

FROM THE HEART

NEW EXHIBIT AT RED BANK'S DETOUR GALLERY FEATURES WORK OF JAMES ANDREW BROWN

RED BANK - Press releases are usually so boring. Just the details, nothing more.

So I was happy to see an email from Detour Gallery curator Rune Egenes with a passionate description of the Red Bank gallery's next show, ironically titled From the Heart, featuring new works by James Andrew Brown.

The show opens on Saturday, September 7 from 6 to 9:30pm at the 24 Clay Street gallery.

Here is Rune's email verbatim.

Hello Jason,

I'm going to write from the heart because that was where it hit me when I first laid my eyes on James Andrew Brown's paintings. This explication is not going to be a typical press release or exhibit statement; I'll be addressing the raw power presented in Brown's artwork by sharing my story.

Detour Gallery has now been open for three years and what a trip it has been. I joined the ship early. In the beginning, when the opportunity of working for Detour presented itself to me, it was not so much the people I was going to work with, or who I was going to work for that was exciting, it was the work of James Andrew Brown. I knew I was about to experience something genuinely masterful, and I couldn't wait to start digging through the collection of large homemade folders holding several works on paper.

What I found was a raw assemblage consisting of energetic brush strokes and collages, congregated by mediums, I can't wholly recognize, all compounded into a perfect story that I still feel in my spine. The message is clear, family and culture, all squeezed in tight. As an African-American artist, it is apparent that Brown deals with race, but not in a way that displays the paintings as a protest, or directing it at people and their prejudices. It seems more like it is addressed to our directions, as a human culture, to suppress the topic of race and avoid its delicacy. We live in a duplicitous world, but Brown's message is direct and blunt, which makes his work uniquely important now.

With that, I cordially invite you to the opening reception at Detour Gallery showing the extraordinary paintings by James Andrew Brown on Saturday, September 7th, 6 PM.

Brown, born in Patterson, NJ in 1953, says, "I think of myself as an interdisciplinary artist, influenced by my ethnic and sociological environment. My work shows the struggle to transcend the trap created by our social environment, and it confronts the traps within its madness; a human expression of our reality that is difficult to comprehend, and often too complex to communicate."

"The anger found in my work is not my anger, but an example of our resistance to change. It is that strong imagery that creates a visual game of mirrors reflecting one's own self, as well as questioning our humanity. In the last few years, I have been exploring the theme of reversals, reversing the stereotypical imagery of African American people and then expanding it to include other cultures. While the work sometimes embraces a humorous edge, it is deadly serious. My intent is to develop awareness and to explore the elements at war with one another in society. I began as a painter, but my work has undergone a steady expansion into large-scale installations I call, visual experiences, which draws from life. Drawing has been a means of exploring visual communication, and it has been a great part of my creative experience."

Brown's body of work includes painting, sculpture, installation, performance art, and video. His work has been exhibited in a variety of group and solo exhibitions throughout America, Europe and China.



Work by James Andrew Brown