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Lawrence Agyei, *Portrait of Marshall Brown*, 2021. © Lawrence Agyei.



Marshall Brown, *Pantheon*, 2020. Collage on archival paper. SBMA, Museum purchase, General Acquisition Fund, 2022.8.1. © Marshall Brown Projects.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art presents
The Architecture of Collage: Marshall Brown
October 2, 2022 – January 7, 2023

Santa Barbara Museum of Art organizes Marshall Brown's first museum exhibition.

July 6, 2022—The Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) announces the exhibition *The Architecture of Collage: Marshall Brown*, on view October 2, 2022 – January 7, 2023. This comprehensive presentation includes twenty-five artworks, including six recent acquisitions by SBMA, loans from the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, the Art Institute of Chicago, and a private collector. In addition, an original etching by the Enlightenment-era architect and printmaker Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778) from the Museum's collection will be included in the exhibition to illustrate the importance of *Le Carceri d'Invenzione* [Imaginary Prisons] as a prompt for Brown's most recent collages.

Brown teaches architecture at Princeton University and over the past ten years has built up a body of work that challenges preconceived ideas about the creative process and what counts as originality. The most complete display of this body of work to date, this exhibition features examples from all four of Brown's collage series. *The Prisons of Invention* and *Maps of Berlin* make their premiere at SBMA, alongside previously-exhibited *Chimera* and *Je est un autre* [sic], a phrase taken from French poet Arthur Rimbaud.

Working from architectural periodicals, books, and photocopies, Brown cuts out photographs of buildings and reassembles them into levitating structures that hover between reality and fiction. James Glisson, SBMA Curator of Contemporary Art and exhibition curator, explains their curious power, “These artworks start a journey towards a destination unknown. They float in a state of suspension where possibilities can be weighed against each other without concern for practicalities or the outcome of a finished building.” Are these collages sketches? Could these gravity defying structures exist? These inevitable questions miss the point. The collages are exercises in imaginative freedom and achieve what contemporary art often does so well: they suggest that the world could be different than what it is without specifying what that might concretely be.

The collages also are physical proof that originality can be a selective borrowing and recombination from the history of art and architecture. Brown has compellingly written about his collages as a form of “creative miscegenation,” and he considers collage a medium well suited to unseating the pretensions around originality and authorship because as he says, “collage can break aesthetic boundaries, expose false dichotomies, and challenge intellectual bigotries.”

Although architectural design has gone digital, Brown insists on paper, glue, scissors, and X-Acto knives. The cuts and the joints matter because they are visible manifestations of his technique. As Brown explains, “The seams created between two pieces of paper in a collage are not lines but gaps. If one magnifies a collage, the seams become fissures. Seams create conceptual connections by holding entirely unrelated things ever so slightly apart.”

Biographies

Marshall Brown is an architect, artist, and director of the Princeton Urban Imagination Center. His artwork is in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago, Arts Club of Chicago, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, and Santa Barbara Museum of Art. He has exhibited at the Chicago Architecture Biennale, Venice Architecture Biennial, Arts Club of Chicago, and Western Exhibitions.

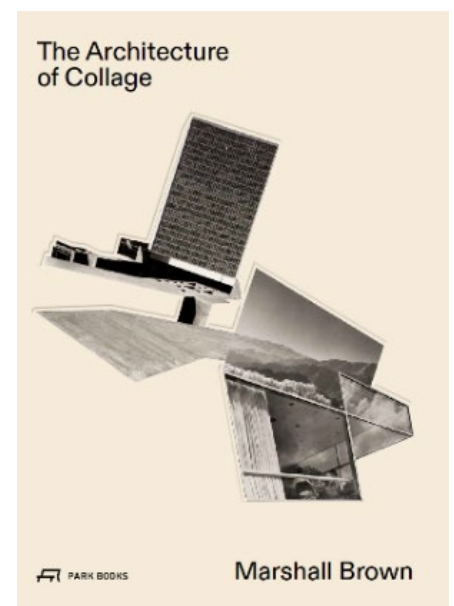
James Glisson is the Curator of Contemporary Art at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. His exhibitions and publications have won awards from the American Library Association, *Choice Magazine*, and American Alliance of Museums.

Exhibition Publication

A substantial multi-author catalogue will be published in conjunction with the exhibition by the Museum and Park Books of Zurich, Switzerland with distribution by University of Chicago Press. It explores the artist’s collage practice to date, with essays by Marshall Brown, Aaron Betsky, Anna Arabindan-Kesson, and James Glisson. Designed by Buro Doeller of Frankfurt am Main, this elegant, full-color publication includes circa 140 pages and over 60 illustrations, with a large foldout reproduction of a *Map of Berlin* (2022), a never-before exhibited or published collage.

The catalogue has been generously supported by Susan D. Bowey; Barr Ferree Foundation Fund for Publications; Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University; Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts; SBMA’s The Museum Contemporaries; and SBMA Museum Collectors’ Council.

Images and catalogue available upon request.



Related Programming

Collage Demonstration with Marshall Brown

Saturday, October 1, 2022, 10:30 – 11 AM (for adults), 11:30 AM – 12 PM (for families)

SBMA's Family Resource Center

Parallel Stories: A Cross-Disciplinary Conversation with Marshall Brown and Jonathan Lethem

Sunday, October 2, 2022, 2:30 – 3:30 PM

SBMA's Mary Craig Auditorium

More information to be listed on the Museum's website at www.sbma.net/events.

About SBMA

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is one of the finest museums on the West coast and is celebrated for the superb quality of its permanent collection. Its mission is to integrate art into the lives of people through internationally recognized exhibitions and special programs, as well as the thoughtful presentation of its permanent collection.

Location: 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 11 AM – 5 PM

Free Thursday evenings, 5 – 8 PM

www.sbma.net

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