

Issue 12 – Corey Whyte

SOS / Sculptors on Sculpture is a series of weekly condensed interviews with early career contemporary sculptors.

Corey Whyte is a London-based sculptor. His work sets to examine, play with and continue, an observation on how society operates within the cult like culture of consumerism. The essence of the study is seasonal times and the ingrained control on our natural way of life.

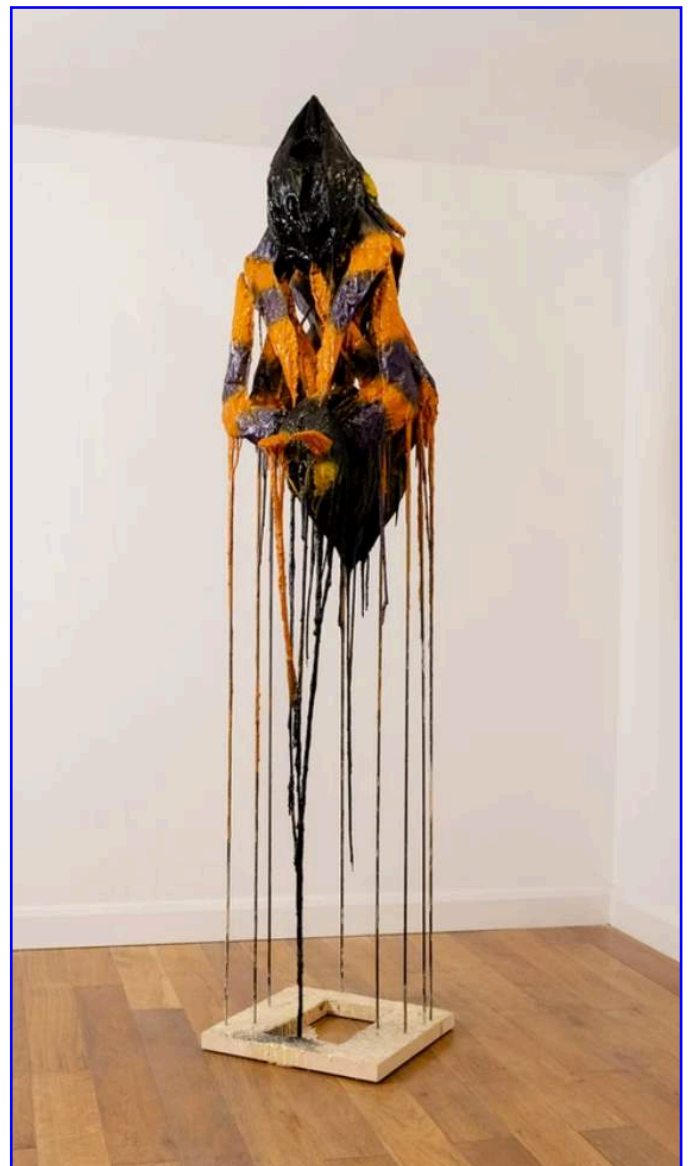
SOS: *Sculptors_on_Sculpture* came into fruition in the first lockdown, as we enter a second, have you been able to operate and make sculpture during these times?

CW: Well, luckily in February I started to devise a new series of work, I'm calling 'Imagery' works. I was experimenting and thinking about those when the first lock down hit. I decided this shit's going to last longer than 3 weeks and so I brought a lot of materials home. The studio closed for that first fat bit of lockdown so it was lucky I got those really. I managed to be quite productive over that time, when the studio reopened I continued the new sculpture I was working on and finish the 'Imagery' works, which all got finished in July. I was also working at a store throughout lockdown, so only got the 12 new pieces done. More are coming!

SOS: I recall fondly stumbling across your exhibition "Enter the Golden Quarter" with Cole Projects in Autumn of last year. Was a wonderful first encounter. Can you talk more about this exhibition?

CW: That's great! I am glad you did. Many people have told me the same, which is amazing.

That was my first solo show. It came from a studio visit from Cole Projects in Jan 2019. It was a mix of works that were Halloween and Christmas based, which are the main seasons in The Golden Quarter (TGQ). TGQ is the biggest time of the year for consumption, mass sales and holidays to milk. The show opened the night



'You Consuming Me, Me Consuming You', 2019 at Cole Projects, London

of 30th September, hence "Enter The Golden Quarter", which also makes reference to Metallica's Song title 'Enter The Sandman' as the exhibition featured my (now on hold) studio studies. It was very successful. Camilla at Cole Projects found an amazing location for the show, it was this great boot shaped space that allowed us to create this maze of work that almost trips you into being consumed by it.

SOS: I'd like to discuss the process of making your sculptures; they are such an incredible interwoven web of gravity defying drips. Where do you start?

CW: Making wise, I start with research for the inflatable(s); I often source them from ebay or stores in USA. Sometimes I respond quickly to them, other times they sit around for a while. There is very rarely a preliminary drawing

made. I often just have a spark and go from there really, so the process is sporadic and uncontrollable. It's a collaboration between my self and the materials nature really, I can't speak for it. Sometimes the inflatables will be on a stand already or I will rearrange them onto one. And finally they get painted back to the inflatables original colours with spray paint. Oh and Lacquer... lots of Lacquer!

SOS: Are there any sculptors practicing today who you feel you share particular affinity with?

CW: I'm attracted to sculptors mainly, those who are manipulators of material, who are makers and who are clear masters of the materials they are working with. But just to (short) list them off... I particularly like Cajsja Von Zeipel, Tau Lewis, Guan Xiao, Jean-Marie Appriou, Huma Bhabha and Thomas Houseago.



'You Consuming Me, Me Consuming You'
(detail), Inflatable, resin, wood, enamel
paint and lacquer.



'The Egg Merchant', 2020, Paper, Pencil, Pen, Ink, Spray Paint, Glue, Corrugated Bitumen and Fixative.

I'm quite obsessed with Korakrit Arunanondchai's work he makes with fire, often called Painting with History they have an amazing process. I don't know any of them personally, but I find myself going back to their Instagram or gallery website(s) often. All have a feast for you.

SOS: [Guest Question] Your use of resin reminded me of Sterling Ruby's monumental urethane works. This question comes from an interview between Ruby and Alain Elkann in 2017. "When did you understand that you were an artist?"

CW: Ah it was always going to happen! My father (Steven Whyte) is a sculptor and I grew up being in the studio with him. It was mainly drawing at first. Then my high school teacher introduced me to H.R. Giger and Keith Haring, two very different ends of the stick but they're

the main humans I always come back to. My first inspirations. And it just gets fucking weird from there!

SOS: Besides your practice what's filling your time right now? Are there any books /television/ podcasts you'd recommend?

CW: This year resulted in re-deep binging into Anthony Bourdains shows, X-Files and Studio Ghibli.. I watched Silence of the Lambs a few times... and Labyrinth.

I would also recommend Ancient Aliens and re-watching Pokemon, that hits you right in the childhood! I often retrace through all my sculpture books, I find they may mean different things to you over time. Recently, I've been enjoying JTT's new podcast, Talk Art is always very enjoyable and The Great Women Artists Podcast has a great episode on Louise Bourgeois.



'Christmas Morning', 2020, Inflatable, resin, wood, enamel paint, lacquer and fixtures.