

Roy Dowell

New Paintings and Sculptures

Opens Thursday, April 3, 6–8 pm

Continues through May 3, 2014

Lennon Weinberg, Inc.

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Untitled #1029, 2013, 52 x 40 inches, acrylic on linen

This is Roy Dowell's second exhibition at Lennon, Weinberg. It is strikingly different from his first here four years ago in which long rows of framed collages ringed the gallery. The current exhibition includes eight paintings and five sculptures that assert an attitude about Dowell's foundational practice of collage as surely as if they had been made from his usual repertoire of printed and hand-drawn sections of paper.

Roy Dowell is a prodigious gatherer of references and resources. He has a magpie's eye for the visual properties of things that he generously introduces into his work. Icons of early and mid-century modernism such as Georges Braque, Kurt Schwitters and Stuart Davis are fair game, along with Mexican and Latin American pottery and textiles, ethnographic material from Africa and India, printed billboards and painted signage. His home and his studio are filled with collections of ritual and vernacular objects that clearly inform his sense of color, pattern and composition.

Asked recently what is the most indispensable item in his studio, Dowell replied, "I would say that the object that hangs above my desk, an axe handle with a painted soccer ball attached to it is the most indispensable object in my studio. I bought it in Mexico many years ago and it constantly reminds me of what a perfect object should look like." This odd but powerful object is clearly the inspiration for one of the works in our exhibition, the wall-mounted sculpture *Untitled #1030*, a flat disk painted with a pattern of hexagons joined to a pole-like handle.

Dowell was included in the inaugural *Made in L.A.* biennial

exhibition at the Hammer Museum at UCLA in 2012, represented by a selection of painted sculptures. Long recognized for his paintings and collages, the sculptures came as something of a surprise. Christopher Knight of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote this about them in his review of the show: “Vivid modern abstraction derived from high art and popular design is fused with functional forms suggestive of tribal objects—headrest, stool, mask, shield and more. Art and its rituals of display are bracingly unveiled as a celebratory branch of global ethnology.” The sculptures in our current show evoke a similar range of reference with the addition of a cartoony umbrella that is positively Guston-esque.

The generally medium-sized paintings share a loosely bilateral symmetry with the sculptures. Painted with acrylic on linen, they show a skilled and relaxed hand at work. The paintings are precise but not tight, with an engaging spatial play between opaque areas and transparent ones. Shapes can be wobbly but the geometry of grids, stripes, circles and serrated rows of triangles achieves a poised resolution. The handmade quality of all of Dowell’s works—the paintings, sculptures and collages—both animates them and corroborates their relationship with the diverse source materials that inspire him.

Jill Weinberg Adams



Untitled #1060, 2014, 40 x 40 inches, acrylic on linen



Untitled #1030, 2013, 50 x 24 x 3 inches, paper and acrylic paint



Untitled #1053, 2014, 48 x 54 inches, acrylic on linen



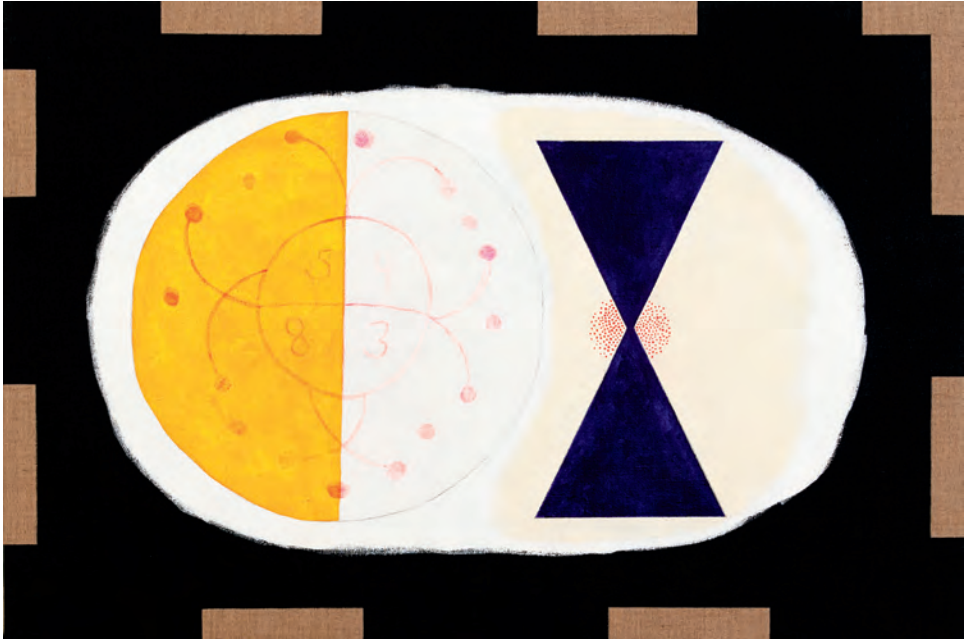
Untitled #1057, 2014, 52 x 40 inches, acrylic on linen



Untitled #1054, 2014, 40 x 25 x 13 inches, cardboard, paper and acrylic paint



Untitled #1055, 2014, 16 x 12 x 12 inches, cardboard, paper and acrylic paint



Untitled #1056, 2014, 24 x 36 inches, acrylic on linen



Untitled #1058, 2014, 16 x 16 x 13 inches, cardboard, paper and acrylic paint



Untitled #1062, 2014, 52 x 40 inches, acrylic on linen



Untitled #1047, 2013, 52 x 40 inches, acrylic on linen



Untitled #1061, 2014, 46 x 18 x 13 inches, cardboard, paper, wood and acrylic paint



Untitled #1059, 2014, 36 x 24 inches, acrylic on linen

Roy Dowell was born in Bronxville, New York in 1951. His family moved regularly before settling in California when Roy was fourteen. He began to visit the Pasadena Art Museum and particularly remembers seeing a Joseph Cornell exhibition there. He attended the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland from 1969 to 1971, then transferred to CalArts in Valencia, California. Dowell studied with Emerson Woelffer, who provided a direct link to the modernist tradition, but also with Allan Kaprow, a pioneer in the field of performance art. He continued on to the graduate program; it was then, he says, “that I began edging into painting through the back door.” He graduated in 1975. In 1979 he founded the fine arts graduate program at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles and still serves as chair of the department.

In Los Angeles, Dowell showed with Rosamund Felsen from 1986 to 1994 and with Margo Leavin from 1995 to 2012. In New York, he had exhibitions with both Joe Fawbush and Curt Marcus. His first show with Lennon, Weinberg was in 2010. Recently, he showed works at Galería Nina Menocal in Mexico City, Various Small Fires in Venice, California and James Harris Gallery in Seattle. His work was featured in the 2012 *Made in L. A.* biennial at the Hammer Museum.

His work is included in museum collections such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, as well as the Hammer Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, The Berkeley Museum of Art, The Oakland Museum, The Jumex Collection, the Eli Broad Collection, and many other significant institutional and private collections.

He lives and works in Los Angeles and San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

