



Ashley Norwood Cooper

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I was a classics major in college, and when I started out to paint I thought I would make paintings about mythology. It never really worked. The ideas always seemed stale and over-worked. I had children and became much more interested in the quotidian details of contemporary family life. Now my children are teenagers and I am almost 50. I think the big spiritual questions are weighing on me more. The mythology is starting to trickle back in, not instead of the personal, but through the personal. I am coming full circle. The heroic gave way to the ordinary and now the ordinary is starting to seem heroic.

When I was an art student, one of my professors told me that I would never be a serious artist. I would become pregnant the minute I got my degree.

I did become pregnant, soon after graduation, and it was through the portal of motherhood that I became a serious artist. It wasn't at all what I thought it would be. I became a very specific mother of three very specific children. We live in a place and a time that is temporary. My love helps them grow, my flaws and mistakes also hurt them and impede their growth. My journey is spiritual. It is difficult. It isn't like anyone else's. It informs my art even as it devours the time and energy I have to create.

Cover:
WOKE
36 x 48"
oil on panel

Photo Credit:
Grace Roselli, Pandora's Book Project



All that will remain
after an apocalypse
is glitter.
– *British Vogue*



GLITTER
48 x 60"
oil on panel



Detail **Inhale**

In this painting the man is big, larger than life. The woman is lying on her back in bed like a woman in a painting by a man, but the painting is from her point of view. In a sense, he dominates her, but she is reading a book-- "Ninth Street Women." I have copied two pages out of Ninth Street Women by hand into the pages of the book in this painting. They are not really legible, though some words stand out. The writing is about Elaine De Kooning and Grace Hartigan and their discussions about motherhood. Elaine De Kooning decided not to have children so that she could paint and Grace Hartigan ended up making a very difficult decision to leave her son to be raised by her parents.

Inhalers first crept into my paintings while my husband was serving in Afghanistan. It was a stressful time and I was struggling to paint and also just to live. I got sick and my asthma got bad. I was also reading a biography of the painter Joan Mitchell. In it she is quoted "If I can paint, I can breath." This became like a mantra to get me through. The inhaler became a symbol for both breathing and painting.

INHALE
Stand up straight at the foot of
your love I lift my shirt up
– *The National*



INHALE
80 x 72"
oil on panel



This is a painting about being young with your girlfriends making art. The girl's room is the place where art is new and art can solve any problem. The hands are the hands that pulled us out of that room.

THE GIRL'S ROOM
60 x 48"
oil on panel

The woman in the painting is reading "9th Street Women." This book had a profound effect on me and many others. It made me think about how art history is a constructed story and how women are written out of it. It made me think about the extreme sacrifices women artists have made for their work and how hard I have tried to make serious work while leading a more ordinary American family life. I kind of think that is the next frontier of women in art, women with children making art. Women not having to prove their art by making it work on men's terms.



WOKE
36 x 48"
oil on panel



We have long had an idea that man creates because he is made in the image of the creator God, but the first creator was the Goddess. These children become creators because they take after their mother.

TRIPLE SPIRAL
60 x 48"
oil on panel

I first started thinking of paintings of crying men on the night of the horrible election. I was watching the results on tv in our dark den. I was ranting and raving (that's the kind of thing I do) but my husband was silent. I looked over and reflecting the light of the television, I could see the tears rolling down his face. I had recently visited the Picasso Museum in Paris and had become interested in Dora Maar, how she moved Picasso to a political conscience and how she inspired his crying woman paintings.

It took me a while to figure out exactly how "crying men" paintings would work. I think compassion is one of the hardest things for an artist to communicate today, but also one of the most important.

**THE CRYING MEN ARE COMFORTED
IN THE ARMS OF THE DIVINE FEMI-
NINE (and also a beagle)**

40 x 30"
oil on panel



Ashley Norwood Cooper
CV

Education
MFA Painting, Indiana University
BA Latin, University of Georgia

Solo Exhibitions
Sleepless, ZINC contemporary, Seattle, WA 2019
The Likes of Us, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2019
Deployment Paintings, Wilbur Mansion, Oneonta, NY, 2014
Down from the Hills, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2012
Homebodies, Earlville Opera House, Earlville, NY, 2011
At Home, Cooperstown Art Association, Cooperstown, NY, 2006
Interior, Exterior, Subterranean, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2004
Paintings by Ashley Norwood Cooper, Mary Praytor Gallery, Greenville, SC, 2001
MFA Thesis Exhibition, Indiana University, 1999

Two Person and Group Exhibitions
Indigo/Blue, Art Garage, Cooperstown, NY, 2019
Picture This, Smithy Pioneer Gallery, Cooperstown, NY, 2019
New Narrative Now, M. David & Co., Brooklyn, NY, 2019
Color Color, with Ling Chun, ZINC contemporary, Seattle, WA, 2018
Splash, Art Garage, Cooperstown, NY, 2018
68th Annual Art of the Northeast, Silvermine Arts Center, Silvermine, CT, 2018
Truth, Smithy-Pioneer Art Gallery, Cooperstown, NY 2018
No Man's Land; A Collection of Works by Contemporary Female Artists, Andrews Gallery, William and Mary University, Williamsburg, VA, 2017
Stack, curated by Debra Zlotsky, Kathyryn Markel Gallery, New York, 2017
Homeland: Paintings by Ashley Norwood Cooper, Tracy Helgeson, and Peter Edlund, Art Garage, Cooperstown, NY, 2017
Homage to David Park, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA, 2017
Re-Imagining Grandma, Bennington Museum of Art, Bennington, Vermont, 2016
Lights-On, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2016
Faculty Exhibit, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY, 2016
Beauty, Church of St. Paul the Apostle, New York, NY, 2016
Interior Spaces, Smithy-Pioneer Art Gallery, Cooperstown, NY, 2016
Art of the Model, Smithy-Pioneer Art Gallery, Cooperstown, NY, 2016



Journeys into Mysticism, Mystery, and Spirituality, Windsor Whip Works Art Center, Windsor, NY, 2016
2016 National Show, Cooperstown Art Association, Cooperstown, NY, 2016
Hartwick College/SUNY Oneonta Art Faculty Exhibit, Hartwick College, Oneonta, NY, 2016
Eumetedotos, Novella Gallery, New York, NY, 2015
65th Annual Art of the Northeast, Silvermine Arts Center, Silvermine, CT, juried by Michelle Grabner continued (juror of the 2015 Whitney Biennial) and Brad Killiam, 2015
Made in NY 2015, Schweinfurth Memorial Art Center, Auburn, NY, 2015
Occupycommonground#, Church of St. Paul the Apostle, New York, NY, 2014
Liberalis, Novella Gallery, New York, NY, 2014
Color: Real and Imagined, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA, 2014
Winter Eclectic, Carrie Haddad Gallery, Hudson, NY 2012
X Marks the Spot, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY, 2011
New Space, New Work, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2011
Poetic License, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2010
NYFA Mark10 Alumni Show, Saratoga, NY, 2010
Domestic Dramas, Albany Center Gallery, Albany, NY, 2010
Painted Cities, Carrie Haddad Gallery, Albany, NY, 2010
40th Anniversary Show, First Street Gallery, New York, NY, 2009
National Juried Exhibition, Cooperstown Art Association, 2008
Group Show, Carrie Haddad Gallery, Hudson, NY, 2007
Realism 2003 Stage Gallery, Merrick, NY, 2003
Young Painters Competition, Miami University, Oxford, OH, 2002
7th Biennial Midwest Competition, Southern Illinois University Art Museum, Carbondale, IL, 2000
Regional Competition, Jasper Community Arts Center, Jasper IN, 2000
Recent Paintings by Grace Park and Ashley Cooper, Waldron Arts Center, Bloomington, IN 1999
Realism in Detail, St. Cloud Community Arts Center, St. Cloud, MN, 1999
Faculty Show, Depauw University, Greencastle, IN, 1999

Honors

Faculty Development Grant, SUNY Oneonta, 2019
Research/Creative Creative Activity Shadowing Grant, SUNY Oneonta, 2018
Builders Prize, Silvermine Arts Center Art of the North East, 2015
Kalos Visual Art Foundation Visual Art Prize, Honorable Mention, 2013
NYFA Mark Program Fellowship, 2010

Riva Shiner Award in Painting, National Society of Arts and Letters, Bloomington, IN Chapter, 1998

Press and Publications

New American Paintings: Northeast Edition, 2019
Artist Ashley Norwood Cooper: The Humanity of Being an Artist, Interview with Erika Hess, I Like Your Work Podcast, 2019
Homeland, Reviewed by Petey Brown, deliciousline.org, 27 July 2017
Decievingly Simple, Decidedly Unplugged, by Sarah Fritchey in Big, Red and Shiney, 2015
An interview with Ashley Norwood Cooper, by Christopher Lowrance, MW Capacity, featured on Painters Table Art Blog, 2014
Portals and Awakenings, Marly Youmans, The Palace at 2 AM blog
Ruminate Magazine, December 2013
Gathering Clouds, A Magazine of Contemporary Art, August, 2013
Ashley Norwood Cooper Talks About her Art, Albany Times Union, December 14, 2011
Snared in the Moment When things Go Awry, Marly Youmans, The Freeman's Journal, Cooperstown, NY, April 21, 2011
Deborah Zlotosky: Now & Later, Oct 4, 2019
Manuel Neri: The Human Figure in Plaster and on Paper, Aug 28, 2018
Sonic Rebellion: Music as Resistance, Dec 20, 2017
On Arrival: Pooh Kaye and Cara Wood-Ginder, Nov 16, 2017
Truth is the Only Safe Ground to Stand Upon: Portraits of New York State Suffragists by Christine Heller, Aug 09, 2017
A Place at the Table, Jul 21, 2017
Material Mythos: Laura Bernstein, Ben Dowell, Heidi Lau, Sangram Majumdar, and Clintel Steed, Jul 11, 2017
Petey Brown: High Tide, Jul 03, 2017
Anselm Kiefer: Transition from Cool to Warm, May 22, 2017
Fables of the Reconstruction: Peter Burns, Mary DeVincentis, Lizbeth Mitty, Helen O'Leary, May 16, 2017
Chelsea Gibson: The Space Between, May 08, 2017
Small-Great Objects: Anni and Josef Albers in the Americas, May 01, 2017
Made in Paint, Apr 13, 2017

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Detail: THE CRYING MEN ARE COMFORTED IN THE
ARMS OF THE DIVINE FEMININE (and also a beagle)
40 x 30" oil on panel

ZINC contemporary



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