

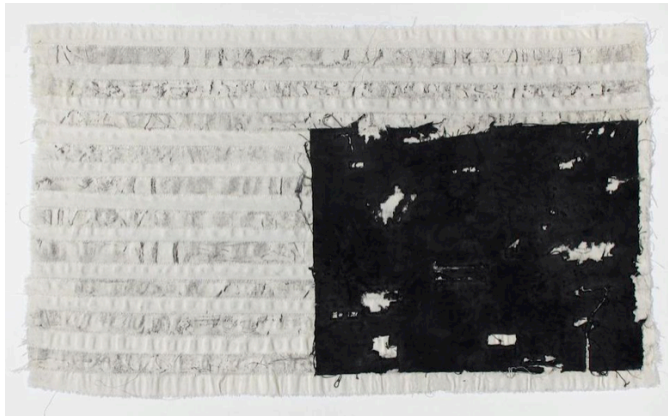
BMW Art Journey And Art Basel Take On Cultural Identity, Slavery And Migration

Nargess Banks, Jul 31, 2018



Artist Jamal Cyrus speaks with Skidmore College students about his work, TANG TEACHING MUSEUM

Afro-Atlantic notions form the conceptual base for the latest BMW Art Journey. Jamal Cyrus is travelling from the United States to Europe, Africa and Latin America tracing the migration of slaves and assess their cultural impact along their journey. His project, explains the Houston-based artists, is “an intercontinental and multinational geography describing the circulation of ideas between Africa, Europe and the Americas.”



Jamal Cyrus, For Bass (Paul) 2016, lasercut canvas, ink, and wax crayon, INMAN GALLERY

Cyrus was selected by an international jury of renowned experts from a shortlist of three artists whose works were exhibited in “Positions” at last year’s Art Basel show in Miami Beach, where the artist was being represented by Inman Gallery. In its third year, the creative initiative sees BMW work with Art Basel to patron interesting and emerging global artists. The association doesn’t

necessarily have a direct benefit for the car company – more, such patronage works well in subtly expressing the creative values of the brand.



Jamal Cyrus, Major & Minor 2014, wood, steel, fabric, silk screen, tacks INMAN GALLERY

“The journey is the work,” explains Cyrus as I briefly catch up with him on the London-leg of his travels. “You see it is not like an artwork. It is about somehow documenting the journey, aspects of which will be put on a show,” he says, adding candidly, “although I’m really not sure what it will look like in the end.” The beauty of the BMW Art Journeys initiative is exactly this: the creatives are encouraged to let the experience organically mold the artwork. Last year’s winner, the English artist Abigail Reynolds for instance, took on lost libraries along the Silk Road. Hers was a search for closed, destroyed or simply missing libraries. Her travels are documented in a book of scrap-notes, words and image that naturally tell a compelling and intimate story of war, displacement, lost languages and lost lands.