

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Gartenfeld, Alex. "Exhibition Reviews: Cameron Jamie." *Art in America*, October 2010, p.189.

EXHIBITION REVIEWS



View of Cameron Jamie's installation *Smiling Disease*, 2008, carved masks and carved pedestals; at Gladstone.

rows of peacock feathers, a material Bove favors. Departing from the nautical motif as well were two sculptures from 2010 that share the same dimensions (96 by 48 by 48 inches) and the title *Harlequin*. Both are standing rectangular boxes open on two sides made of thick, transparent Plexiglas and sheathed in a diamond-patterned metal mesh that generates moiré effects when viewed from certain angles. They strongly resemble the metal-detecting body scanners standard at airport security checkpoints. Although the gallery discouraged walking through these sculptures, the thresholds they demarcated seemed a fitting tribute to Heard's metaphysical aspirations—and to Bove's own ability to transform ordinary materials into objects of wonder.

—Matthew Guy Nichols

CAMERON JAMIE GLADSTONE

Cameron Jamie's first New York solo exhibition looked back to medieval Austria, centering on 11 ornately grotesque wooden masks reminiscent of those worn, to this day, by villagers channeling Krampus (a kind of anti-Santa Claus) and his band of demons, who in December street revels sometimes playfully whip those—particularly children and attractive young women—alleged to have been "naughty." Collectively titled *Smiling Disease* (2008), the works also reference *Perchten*, festival masks that devotees of the ancient Germanic goddess Perchta once used to ward off evil spirits. The sculptural disguises, which the

artist commissioned from an Austrian carver, are gnarled and fleshy-looking, with matted, shaggy fur from various animals serving as hair. The toothy, painfully wrought faces are delicately assembled and smile, seeming to relish the irony of their elegant abjection. Each mounted on a single bare tree branch stuck in a flat-cut section of log to form a pedestal, they were shown in a rough circle, as if conferring among themselves or conspiring with any viewer who dared to step into the center.

Jamie, a 41-year-old, American-born artist now living in Paris, is best known for films that focus on social groups and activities excluded from official culture, which makes his forays into formal display interesting. His theatrically presented masks call attention to their function as props, and to the silence of their surroundings. Though he has shot Krampus parades, the footage was not presented in the show. The masks were accompanied instead by inky drawings and semiabstract ceramic sculptures. Most of the works on paper feature black lines and drips arrayed around an axis in a manner that recalls the Surrealist practice of automatic drawing. They are mounted on boards to suggest windows in a door, a facile metaphor for a peek through a closed portal. Like the masks, they invoke a narrow psychological zone between control and release. Jamie's ceramic works take the form of deformed birds, emerging seemingly prematurely from their deliberately clumsy bases. They are exquisitely painted, dignified when they look like a phallus, and morbidly funny

when they look like a pile of excrement. Fantasy, it seems, holds opposing psychic forces waiting to emerge.

—Alex Gartenfeld

ELLIOTT HUNDLEY ANDREA ROSEN

Elliott Hundley, in his second show at this gallery, expanded his more-is-more esthetic to great effect. Titled "Agave of *The Bacchae*," the exhibition was intended as a visual exploration of themes in the play by Euripides. Five paintings and three sculptures (all 2010) gave new life to the term bricolage, with all kinds of materials attached to surfaces by means of pins, glue and what appear to be long specimen needles. Tiny bits of images, sticks and a bull's horn are fair game, as are found paintings, sequins and elaborate ransom-note-style sentences (sometimes the length of short stories). The paintings resemble '80s Neo-Expressionism at its wildest.

There are narratives implied, along with scientific or philosophical allegories and fantastic extremes of ornamentation. The large-scale *Dionysus*, 8 feet high and 16 feet wide, includes such materials as soundboard, inkjet prints, kitakata paper, photographs, found paintings and the bull's horn. A monklike man, bald and robed (Dionysus arriving from the East?), is seen four times in four panels, elevated above a landscape teeming with activity. Tiny naked men convene in a circle, and hundreds of the specimen needles pierce the surface at graduating angles, creating a wave effect. The

OCTOBER '10 ART IN AMERICA 189