

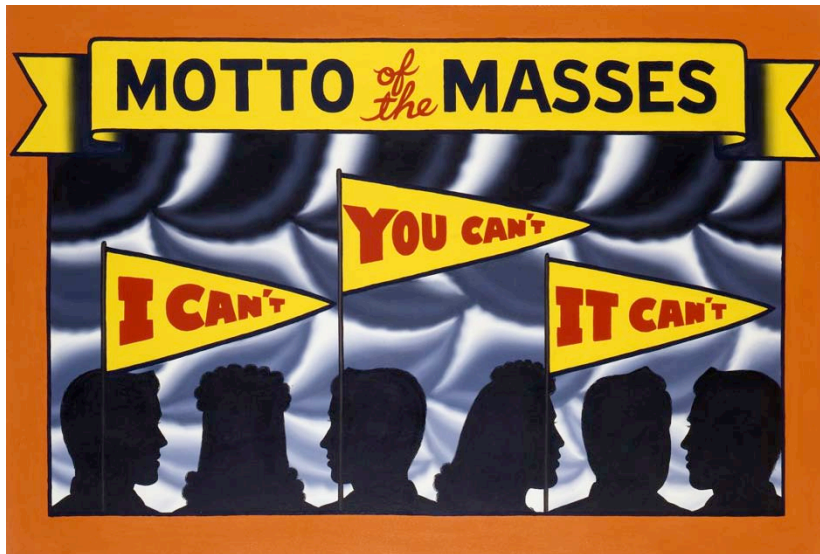
535 WEST 22ND STREET NEW YORK NEW YORK 10011 212 247.2111 DCMOOREGALLERY.COM

ROGER BROWN (1941 – 1997)

Political Paintings

June 18 – July 31, 2015

Opening Reception: June 18, 6:00 – 7:30 PM



Can't Never Could / The Courage to Face The Trials And Bring A Whole New Body of Possibilities Into The Field of Interpreted Experience For Other People To Experience – That Is the [Artist's] Deed, Joseph Campbell. (I Paraphrase Artist's For Hero's) because Campbell Said Artists Are Our Heroes. Read Pages 40-41 of "The Power of Myth" With Bill Moyers, 1991. Oil on canvas, 48 x 72 in.

You're gonna get my view of things, which is not left-wing or right-wing. It's just my view ...
That's what art is—you put yourself on the line.

Roger Brown, 1987

DC Moore Gallery is pleased to present *Roger Brown: Political Paintings*. Spanning the years 1983 to 1991, the work on view provocatively addresses the defining political, social, environmental, and economic crises of the era. A catalogue accompanies the exhibition, featuring an essay by Lisa Stone, Curator of the Roger Brown Study Collection of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Brown's paintings deliver biting commentary on the Gulf War, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the Savings & Loan industry collapse and bailout through inventive use of luminous color, silhouetted figures, stylized natural forms, and dramatic shifts of scale and perspective. "Impelled by current events and keenly sorting through the assorted forms of news media—from standard newspapers and TV coverage, to sensationalized tabloids and talk shows—Brown observed and responded to current events as they unfolded," Stone writes. In *The War We Won* (1991), four life-size politicians mark the end of the Cold War with stiff smiles and an unconvincing handshake, while another conflict escalates in *Gulf War* (1991).

Like his Chicago Imagist peers, Brown aggressively blended borrowings from art history with the languages of vernacular culture. Paintings such as *Can't Never Could / The Courage to Face The Trials And Bring A Whole New Body of Possibilities Into The Field of Interpreted Experience For Other People To Experience – That Is the [Artist's] Deed, Joseph Campbell. (I Paraphrase Artist's For Hero's) because Campbell Said Artists Are Our Heroes. Read Pages 40-41 of "The Power of Myth" With Bill Moyers* (1991) incorporate text on bands of yellow ribbon familiar from carnival sideshow banners. *La Cage Aux Folles (Only the Names are Changed to Protect the Innocent)* (1986) and *57th Street (After Sunset Blvd.)* (1988) blend formal devices from both fresco cycles and comic strips to skewer art world figures and market trends. "Brown's political paintings represent a strong and sustained current in the arc of his career," Stone writes, "but they are balanced by an equally-rich vein of personal and spiritual reflections. *Illusion* (1985), with its haunting visualization of the thin line between life and death, spans both realms."

Roger Brown (1941-1997) grew up in Alabama, where he developed an interest in the material culture of the South. He earned BFA (1968) and MFA (1970) degrees from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In the late 1960s, he participated in two exhibitions titled "False Image" at the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, one of several group exhibitions which followed the "Hairy Who" shows. In addition to painting, Brown created sculpture, stage sets, and murals and amassed three eclectic and inspiring art collections. He died at the age of 56 from complications of HIV/AIDS.

Recent exhibitions of the artist's work include *Roger Brown* at DC Moore Gallery in 2013; *Roger Brown: This Boy's Own Story* at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2012; *Roger Brown: Urban Traumas and Natural Disasters* at the Springfield Art Museum in 2011; and *Roger Brown: The American Landscape* at DC Moore Gallery in 2008. From 2007-2008 the exhibition *Roger Brown: Southern Exposure* traveled to Jules Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University, Alabama; The Katzen Arts Center at American University, Washington, DC; and The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, Louisiana. Brown's work is in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; and Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna.

DC MOORE GALLERY specializes in contemporary and twentieth-century art. The Gallery is open from Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm in June. Summer hours are Monday through Friday from 10 am to 6 pm, July 13 - August 14. For more information, for photographs, or to arrange a viewing, please call 212-247-2111 or email Lily Zhou at lzhou@dcmooregallery.com.