

**PSYCHIC REBUILDING**  
**GERALD JACKSON**  
**April 20–June 4, 2022**

Parker Gallery and Marc Selwyn Fine Art are proud to present the inaugural West Coast exhibitions of polymath artist Gerald Jackson (b. 1936, Chicago, IL). The exhibition at Parker Gallery, *Psychic Rebuilding*, focuses on rarely seen paintings and skid constructions from the 1980s.

Jackson lived in a loft on the Bowery in New York City from the late 1960s until 2002, absorbing castaway materials from his neighborhood into his life and practice. Skids or wood pallets, as well as assorted debris from the street, became kindling to burn for warmth during the winter months, then essential materials for his multilayered *Skid Paintings*, begun in the 1980s. Harnessing the psychic energy and inherent strength of these items, Jackson added his own arsenal of influences and ideas—from poetry and jazz to ancient Egyptian symbols and motifs—creating works dense with spiritual reverberations, functioning as conduits for self-reinvention.

Reflecting on his decision to use skids as material supports, Jackson notes, “I chose those because the skids already had their own power and strength. They were strong; they were used to hold heavy equipment. And I always thought I needed something else that already had strength, that I could pull my stuff and my *self* with it, because I didn’t have that backup.”<sup>1</sup>

The artist’s total devotion to making art coincided with his move to New York City from Chicago’s South Side in 1963. Deconstructing his personal past—characterized by racial divisions and the looming threat of violence—Jackson immersed himself in a community of creatives including David Hammons, Ellsworth Ausby, Keith Haring, Peter Bradley and Ornette Coleman, among others. He showed with the influential dealer Allan Stone from the late 1960s through 1990, continuing to innovate across different disciplines, mediums and forms, simultaneously mining and shaping his subconscious through his practice.

Many of the paintings on canvas in the exhibition employ a variety of symbols made using stencils and spray paint. Stars, robots, tribal motifs, and figures commingle on the surface, with the artist’s improvisational streaks of paint and oil pastel dancing on the surface, connecting ready-made images and icons with his own gestures. Ancient Egyptian culture continues to be a strong influence for Jackson, favored by the artist for its use of simplified forms to depict people, places, and things.

In all of his work, Jackson cuts across boundaries of race and class, moving through historical epochs and ancient cultures with his wide ranging references, harnessing the spiritual and healing powers of art.

These inaugural West Coast exhibitions are presented in partnership with the artist Gerald Jackson and his manager Rai Alexandra (Studio@RaiAlexandra.com) – we thank them for their support and collaboration.

<sup>1</sup> “Gerald Jackson by Stanley Whitney,” in The Oral History Project series, *BOMB Magazine* (January 19, 2016).

**Gerald Jackson (b. 1936 in Chicago, IL, lives and works in Jersey City, NY). Recent solo exhibitions include those held at Gordon Robichaux, NY (2021), White Columns (2021) and Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba House, NY (2020). In 1983, the artist’s work was included in the historic *The Black and White Show*, curated by Lorraine O’Grady at Kenkeleba Gallery, New York. Other significant group exhibitions include *Painted in New York City: Viewpoints of Recent Developments in Abstract Paintings*, curated by James Little, Hofstra Museum (2001), *Jus’ Jass: Correlations of Painting and Afro-American Classical Music*, Kenkeleba Gallery, New York, NY (1983), *Lamp Black: Afro-American Artists*, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA (1973), and *New Black Artists*—circulating exhibition, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY (1971). His work is included in the collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, and Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.**