
Collected Stories

Holly Harrison & Kristina McComb

December 19, 2018 – February 17, 2019

Abigail Ogilvy Gallery is proud to present *Collected Stories*, a duo exhibition featuring new works by Holly Harrison and Kristina McComb. Both Harrison and McComb are drawn to the idea of creating a visual story that documents the passing of time. Holly Harrison is an artist, writer, and poet; appropriately, her artwork is comprised of multiple bands of imagery and collage, the layers work like stanzas of modern verse, with bits of meaning half-hidden underneath like symbolism and subtext. The work reads as a narrative when paired with Kristina McComb's recent documentation of the Boston Athenaeum. Each photograph highlights the minute details of the books in the library, worn and weathered through age and use. Together, Harrison and McComb combine elements of past and present, embracing imperfections as means to tell a contemporary tale.

Holly Harrison's *Color Field* series relates sections of color with elements of mixed media. This new series is a return to using stripes as structure. In this new series, the bands of color are themselves the subject, contrasting with her previous work that was mostly image-based. A crucial element to Harrison's work is the mixed media components, giving each artwork texture, depth and most importantly: an imbedded story. Often the layers include old shopping lists, vintage comics, book and magazine pages, printed papers, junk mail, her daughter's early doodles, and pieces of her husband's works on paper. These components are covered with a wash of paint, acting to join the disparate pieces and also to obscure their content. What remains is an impression or hint, encouraging the viewer to look more closely. Harrison also questions the emptiness or fullness of each block of color, her draw to poetic forms leads Harrison to build her own organic shapes that push against an established boundary.

Kristina McComb's photographs capture the hidden history of the books within the Boston Athenaeum. As their artist in residence for the past year, her plan for this project was intentionally vague, allowing for the individuality of the books to catch her attention. As she worked, McComb deliberately did not interfere with how the books were positioned, only documenting exactly as she found them, the unedited truth of how they exist in the library. These striking photographs bring attention to the tears, folds, broken spines, and cobwebs that mottle their surface; celebrating their imperfections rather than shunning them. By freezing the books in their current state and giving them a new life through digital reproduction, she starts the cycle anew, letting the images age much like the books themselves have aged. McComb finds profoundness in the life lived by both the object and those who have interacted with it. Whether a single image or the series in its entirety, the work tells the story of a collection through intricate maps across the surface of the books.

Holly Harrison is a mixed-media artist living and working in Concord, MA. Harrison received her MA from City College of New York and her BA from Wesleyan University. Harrison's work has been featured at galleries and museums throughout New England and New York such as the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Concord Art, and is held in private collections across the country and internationally. Harrison was selected for the 2018 and 2015 Artcetera Auction as well as the 2017 MassArt Auction. She was also the recipient of the 2014 Dick Blick Materials Award and the 2012 Attleboro Museum Certificate of Merit.

Kristina McComb is an interdisciplinary artist from Western Massachusetts. She graduated with Distinction from Greenfield Community College, receiving her Associates of Science in Visual Art with a concentration in Photography. McComb also holds a BFA from The School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University. Her work has been exhibited since 2014, most notably at the Brattleboro Museum and Arts Center in Brattleboro, VT, the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, and The Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston, MA. McComb has also exhibited in galleries across the country including Manifest Gallery, in Cincinnati, OH, and the Mark Arts in Wichita.