The Anthropophagic Effect

Jeffrey Gibson

February 13–June 9, 2019
Those Are Pearls… by Hélène Cixous

First Reading
The First Reading is a rare event that happens only once in a lifetime. It takes place in a room and revolves around a certain hour every millennium, marking the beginning of an inaugural year. At that time,

— What is a pearl?
— A pearl is a natural or manufactured object that has been created by an oyster or a snail. It is a small, round, shiny object that is often used in jewelry or as a decorative element in various fields.

— Why would one want to know the secret of the world with a genesis hewn in both a modest birth and a grand emergence?
— The secret of the world is born from a humble beginning and a grand emergence. It is a story of how life began and how it evolved over time. Each creature, object, or event has its own unique story of how it came to be.

— What is meant by “créer, c’est-à-dire…”?
— “Créer, c’est-à-dire…” translates to “To create, that is to say…” in English. It is used to introduce a new idea or concept. It suggests that the act of creating something has a deeper significance than just producing a physical object. It implies that creation is a means of expression or communication.

— How do we relate to the language of the world?
— Language is a fundamental aspect of our existence. It allows us to communicate our thoughts, feelings, and ideas to others. It is a tool that enables us to express ourselves and make sense of the world around us.

— What is the relationship between the world of man and the world of nature?
— The relationship between the world of man and the world of nature is complex and multifaceted. Man and nature are interconnected, and our existence depends on each other. We rely on nature for food, shelter, and resources, while nature provides us with a sense of wonder and awe.

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Those Are Pearls

Fall fathers better fall leaves;
Of those pearls that were his eyes;
But still a rear a change
Into something unsaid.

These precious, precious words by Ariel Dorfman, a renowned writer and human rights activist, speak to the power of language. They remind us that words have the ability to shape our thoughts and actions. Dorfman’s words are a powerful reminder of the importance of language in our lives.

— What is the significance of the phrase “lire l’univers”?.
— “Lire l’univers” is a phrase that refers to the act of reading the universe. It suggests that the universe is a book that we can read and understand. It is a metaphor for the idea that the universe contains information and knowledge that we can learn from.

— What is the role of language in creation?
— Language plays a crucial role in creation. It is a medium through which we express our thoughts and ideas, and it enables us to communicate with others. Language is also a tool for creation, as it allows us to create new meanings and new ideas. Without language, we would be unable to create art, literature, or science.

— What is the relationship between language and culture?
— Language and culture are closely related. Language is a means of communication that is shaped by culture. Culture, in turn, is shaped by language. The two are interdependent and inseparable.

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Jeffrey Gibson: The Anthropophagic Effect

In his exhibition and residency “The Anthropophagic Effect,” presented in the summer of 2019 at the New Museum in New York, Jeffrey Gibson uses the term “anthropophagy” to refer to the cultural act of cannibalism, understood not just as an act of eating one’s own flesh but also as a metaphor for the appropriation of cultural patrimony, including language and ideas, and the exchange of cultural gestures. Gibson’s term emphasizes the importance of these exchanges in constructing a series of small openings that re-shape the ways in which we understand cultural appropriation.

Gibson’s work is characterized by its use of traditional materials, such as birch bark and glass beads, which are traditionally associated with Indigenous cultures in the Americas. He takes these materials and transforms them into modern, haute-couture garments, challenging the boundaries between traditional and contemporary art and design.

In the exhibition “The Anthropophagic Effect,” Gibson presents a series of garments that are inspired by the traditional attire of Indigenous peoples. The garments are made from birch bark and glass beads, which are traditional materials used in Indigenous fashion. The garments are designed to be wearable art, and they are displayed on a mobile platform that curves around the exhibition space.

In his residency at the New Museum, Gibson works with a group of Indigenous artists and craftspeople to create new garments and to expand the frameworks of cultural exchange.

The title of the first performance, “THE ARTIST IS FREE,” refers to Gibson’s ability to create new works that are informed by traditional techniques and materials. The performance features a group of Indigenous artists and craftspeople who work with Gibson to create new garments.

In conclusion, Jeffrey Gibson’s work is a testament to the power of cultural exchange and the importance of traditional materials. His work challenges the boundaries between traditional and contemporary art and design, and it offers a new perspective on the ways in which we understand cultural appropriation.
Gibson produced during this, 2019, 2019, techniques that Gibson employs, 2019.

The Anthropophagic Effect

"Samples and Citations" is organized by Jeffrey Gibson and Kate Wiener, Curatorial Assistant.

The Anthropophagic Effect, Helmet no. 3

The Anthropophagic Effect, Garment no. 3

This Resource Center presentation includes archival materials from the American Indian Community House Gallery, a historic community center and exhibition space—which mounted Gibson's first solo exhibition in New York City—alongside a diverse reading library with publications exploring Indigenous art and culture from the twentieth century to the present.

"Samples and Citations" is organized by Jeffrey Gibson and Kate Wiener, Curatorial Assistant. We are thankful to collaborators Kathleen Ash-Milby, John Lukacs, Polly Nondorstand, and Candia Hopkins for their generous insights and loans.

The Resource Center is a hybrid exhibition, study, and pedagogical space that provides a generative platform for presenting histories, in-depth research, and broader contexts for artistic and curatorial production. overseen by the Department of Education and Public Engagement, the flexible space is programmed by a variety of practitioners.

List of Works

Jeffrey Gibson

The Anthropophagic Effect, Garment no. 1, 2019

Canvas, cotton, vinyl, brass grommets, nylon thread, artificial sinew, dried pear gourds, glass and plastic beads, plastic beads, birch, porcupine quills, nylon ribbon

58 x 72 x (147.3 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

Jeffrey Gibson

The Anthropophagic Effect, Garment no. 2, 2019

Canvas, cotton, vinyl, brass grommets, nylon thread, artificial sinew, dried pear gourds, copper (ingots, glass and plastic beads, nylon ribbon

58 x 72 x (147.3 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

Jeffrey Gibson

The Anthropophagic Effect, Garment no. 3, 2019

Canvas, cotton, brass grommets, nylon thread, artificial sinew, dried pear gourds, glass and plastic beads, nylon ribbon

58 x 72 x (147.3 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

Jeffrey Gibson

The Anthropophagic Effect, Helmet no. 1, 2019

Split reed, brass bells, cotton thread, acrylic medium, artificial sinew

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

Jeffrey Gibson

The Anthropophagic Effect, Helmet no. 2, 2019

Split reed, brass bells, cotton thread, acrylic medium, artificial sinew

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

Jeffrey Gibson

The Anthropophagic Effect, Helmet no. 3, 2019

Split reed, brass bells, cotton thread, acrylic medium, artificial sinew

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

Selection of objects from the collection of the Gibson family (1980–present).

Canvas, brass grommets, nylon ribbon, glass and plastic beads

58 x 72 x (147.3 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy the artist, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., Kavi Gupta, and Roberts Projects

*This work is in process and will be produced over the course of the residency.

Samples and Citations

"Samples and Citations" presents some of Jeffrey Gibson's manifold influences in the Fifth Floor Resource Center, showcasing samples of works by contemporary and historical Indigenous musicians, visual artists, curators, and writers. Dialogue and collaboration are integral to Gibson's practice and his work often draws—materially, visually, and conceptually—on these connections. Employing mixed mediums, his works reference diverse thinkers and makers, interweaving text from materials, his works reference diverse thinkers and makers, interweaving text from traditional indigenous handcraft and aesthetics. "Samples and Citations" offers visitors the opportunity to learn about some of the Indigenous platforms and practitioners that Gibson works in dialogue with, and to delve more deeply into this network of exchange.

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Public Programs

**PERFORMANCE:** The Spirits Refuse Without a Body

Thursday February 21, 7 PM

Sky Room

"Activating the collection of garments and helmets Gibson produced during this residency, this intimate performance will feature a live set by DJ Koolmum and performances by musician Laura Ortman and choreographer Mx. Oops, accompanied by two dancers.

**CONVERSATION:** Glenn Adamson And Julia Bryan-Wilson

Saturday March 16, 3 PM

Theater

This conversation between curator and writer Glenn Adamson and art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson will situate the Indigenous handcraft techniques that Gibson employs within a broader design history.

**GALLERY TALK:** Kathleen Ash-Milby

Thursday April 11, 3 PM

Fifth Floor Gallery

Curator Kathleen Ash-Milby will discuss the history of the American Indian Community House Gallery in New York City, where she served as curator and codirector from 2000 to 2005. The gallery presented many important exhibitions by Indigenous artists, including Gibson's first solo exhibition in the city.

**CONVERSATION:** Valerie Steele And Jeffrey Gibson

Thursday May 20, 7 PM

Theater

This conversation between legendary fashion historian Valerie Steele, Director and Chief Curator of The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, and Gibson will explore relationship between couture and Indigenous fashion design.

**PERFORMANCE: To Name An Other**

Saturday June 8, 3 PM

Lobby and Theater

In a special closing performance for Gibson's exhibition, fifty performers will come together for a drumming event to give names to our current political climate.

To Name An Other was originally commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery Smithsonian Institute, IDENTIFY performance art series, 2016. Additional support was provided by Kavi Gupta.

Sponsors

**Artist commissions at the New Museum are generously supported by the**

Nexon / Edith Artist Commissions Fund.

**Artist residencies are made possible, in part, by:**

Laura Wolfer

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