. I was pretty aimless and deeply confused. I was drinking a lot. So that’s what those paintings are.*



Brittany Tucker. Nightmare 1, 2020

Shelley: It seems like you’re exploring yourself and your sexuality more.

Brittany: Yeah, that’s definitely an aspect of a few of them, like “Nightmare One” and “Nightmare Two.” I mean, I think I’ll have something enlightened to say about this work a little bit later, but right now I’m still on a path to self-discovery. But this piece is definitely about feeling confused about dating a white man after what my ancestors went through. It’s difficult to examine the present in that way.

Shelley: How do your significant others feel about your paintings? Do you incorporate them into the narrative while you're with them or is it something that you do afterward as a way to process?

Brittany: *I mean, if they're a white man, then they're inherently incorporated into the work. I don't like to put people that I'm with in the work while I'm with them. That's a little too much for me. The work-life balance gets thrown off. I do sometimes use photos of me and an ex-boyfriend to work off of, but not very frequently.*

Shelley: What are you working on now?

Brittany: *It's really hard to make work right now, with the state of the world. It's truly a difficult time. I want to make work about Black woman empowerment, but I also somehow feel responsible for the upcoming revolution. [laughs] But I also feel like there's kind of a void.*

So I don't know what's gonna happen. It's going to be something that I work very hard on. The pieces are going to be larger. That's all I can truly say.

Follow Brittany Tucker on Instagram at [@_brittanytucker](https://www.instagram.com/_brittanytucker) and visit Tucker's website to see more work. Tucker is represented by Steve Turner Gallery in Los Angeles. All images courtesy of the artist.



Brittany Tucker. *I Have A Job Interview Later*, 2020