

## Kayne Griffin Corcoran



### Art Insider Jan 21: Color theory, Melancholia, political candles paintings

Color takes on several meanings, an artist delves into the melancholy of the female mind, and candles stand in for alt-right manifestoes.

#### Hank Willis Thomas at Kayne Griffin Corcoran



Hank Willis Thomas. *People just like to look at me (Spectrum IX)*, 2019. UV print on retroreflective vinyl, mounted on Dibond. Framed Dimensions: 97 x 91 3/4 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Kayne Griffin Corcoran.

In the grassy courtyard of Kayne Griffin Corcoran in Mid City, a *Dukes of Hazzard* replica car is upturned, balancing on its front bumper. The confederate flag is painted on its roof, and the words "General Lee" are prominent, recalling so many confederate monuments that have been recently questioned and dismantled.

This sculpture is part of Hank Willis Thomas' *An All Colored Cast*, an exhibition that plays off various color references: race relations, technicolor, and art history.

Preston Zappas, Lindsay. "Art Insider Jan 21: Color theory, Melancholia, political candle paintings" KCRW. 21 January 2020. Web.

Finding nexus between these three elements, his wall works are photographic stills culled from Hollywood and printed on colorful reflective acrylic. Some compositions resemble Joseph Albers' seminal color theory, and others are made to look like television color tests. The photographs are only visible with the use of flash photography from the viewer — the works otherwise appear as chromatic color studies.

Through his references, Williams teases out the critical tensions in each. Social politics, much like color theory, can change depending on how you look at them.



Hank Willis Thomas, "Interaction of Color" (Josef Albers diptych), 2019. UV print on retroreflective vinyl, mounted on Dibond. Overall Dimensions: 59 x 94 1/4 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Kayne Griffin Corcoran.

Hank Willis Thomas has long been interested in advertising.’ In a 2003 photograph called *Branded Head*, he manipulates a Nike swoosh to look like a brand on the subject’s scalp.

In an interview with The Savannah College of Art and Design, he says, “Advertising is the most powerful language in the world because it literally shapes how we see ourselves and the world. And I think it’s important to have a critical look at the things that affect our notions of ourselves and other people.”

He explains further at a 2015 conference, “The role of the artist I’ve learned is to work in the society’s subconscious. Maybe it’s somebody’s job to actually think about just the color blue just for the sake of it because that’s what our humanity’s about. ... I feel the need to think creatively about the things I already know.”

On view: January 18–March 7, 2020

- Lindsay Preston Zappas