

Life Spasm



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Introductions by Ken Rollins and Mark Ormond

I have followed the work of Jeff Whipple for many years and have tremendous respect for his talent. I have also had the pleasure of working on numerous projects with Jeff over the years, including a twenty-five year retrospective exhibition in 2002. As a painter, sculptor, filmmaker, and playwright, Jeff is without equal. He is proficient in each medium and brings not only exceptional craftsmanship to his work, but intellectual insight as well. Jeff thoughtfully examines issues of our contemporary world with keen insight and a fair measure of humor. His work should be included in any serious collection of contemporary art.

Ken Rollins

President, Rollins Fine Art, St. Petersburg, Florida

Ken Rollins has been Executive Director of four art museums in Florida over a career of thirty years: The Deland Museum of Art, Deland, FL; the Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, FL; the Gulf Coast Museum of Art, Largo, FL; and finally Interim Executive Director of the Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, FL.

For more than twenty-five years Jeff Whipple has impressed the art world with his painting, sculpture and works on paper. He challenges us to read beyond the representational elements of his compositions. Our reward is to be immersed in a world where we are controlled and liberated by the artist.

Whipple's work probes aspects of American culture and its influence. His art can be complex and serious. It can be layered with nuance and charged with elements of surprise and suspense. The object of his satire, commentary or concern can be nuclear bombs, human rights or romance. Whipple's presentations are always convincing, engaging and thought provoking. His works are a commentary on decisions we have made as individuals and as a nation.

Whipple's many contributions to the dialogue in contemporary visual art include his uncanny ability to place the viewer in the midst of some narrative that we soon discover we know very little about. There is often an element of humor in Whipple's work. It can arise from absurd elements in the visual narrative he creates. He reminds us that humor can originate in pain, sadness or vulnerability. Laughter can be connected to anxiety and the recognition of truths we may be uncomfortable acknowledging. Whipple has created work that not only reflects contemporary culture but also inspires and challenges us to consider the myriad of issues and emotions that affirm our place within it.

Mark Ormond

Independent Curator and Arts Writer

Professor, Ringling College of Art, Sarasota, Florida

Curator of *Jeff Whipple: 25-Year Retrospective* at the Gulf Coast Museum of Art, 2002



Photograph by L. Gibson

About the Artist



Jeff Whipple has had 81 solo exhibitions throughout the USA. He has participated in dozens of group exhibitions across the country and won numerous top awards in art competitions.

He has had solo exhibits at the Tampa Museum of Art, the Gulf Coast Museum of Art, the Museum of Florida Art, the Eustis Museum of Art and the Boca Raton Museum of Art. His art has been in group shows at the Jacksonville Museum of Art, the Ringling Museum, the Naples Museum of Art, the Orlando Museum, the Danforth Museum of Art, the Polk Museum of Art, and the Art Institute of Chicago.

He has also worked as a playwright and his plays have been in 19 productions. He's won several playwriting awards including five Florida statewide playwriting competitions.


He has received five \$5000 state arts council individual artist fellowships: Two from Illinois in 1985 and 1990 and three from Florida in 1982, 1996 and 2006. The 1996 Florida fellowship was for Playwriting and Whipple remains the only Florida artist awarded fellowships in two different disciplines. In 2001, he was the first recipient of the annual Fulton Ross Award, a \$10,000 grant based on career achievements.

Whipple's public art commissions include an 80-foot long video on the façade of the Tampa Museum of Art, a 300-foot long hand-painted mural for the City of Tampa and a 150-foot long oil painting mural for the Johnson Library in St. Petersburg, Florida. In 2006, he was commissioned to create a large-scale video/sound installation on a Miami Beach hotel façade during the week of Art Basel Miami.

Whipple received a MFA from the University of South Florida in 1980. He has taught at several colleges including Arizona State University and Northern Illinois University. He currently teaches at Florida State University.

More information and hundreds of visuals: www.jeffwhipple.com

Artist Statement by Jeff Whipple



My artwork has always been fused with my philosophy of living, which is to register, chronicle and respond to life. In recent years I've made art about the amazing miracle of the individual cognizant being and its random, brief appearance in the infinity of time. To represent that brief appearance I use a symbol made from three irregular lines.



The "Spasm"

The symbol represents an individual life. It's based on the perception of pattern: one element alone has no meaning, two could be coincidence but three is a pattern. I use it as a life symbol to represent the pattern of the most basic spasm of movement that distinguishes the living from the dead.

I call the symbol a "Spasm". Each Spasm has the three lines but they all are slightly different to refer to the individuality of each life. Spasms are used in my artwork in many different ways and each particular meaning depends on the context. If you think of them as a symbol for life, you will find your own interpretations about how the symbols interact with the imagery.

The figures with Spasms over their eyes may refer to how some people see the world through their life experiences or through the experiences of others. Or they are trying to see some meaning in life. In some of my images people are covered with Spasms. This could represent how our lives are affected by the people who lived before us. Or it could be about people who are burdened or blessed by other lives. Or the figures could represent whole societies or civilizations.

There are images of Spasms melting or burning like candles to represent how lives continually drip or melt away towards death. In some works, hundreds of Spasms form a solid mass or fabric, which could represent groups of people, communities or human history.

The Spasm began in my artwork in 1982 as a painterly element. I used the three markings as a repetitive pattern that suggested it wasn't random. At that time I began presenting realistic images within fields of colors and markings and I've continued with that same format ever since. I initially used the Spasms to define space in the fields of colors and create moods or visual rhythms. They were sort of like percussion in music and sometimes they were like stitching that wove the composition together. The Spasm began as a design motif to support the imagery and it has now moved to the forefront to become the imagery.



Forward by Jennifer Coolidge

Jeff Whipple is one of the most versatile and technically skilled artists working in Florida today. Whipple's vision drives his stretch in modes of communication. His range as an artist is illustrated through strength in drawing, fluency in all types of painting, printmaking and sculpture contrasted by artistic pursuits in installation work, playwriting and directing, set design, and video and public art presentation. In each media, the artist takes risks. His more recent work draws the viewer/audience in with the familiar in recognizable character(s) contrasted by abstract elements or symbols that take the viewer into a new type of narrative.

In his provocative "Spasm" series exhibited at the Museum of Florida Art in 2010, Whipple conveyed bringing the internal to the external in considering life and human experience through symbolic reference in the 'Spasm' symbol. This philosophical metaphor has been a main focus in Whipple's recent work. We were pleased by the engagement of the public with the work during its display.

Whipple pushed his artistic development through research and development of a new iconography. His work has evolved from a solid foundation in drawing and painting and technical artistic skills. Building on that, he has explored other art forms expanding his art into performance. He has deservedly received fellowship awards from two state arts councils and other multiple awards in his career.

Within the last 10 years, Whipple has expanded upon his two-dimensional works with newer media from film and digital to three-dimensional pursuits, installation work and exploration of various display concepts. In so doing, he has evolved in his expertise as a visual artist with his playwriting, performance production, public art and film with installations. In each case, he has used the new forms of creation as research projects to create new ways of communicating. In such efforts, he is in a process of continual self-improvement of his own art, responding to public feedback and working toward new tools for communicating his intriguing message and observations.

What strikes me about his development is his constant exploration and evolution of techniques and experimentation within a depth of consideration of narrative, observation of the human condition and relating these into new themes, subject matter and symbol. Whipple has not stagnated on one theme or approach that may have received recognition but rather featured multiple approaches in connecting his art to audience. This reflects substantive evidence of his growth as an artist within the depth and breadth of his work and commitment to building a prolific body of work included in publications, exhibitions and various venues.

Jennifer Coolidge
Executive Director
Museum of Florida Art, DeLand, Florida



Historian, oil on canvas, 50" x 40", (127 cm x 101.6 cm), 2007

I was thinking of a college history professor who spends his life researching, documenting and teaching the lives of people in the past. His head is constantly filled with the long gone lives of others. The background is a mass of life symbols that could represent all the lives and civilizations of the past that the historian studies or all his students and readers of his books about the past.

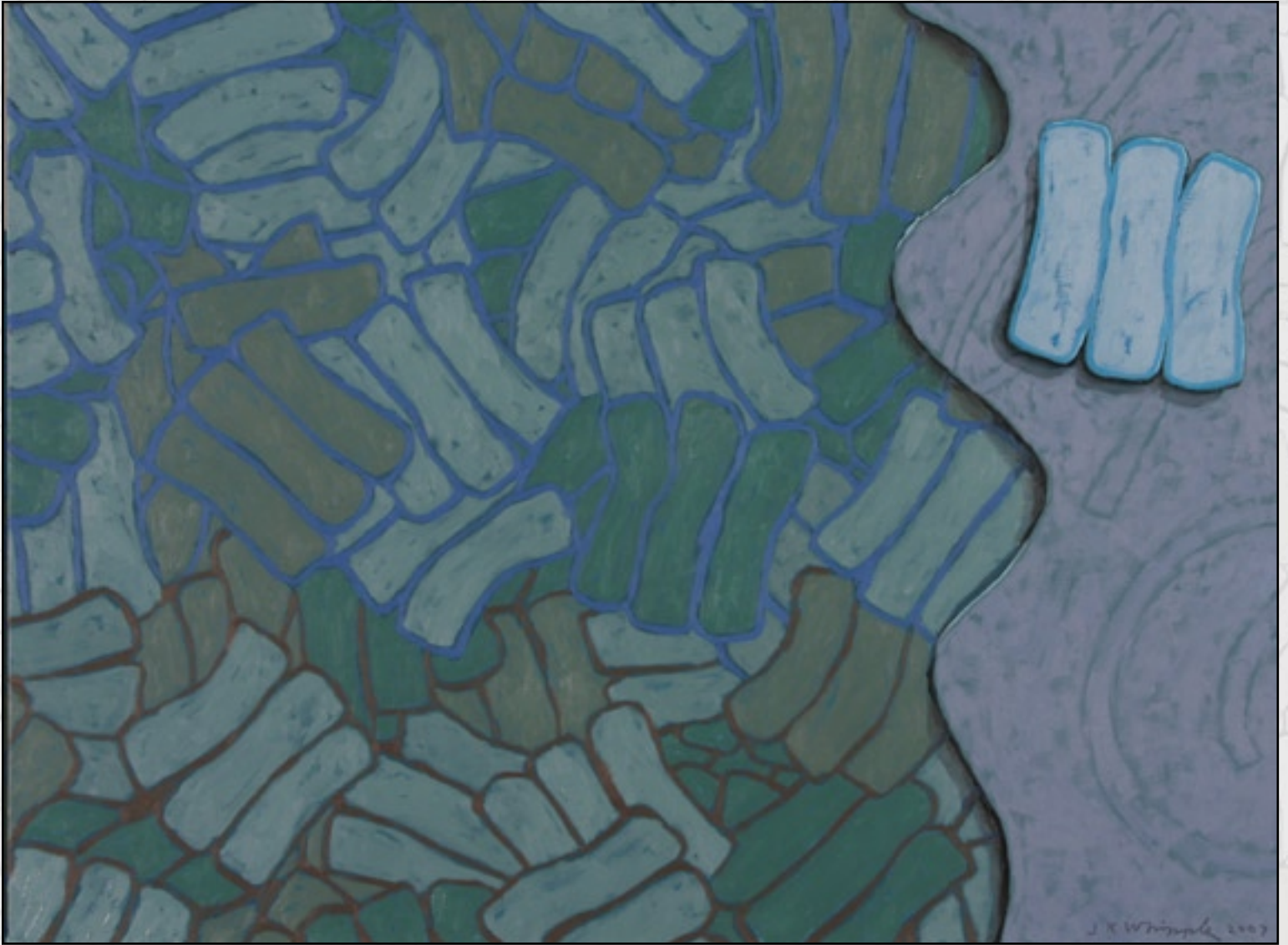
Artist's notes are in italics.



Legacy, oil on canvas, 40" x 50", (101.6 cm x 127 cm), 2007

This could be the most complex painting I've done. The large Spasm, a life symbol, is floating above the background, casting a shadow. There are many Spasms seemingly piled on top of each other in the background. Within the large Spasm shape there is a man covered with Spasm shapes. Behind him is a sky. Think of the man as any person or every single person. He represents all people who have lived. Each person carries the genetic and social information of countless millions. He is covered with so many symbols of lives his own identity is obscured. Or, it's revealed in a different way. Those life symbols could represent his parents and their parents and their grandparents going back in time. Or they could represent all the lives of his children and their children going into the future. The sky behind him represents life in the world; night, day, earth, sky and weather for millions of years. The man is INSIDE the large Spasm. His life and all the lives that are connected to him are only seen from his single perspective. His life is the amalgamation of the collective histories of ancestors. The big life symbol seemingly floats over an endless mass of other life symbols. That background represents, as it does in my other paintings, all the people that have lived throughout time to create the fabric of humanity. This painting is about the legacy we all have been given by the countless lives of our ancestors.

Color is used carefully in this painting. The colors of the Spasms on the man are bright. I made darker and duller versions of the same colors in the background Spasms. Notice too that the background Spasms are all very similar in the darkness of their color. That unifies the background and keeps it from being spotty and distracting. Mixing paint like that is very difficult and it takes a lot of planning. In this piece the color control in the background makes the large Spasm float more and the Spasms on the man seem even brighter. In those ways the color also works with the theme of the piece.



Exile, oil on canvas, 18" x 24", (45.72 cm x 60.96 cm), 2007

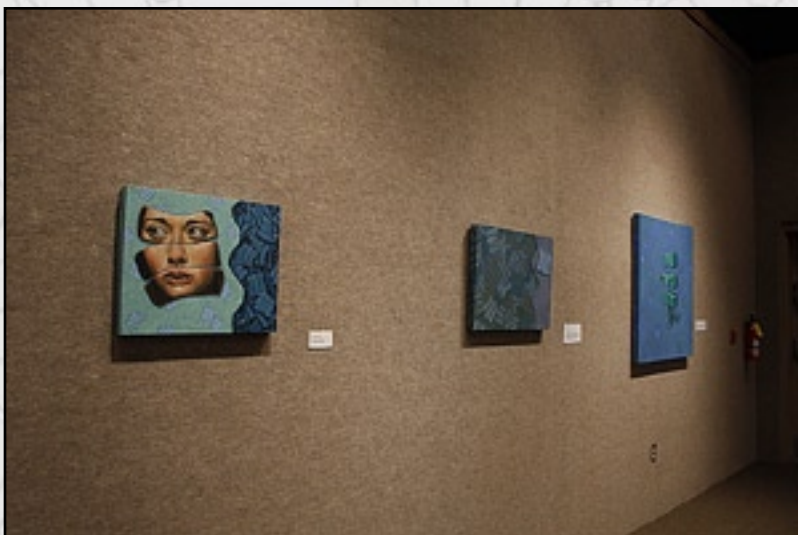
I've done many paintings using the Spasm shapes without images or figures. I enjoy working with the drama of color relationships and 2D composition. In some, like this one, I also play with a little dimension using cast shadows that make the Spasms seem real. It's all made up, of course. This image never existed outside this canvas. It's called "Exile" because the one Spasm is isolated above an area where there are no Spasms. Note how it seems brighter than the ones in the background. To make that happen I had to mix darker and duller paint for all the other Spasms.

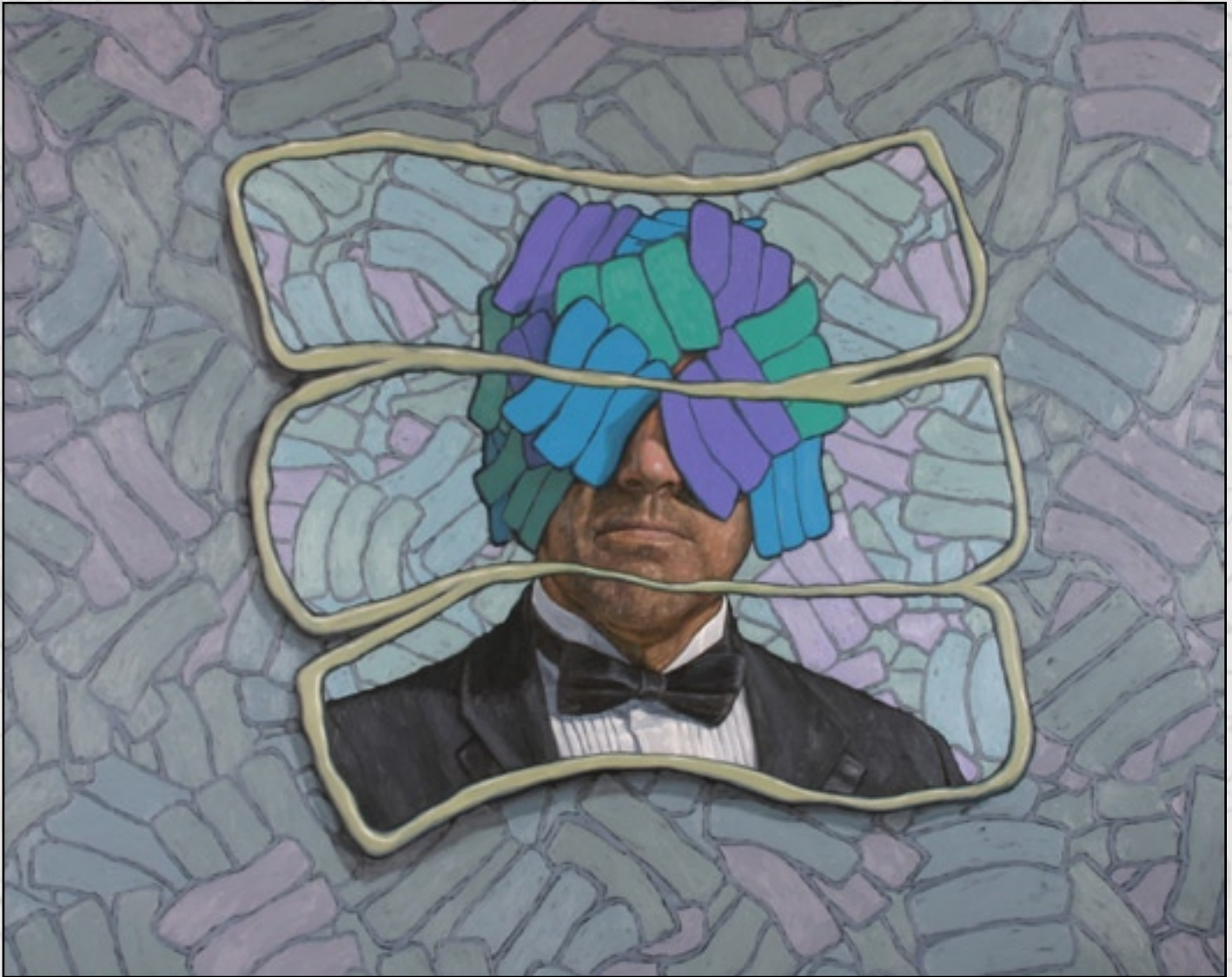


Sentinel, oil on canvas, 72" x 48", (182.88 cm x 121.92 cm), 2011



Heritage, oil on canvas, 16" x 20", (40.6 cm x 50.8 cm), 2010
Collection of Mark Friedemann, Tallahassee, Florida





The Patron Sees, oil on canvas, 48" x 60", (121.92 cm x 152.4 cm), 2007

The images with figures covered in Spasm symbols depict the effect of past or present lives on the individual. Each Spasm shape represents the life of someone who is in the thoughts of these characters, or shaping their choices, desires and perceptions.



Savior, oil on canvas, 70" x 70", (177.8 cm x 177.8 cm), 2007

In "Savior", the large Spasm shape is like a god or some kind of heroic figure floating over masses of regular Spasms. Wherever the large Spasm goes, the smaller ones beneath are brightened, maybe even enlightened.



Bound, oil on canvas, 40" x 30", (101.6 cm x 76.2 cm), 2011



I made molds for sculptures of Spasms that can be cast in various media. For these images, I cast several 3-D Spasms in colored ice and suspended them on strings in the hot sun. I videotaped them melting in time lapse and shot still photographs.

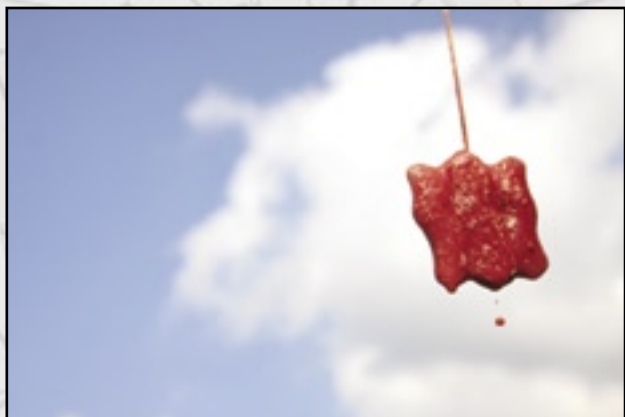
I also cast several in wax with candlewicks. I videotaped them burning in time lapse and took still photos.

These images are selected from hundreds of photographs of the melting and burning Spasms.



Spasms melting or burning are a metaphor for lifetimes, which gradually drip or burn away. Some are faster than others and some seem to go at a slow, leisurely pace.

Images: Melting and burning Spasms, digital photographs, print sizes variable, unedited, 2006





Images: Melting Spasms, digital photographs, print sizes variable, uneditioned, 2006





Self-portrait On My Birthday, oil on wood panels, 126" x 94" x 3", (320 cm x 238.7 cm x 7.6 cm), 2010

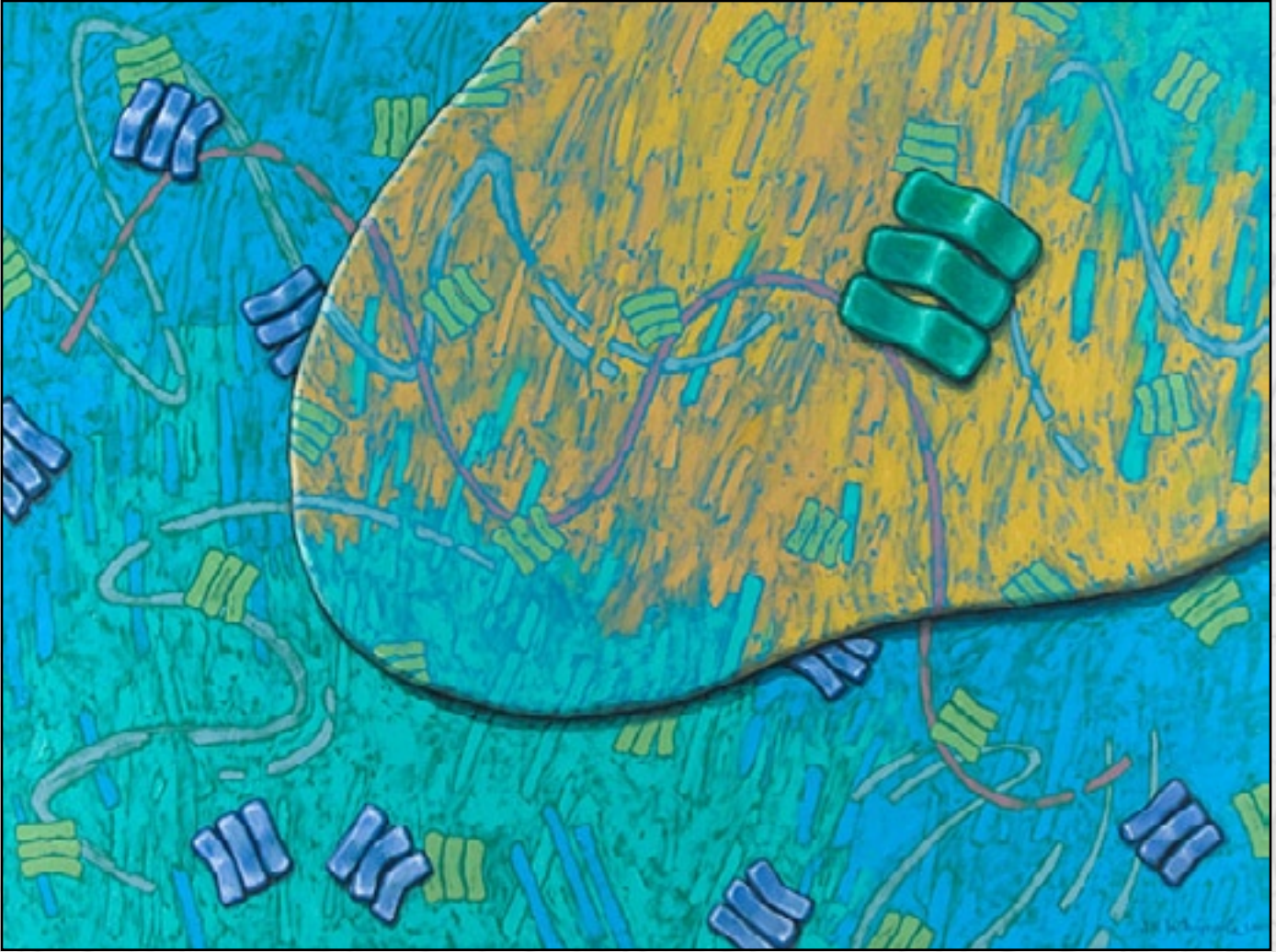
I began putting eyes and mouths on the Spasm symbol in 2006. At that time I was applying videos of my eyes and my mouth talking to an animated Spasm. I kept the eyes out of sync and they were moving with the animated Spasm shapes. It was very funny but also somewhat disconcerting, especially since the dialogue was peculiar too. I did two short videos like that and they were meant to be used in the large-scale video installation called "The Spasm Between the Infinities." But I ran out of time and couldn't make them fit before the video had to be finished.

It seems like a natural extension of my concepts to apply faces to the life symbol. It's the essence of the individual life. I wanted to do a self-portrait with the Spasm shape so for this painting I took photos of myself on my birthday, May 28, and used them to draw and paint the eyes and mouth. This was painted on large wooden panels that I cut out and sanded the edges. I wanted the three panels to look unified so I made the painterly markings, like the spiral and the zig-zag, flow from one panel to the next along with the colors.



Self-portrait On My Birthday, installation view, 621 Gallery, Tallahassee Florida, June/July 2010

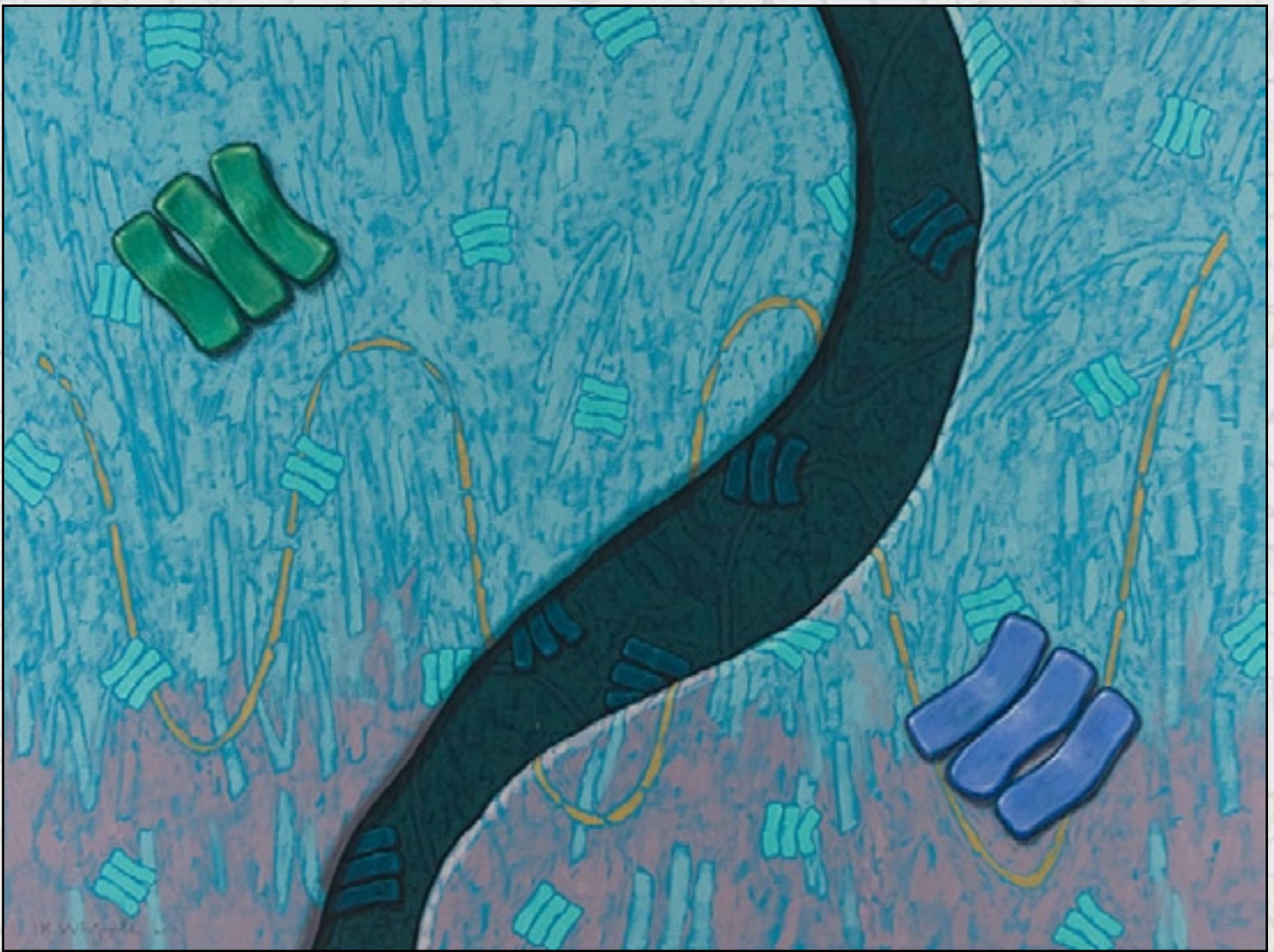




Inevitable, oil on canvas, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2011



Triad, oil on canvas, 48" x 32", (121.92 cm x 81.28 cm), 2011

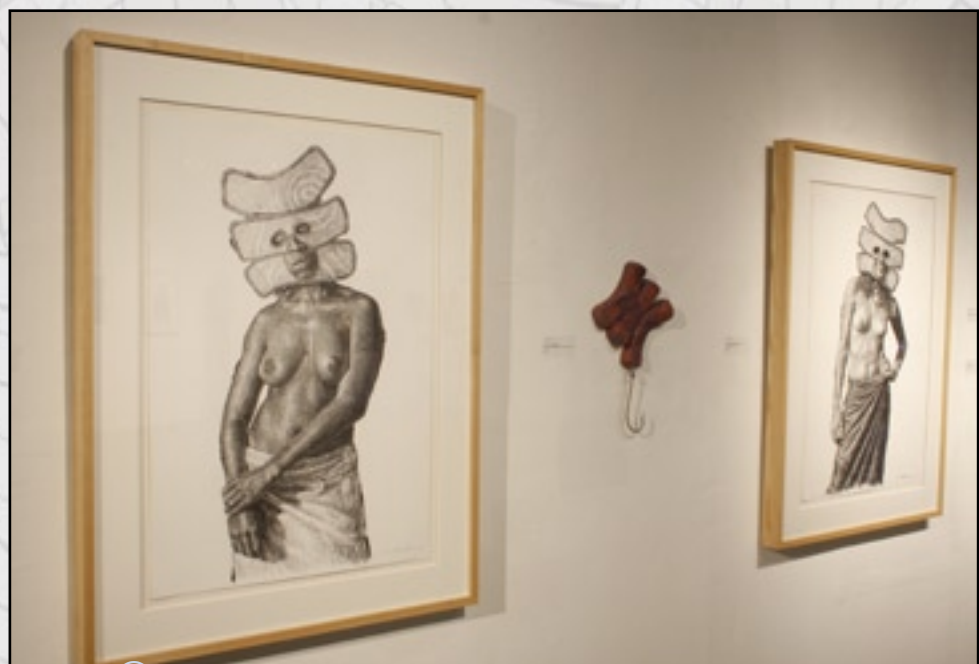


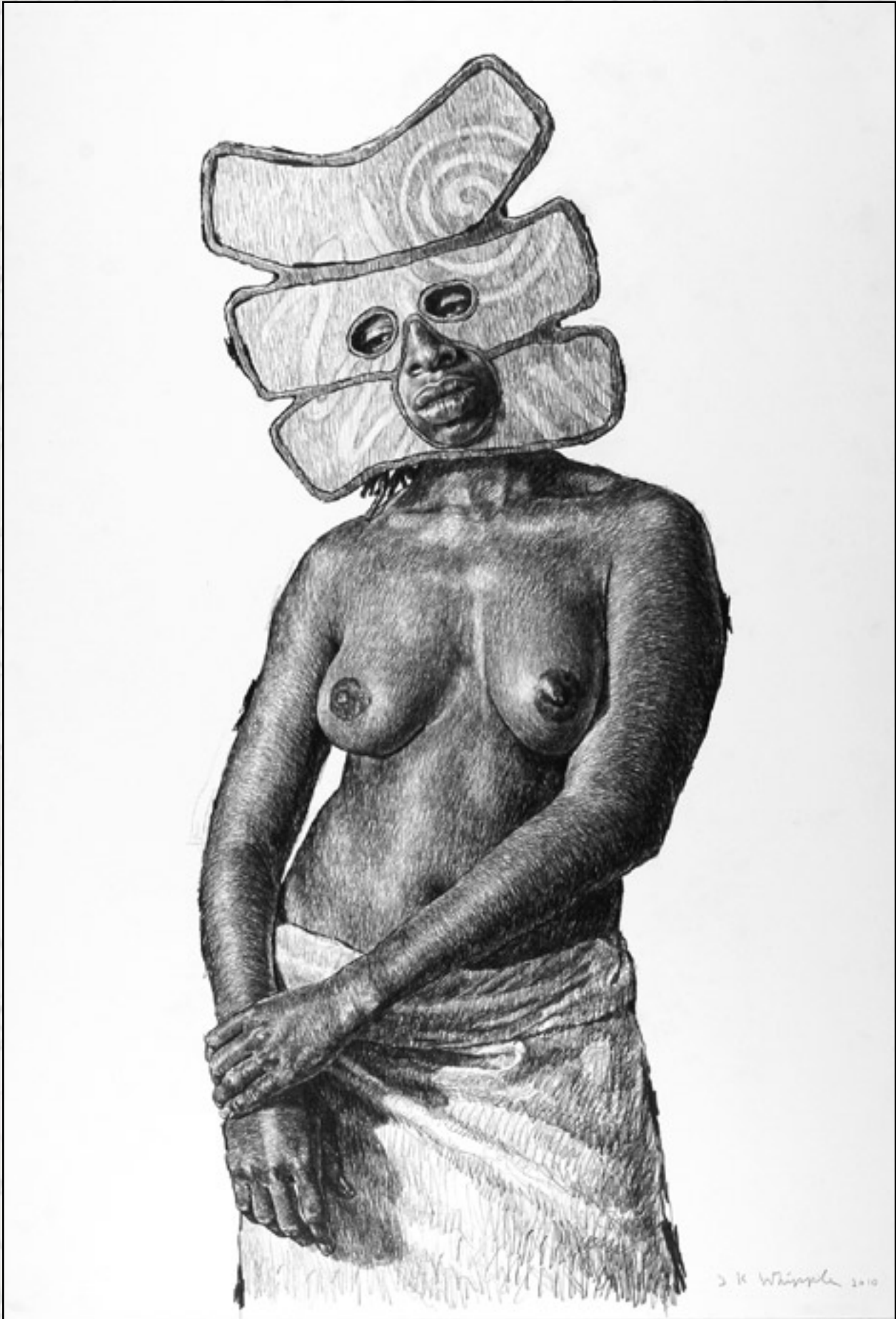
Wavelength, oil on canvas, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2011



As I explored the Spasm theme I began to think of how it might be depicted in ancient times. I was thinking of Greek sculptures when I created this image. Greek sculptures often show beautiful, semi-naked men and women with flowing fabric in powerful poses. They were depictions of Gods and mythological figures but my versions are only meant to be symbolic. They are not religious or god-like, just personified symbols looking at life itself with opinions or...attitude.

A Spasm Goddess with Attitude, pencil on paper, 36" x 24", (88.9 cm x 60.96 cm), 2010





"The Ennui of the Spasm Goddess", pencil on paper, 35" x 24", (88.9 cm x 60.96 cm), 2010



The Ambivalent Genesis of Being, oil on canvas, 45" x 60", (121.92 cm x 152.4 cm), 2010

The two men in the top Spasm-shaped images are my grandfathers, Ken Gooch and Leo Whipple. Ken was a Missouri farmer; Leo an urban businessman near Chicago. Nothing in common. They never met and lived 400 miles apart. The couple is my parents, Moe and Norma, shortly after they first met on a blind date in 1950. The two ceremonial goddess figures represent the random forces of nature battling to determine which chromosomes are combined to form the embryo that becomes a person. They are not enthusiastic warriors and are seemingly unmoved and perhaps bored by the process of how someone becomes who they are. Nature may be bored but I am utterly amazed at how from the billions of people alive my grandparents got together to create my parents and how by some equally improbable chance my parents got together to create me. And in May, the month of my birthday, I created this image to celebrate it.

On the technical side, this scene never existed. I took photos of the two models posing as goddesses. They wore masks and fabric wrapped around their waists but I changed a lot. I invented the shapes at the top, drew the images inside from old family photos and made the shapes appear to have highlights and cast shadows. The imagery in the top three Spasms is rendered in very dull versions of yellow, red and blue, the primary colors. They are equally monochromatic and if you've ever mixed paint, you might have an idea of how difficult that is. The wall and floor are covered with Spasm shapes in even duller versions of secondary colors in equal contrast. Note how the floor appears lighter, as if the light hits it more and the colors are darker in the cast shadows. That's all made up and it's much trickier than painting a real scene.



The Flying Spasm, cast resin and paint, 2008

It should be easy enough for you to find a meaning for a life symbol with wings.



Have A Nice Spasm, hand-cast resin and acrylic paint, 6" x 4" x 2", (15.2 cm x 10.16 x 5 cm), 2010

This little sculpture began in modeling clay. The artist applied a rubber mold material to the clay version. The clay version was destroyed but the mold has all the original sculpting including details as fine as finger prints. The artist then made a cast from the mold using resin. Then he painted the cast with two layers of acrylic paint in a manner than accentuates the textures.

This can also be cast in stone and bronze.

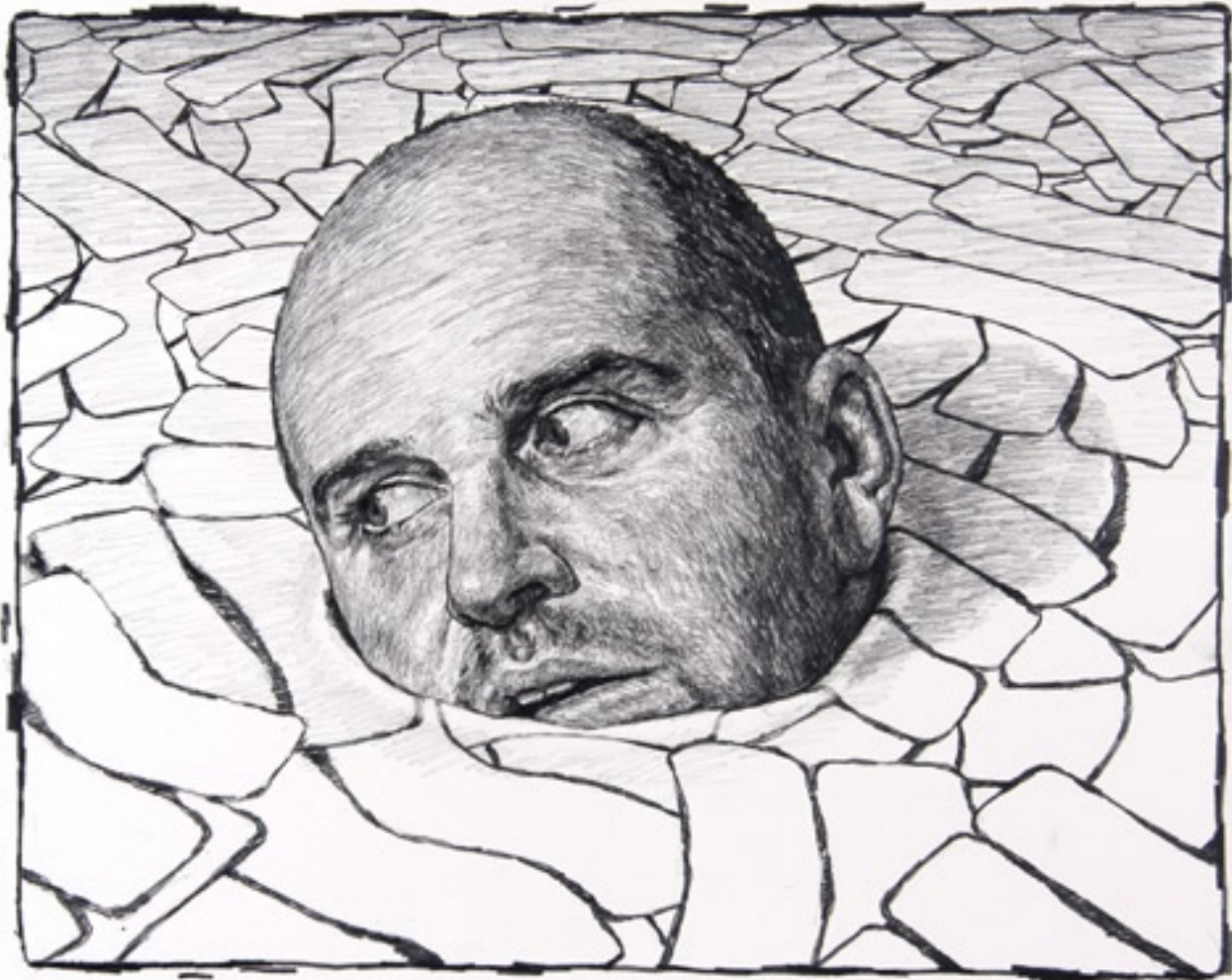




Wade, digital photograph, 24" x 36", (60.96 cm x 91.44 cm), 2008



Patron Award, 22nd Annual Northern National, Nicolet College, Rhinelander, Wisconsin, 2008
Selected for the 58th Annual All Florida Competition, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, Florida, 2009



Deep, pencil on paper, 14" x 17", (35.56 cm x 43.18 cm), 2009



History, watercolor on paper, 30" x 22", (76.2 cm x 55.88 cm), 2009

A young woman is reading a book with the life symbol on the cover. The book is her history. She emerges from a landscape that is made of countless life symbols. We all have emerged from the history of the tragedies and triumphs of people who have lived before us. Whether it's the legacy of genetics, medicine, technology or the arts, we are the recipients of gifts that have been passed along by our ancestors.



Figure Study With Spasm, pencil on paper, 42" x 28", (106.68 cm x 71.12 cm), 2009





Spasm Diver, oil on canvas, 18" x 24", (45.72 cm x 60.96 cm), 2010

Life can be like skydiving. Sometimes we just have to jump and hope there is a parachute that will ease us safely toward what we desire.

Easter Spasms, oil on wood, 12" x 12", (30.48 cm x 30.48 cm), 2007





Embodiment, oil on canvas, 36" x 36", (121.92 cm x 152.4 cm), 2010

In this painting a person is mixed with the life symbol to show the distinction between what we are as flesh and bone and what we are as an individual life. Our bodies are our vehicles through life. Years ago I painted a taxi as a metaphor for our bodies. We get in and we pay the body to take us through life. This image is just another way of looking at someone.



Life Time, oil on canvas, 16" x 20", (50.8 cm x 40.6 cm), 2011



The Unburdened, oil on canvas, 16" x 20", (50.8 cm x 40.6 cm), 2011



Self-portrait Thinking, oil on canvas, 24" x 12", (30.48 cm x 61 cm), 2007



Spasm Goddess, oil on canvas, 50" x 40", (127 cm x 101.6 cm), 2010

Honorable Mention, *Pinnacle II*, National Juried Competition, Florida A&M University, 2010



Seizing the Day, oil on canvas, 45" x 60", (121.92 cm x 152.4 cm), 2010

A man and woman are carrying the life symbol as if they are stealing it. Clouds are seen inside the Spasm shape. Watching clouds is perhaps a most frivolous and unproductive activity but it symbolizes the ultimate in downtime for me. As work and obligations make it impossible to get a day off, I dream of having time to just watch clouds billow up and move across the sky. Making a living often gets in the way of living. This image is a self-portrait showing me stealing, or seizing a day away from problems and responsibilities. The woman holds half the Spasm. She seems hesitant and worried. She could help me and join me or hold me back. Or she could just let go.

Best in Show, *Biennial V*, Museum of Florida Art, DeLand, Florida, 2010

Best in Show, *All-Media National Exhibition IV*, 621 Gallery, Tallahassee, Florida, 2009

Best in Show, *59th Fine Arts Exhibition*, Ridge Art Center, Winter Haven, Florida, 2009



Seer, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", (50.8 cm x 40.6 cm), 2010



Spasm Father Clock, mixed media, cast sculptures, enamel paint and clock, 60" x 16" x 12", (152.4 cm x 40.6 cm x 30.4 cm), 2010

I found a Grandfather clock at the side of a road. It was covered in mold and roaches. I fixed it up because I like the theme of a clock named "grandfather" as if time itself is somehow a parent. I put a new clock mechanism in it and a Spasm shaped face to refer to how time is only relevant to our life. The numbers on the face are random, unrelated to a 12-hour clock and irregularly placed. They represent the arbitrary nature of how we perceive time. The twelve hours system is based on our 24-hour day and would be meaningless to Martians. Why not 65 o'clock? Or 2279 o'clock? Or 3b o'clock? Real Grandfather clocks work using weights to make the clock tick. The weights here are a frightened head, representing every person, and a spiral. I use a spiral to represent time: each year winds around, December to the next December, like an endless rising coil or spiral. The pendulum is a Spasm masked person, the goddess of time, who is wincing, unsure where time will go and not knowing if it'll be great or horrible.





Figure Study With Spasms, pencil on paper, 30" x 22", (76.2 cm x 55.88 cm), 2009



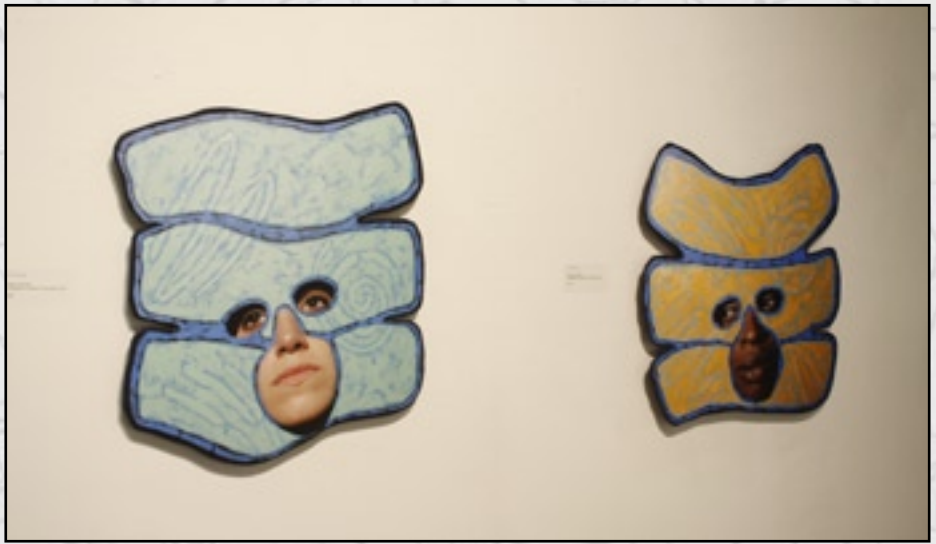
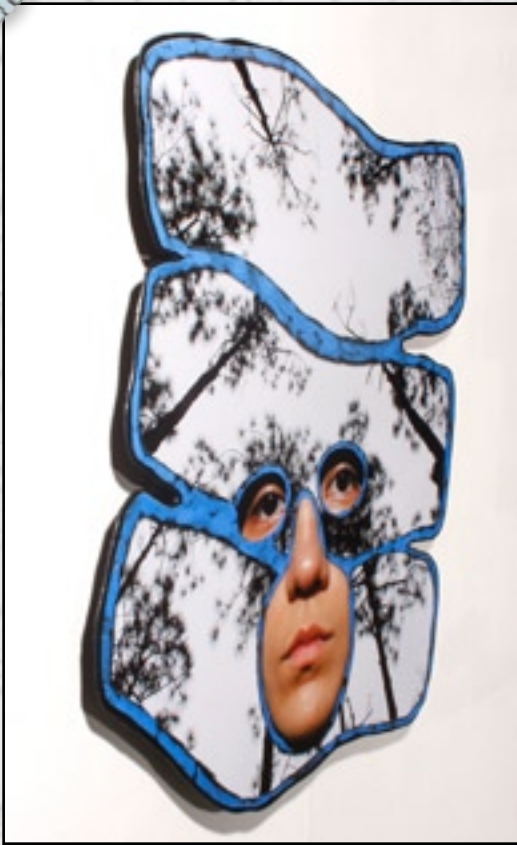


Spasm Entity 4 and 5, each are digital photograph printed on canvas and mounted on shaped wooden panel, 24" x 24" x 2", (60.96 cm x 60.92 cm x 5.08 cm), 2010





Up Into the Pines, digital photograph printed on canvas and mounted on shaped wooden panel,
46 x 46" x 2", (116.84 cm x 116.84 cm x 5.08 cm), 2010



These are installation views of the photographs mounted on shaped wooden panels. The masks that look like they're painted are the actual masks that were photographed on the models. There is no painting on these photographs. The one with the trees was done digitally. I cut the painted part of the mask out and inserted the trees. It's actually the same mask as the green one that the other model is wearing.





Pull, watercolor and acrylic on paper, 22" x 30", (55.88 cm x 76.2 cm), 2009



The Perpetual Spasm, oil on canvas, 30" x 60", (76.2 cm x 152.4 cm), 2007





Smile Spasm, oil on wood panel, 104" x 94" x 2", (264.16 cm x 238.7 cm x 5.08 cm), 2010





These views are to show the scale of "Smile Spasm."

I applied the essentials of the smile of my friend Liz to the life symbol. This image isn't meant to be a portrait of her. It's meant to represent happiness in life. But for me it also is the smile and eyes I enjoy seeing in Liz.





Determination, watercolor and acrylic on paper, 10" x 12", (25.4 cm x 30.48 cm), 2009



Iron Spasm, cast iron, 8" x 8" x , (20.32 cm x 20.32 cm x 3.81 cm), 2009

I made this in Tallahassee at an "Iron Pour" where liquid iron was being poured into molds for a fundraiser. I carved the Spasm shape into a soft sandstone block to make the mold. The blocks were sold to raise money for an alternative art gallery. The iron workers wore fireproof suits and masks as they poured the hot iron into the molds. When I carved this I had to imagine how the Spasm would look in 3D from inside the base. I like the metaphor of heavy metal and strength in the life symbol.





Containment, print with hand-coloring, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2011
Edition of 25



The Disturbed Spasm, mixed media, 36" x 30" x 6", (91.44 cm x 76.2 cm x 15.24 cm), 2010

Unfocused, raw emotion is within everyone. We try to contain it and channel it in productive directions but sometimes it bursts out and suddenly we're doing or saying something idiotic. I wanted to manifest this in a life symbol that is rough-hewn and kind of scary.

This piece is paper mâché on wire mesh with cast plaster spasms, painted wooden eyes and a denture cast that I painted. The tongue is oven-fired clay





Ambition, watercolor on paper, 30" x 22", (76.2 cm x 55.88 cm), 2008



Stuck, digital photograph, size varies, 16" x 22" up, 2008



Stuck, 16" x 20" x 2", mounted on wood panel view.

Juror Award, *Magic Silver*, photo competition, Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky, 2010



Stuck, digital photograph mounted on shaped wood panel, 46" x 38" x 2", (116.84 cm x 96.52 cm x 5.08 cm), 2009



The Emerging Spasm, oil on canvas, 50" x 40", (127 cm x 101.6 cm), 2010



"Life Spasm" © Jeff Whipple 2010



"Life Spasm" © Jeff Whipple 2010



Self-Portrait in Spasms, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2006



Circumstance, oil on canvas, 16" x 20", (40.6 cm x 50.8 cm), 2008



The Mover and Shaker, oil on canvas, 70" x 70", (177.8 cm x 177.8 cm), 2007



Patron, oil on canvas, 36" x 24", (91.44 cm x 60.96 cm), 2007

3rd Place Award, *Pinnacle*, national art competition, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida, 2009

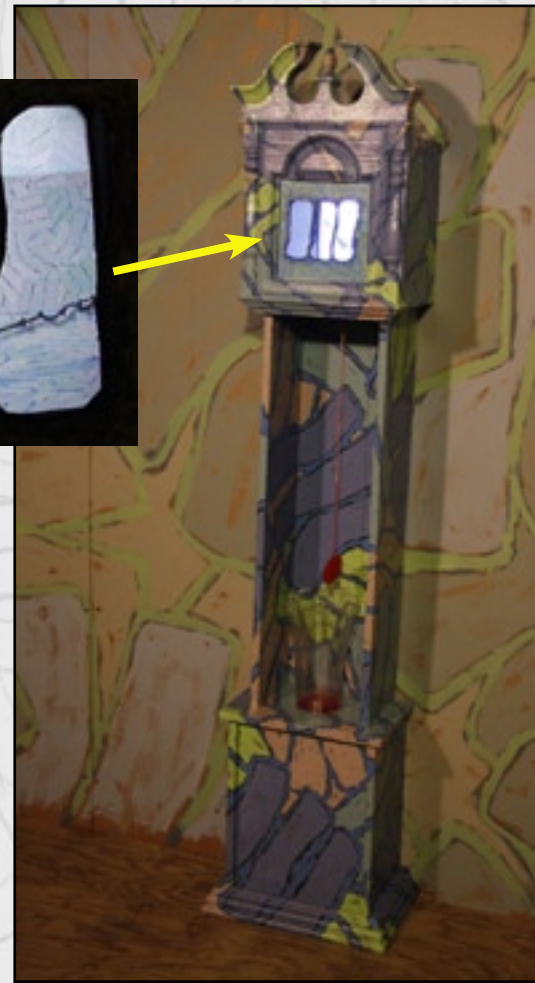
Photograph on right from the opening.





Stuck, installation with found object, photography, painting, video and original music, 8' x 8' x 16', (243.8 cm x 243.8 cm x 487.68 cm), video: 9 minute loop, 2009

This was a curated installation show at the Dunedin Art Center in Dunedin, Florida called, "Contain It." The museum provided PODS storage containers to each artist and they said do anything but don't hurt or mess up the containers.



Above left: one couple was inspired to dance in the pod to the video's music track.

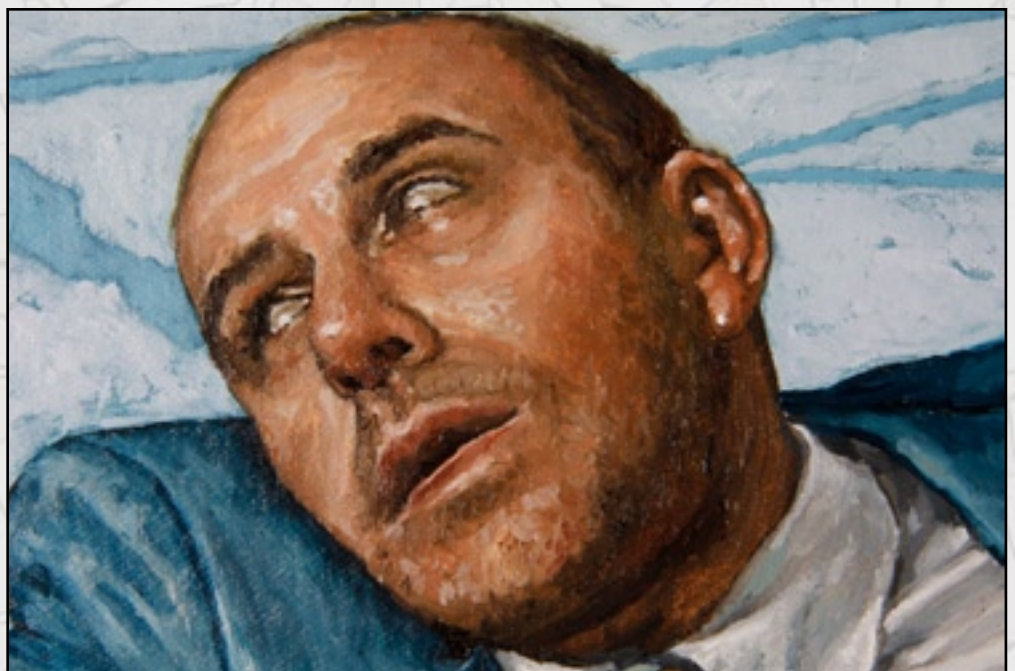
Left: A red Spasm made of ice was the clock's pendulum. It melted throughout the opening party until it was gone.

Right: The grandfather clock had a video that could be viewed through a Spasm-shaped clock face. The video was a male body sinking head-first slowly into a field of spasms.



Tide, oil on canvas, 48" x 60", (121.92 cm x 152.4 cm), 2008

Two people are being overwhelmed by life. Will they sink or float? Will they drift apart? I posed as the guy in this image and a former girlfriend is the woman. We were portraying characters, like actors in theater, so it wasn't meant to represent our relationship. But, in reality, we did get overwhelmed by life a year after this was painted and we drifted apart.





Spasm Entity 1, photograph printed on canvas and mounted on shaped wooden panel, 24" x 24" x 2",
(60.96 cm x 60.92 cm x 5.08 cm), 2009



"Resolve", pencil on paper, 28" x 22", (71.12 cm x 55.88 cm), 2009



Installation views of "The Perpetual Spasm", a solo exhibition in May, 2007 at C. Emerson Fine Art, St. Petersburg, Florida



The Fabric of Life, oil on canvas, 67" x 67", (170 cm x 170 cm), 2007

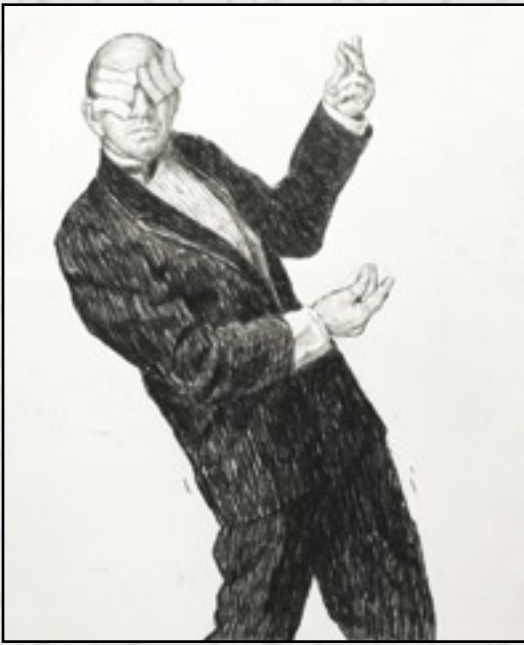
This image is one of several using the illusion of folded and billowing fabric to define the surface. I used this motif for primarily a visual interest but there also is the underlying inference of the fabric being the life force that unifies people and holds them together.



A Patron is Delighted by What She Sees, oil on canvas, 60" x 48", (152.4 cm x 121.92 cm), 2007



This photograph shows the under painting for "A Patron is Delighted by What She Sees". The surface texture of the oil painting is enriched by fragments of the under painting showing through the top layer brush work.



The Patron is Moved by Culture, pencil on paper,
17" x 14", (43.18 cm x 35.56 cm), 2007

The Patron Hates It, pencil on paper,
30" x 22", (76.2 cm x 55.88 cm), 2007





Spasm Face, cast resin and acrylic paint, 16" x 20" x 3, (40.64 cm x 50.8 cm x 7.62 cm), edition of 50, 2010

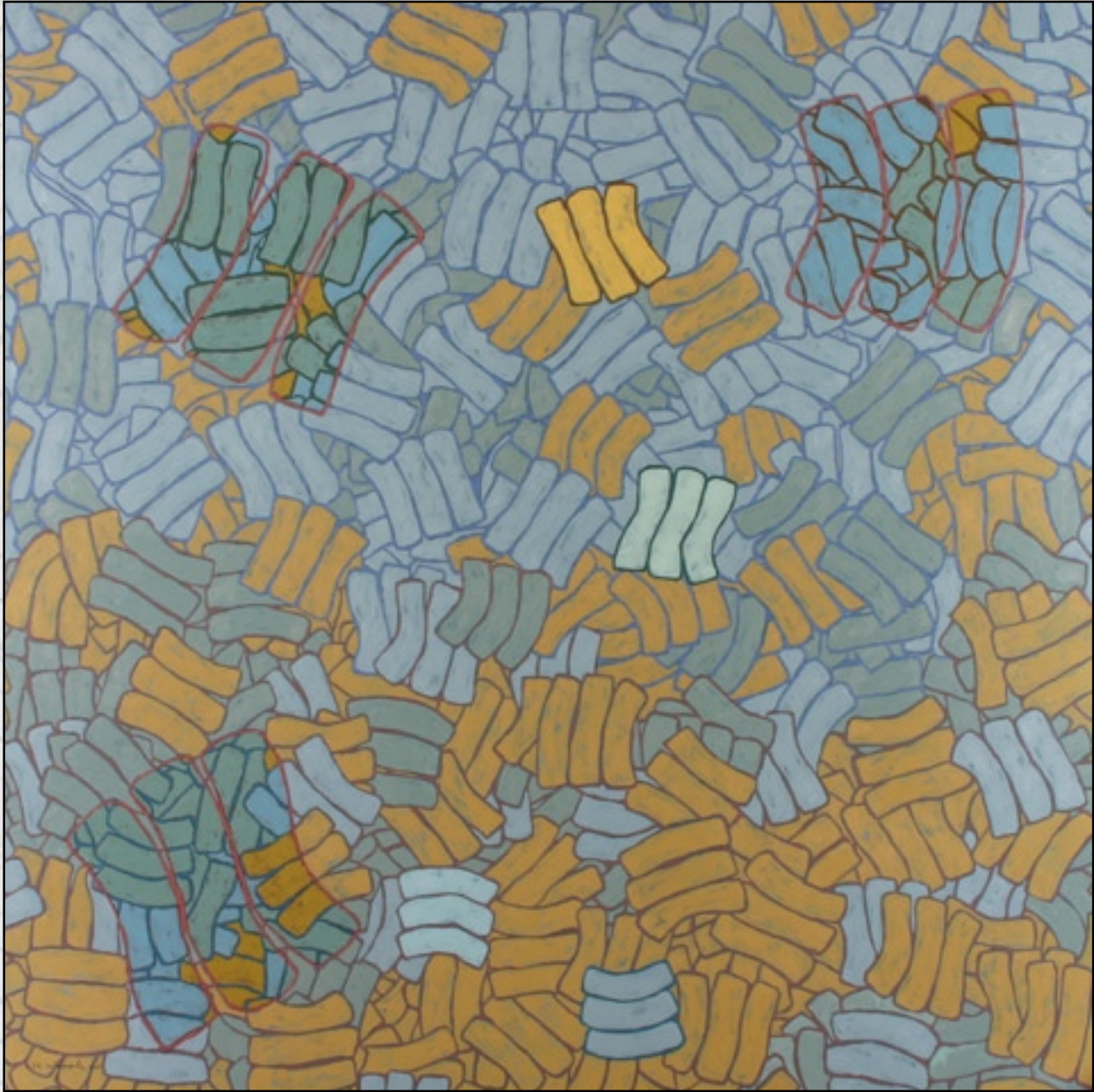




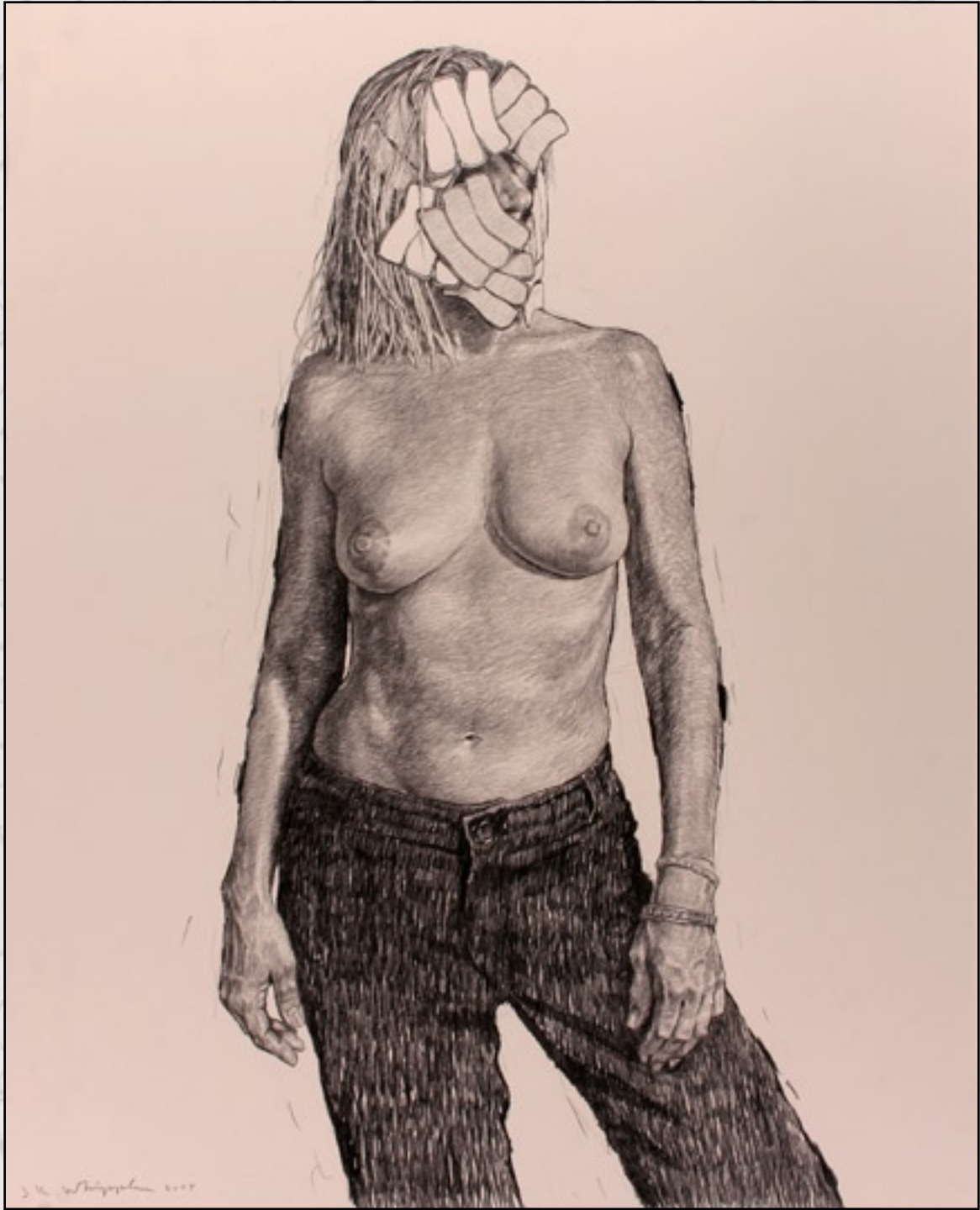
Reach, pencil on paper, 17" x 14", (43.18 cm x 35.56 cm), 2009



The Lure of the Spasm, cast resin, acrylic paint and fish hook, 20" x 14" x 3,
(50.8 cm x 35.56 cm x 7.62 cm), edition of 50, 2010
One artist proof in collection of Ken Naigus, Lake Buena Vista, Florida



Spasm Field #12, oil on canvas, 70" x 70", (177.8 cm x 177.8 cm), 2007



Fashion Trend, pencil on paper, 40" x 32", (101.6 cm x 81.28 cm), 2007
Collection of David Smith, Lakewood Ranch, Florida



The Patron is Moved by Culture, oil on canvas, 40" x 30", (101.6 cm x 76.2 cm), 2007



Contemplation, pencil on paper, 17" x 14", (43.18 cm x 35.56 cm), 2009



The Consequence of Being, oil on canvas, 30" x 48", (76.2 cm x 121.92 cm), 2007



Historian, hand-colored print, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2007
Artist's Proof, 1 of 2, unique color



The Past in the Present, watercolor and acrylic on paper, 16" x 12",
(40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2007



Tethered, oil on canvas, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2010

Think of how a young mother is tethered to her baby during pregnancy with an umbilical cord. Parents are challenged by the conflicting desires of wanting to keep their children under control at the same time as they are teaching them to fly away.

I also like the interpretation of a girl thinking or dreaming about someone or something. The string is connected to a kite or balloon shaped like a life symbol, which could represent her lover or a goal in life.



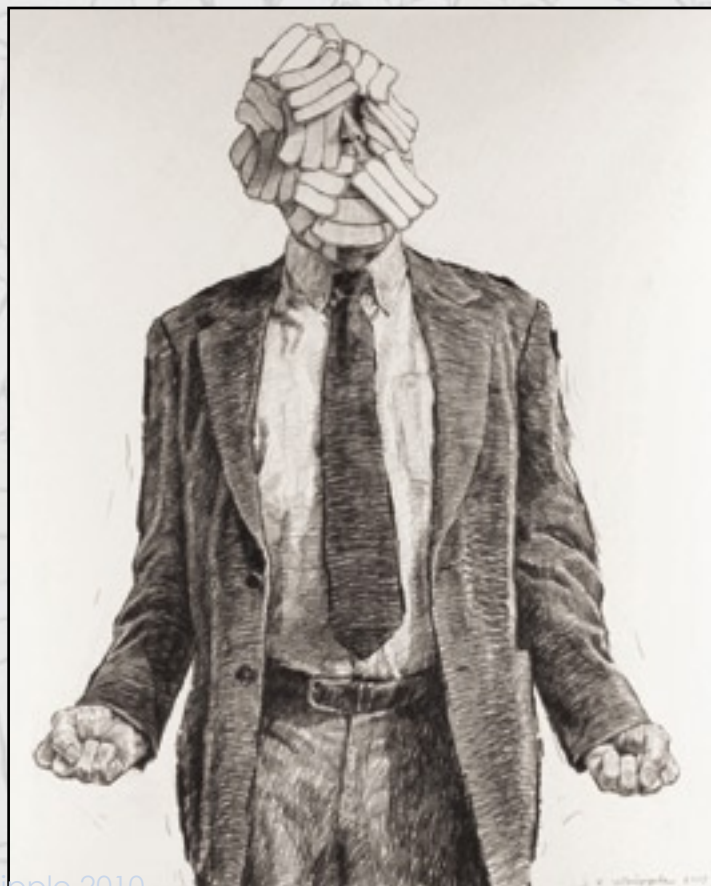


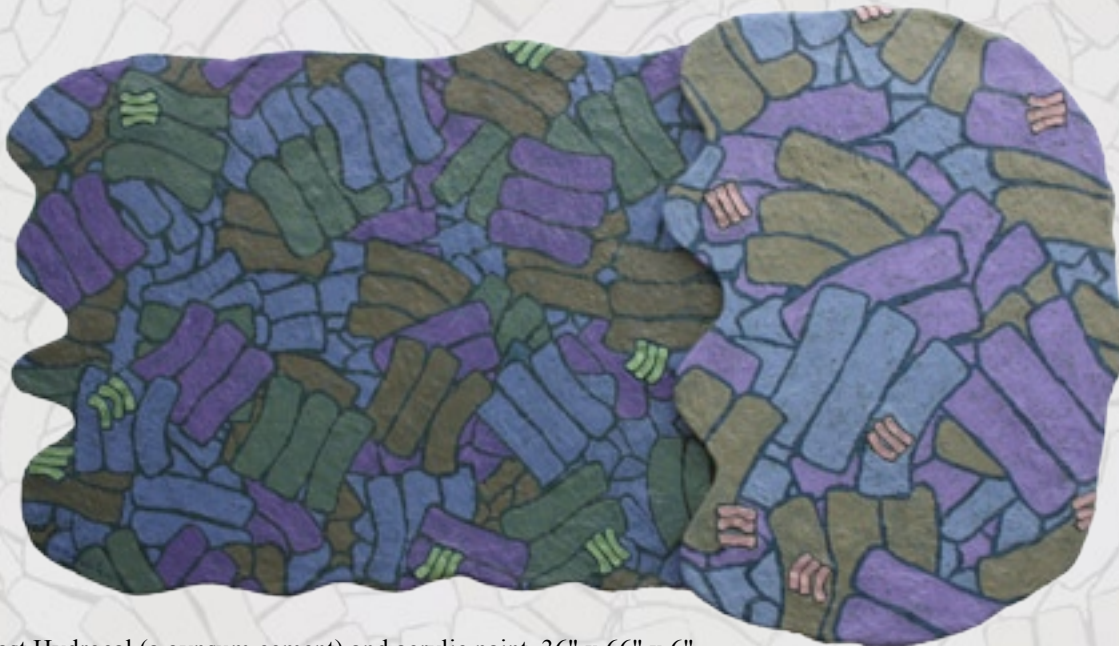
Tow, oil on canvas, 24" x 30", (60.96 cm x 76.2 cm), 2010



Fashion Trend 2, pencil on paper,
30" x 22", (76.2 cm x 55.88 cm), 2007

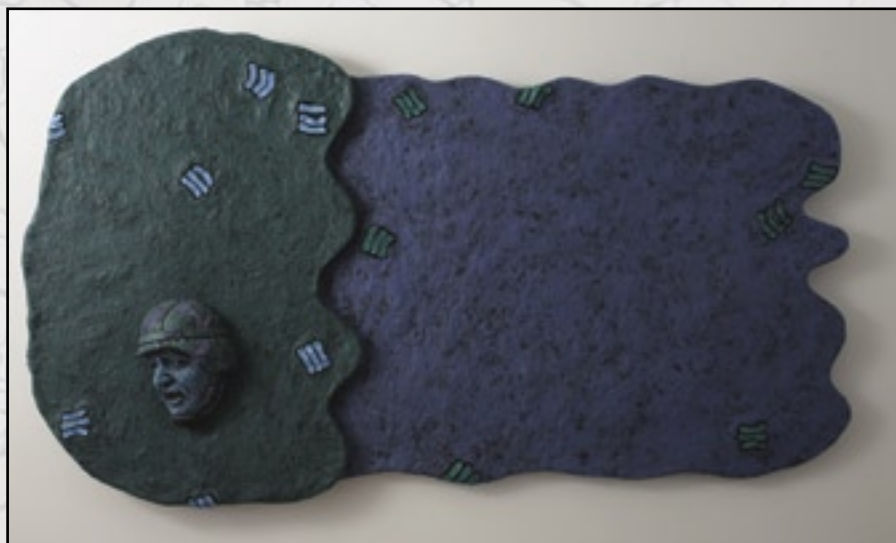
The Nature of Things, pencil on paper,
40" x 32", (101.6 cm x 81.28 cm), 2007
Collection of Carlton Carter, Tampa, Florida



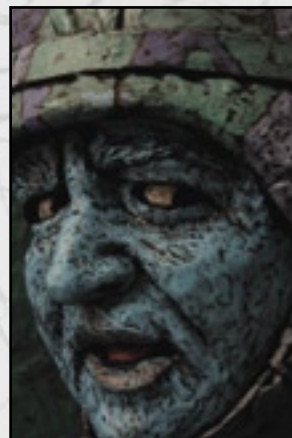


Flow, cast Hydrocal (a gypsum cement) and acrylic paint, 36" x 66" x 6",
(91.44 cm x 167.64 cm x 15.24 cm), 2007

These are 3-D paintings cast from a mold. The mold was made from a clay original. Each cast has a different color scheme and some have sculptural attachments like the piece below with the soldier head. That cast is the same as the one above but turned upside down.

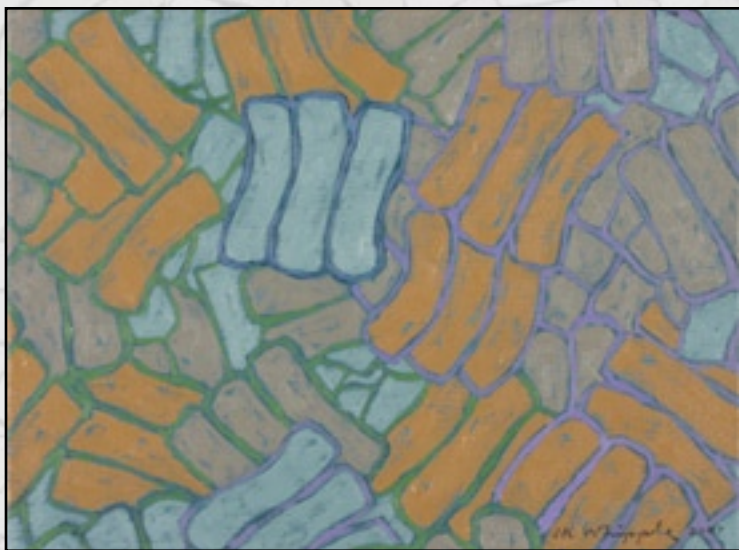


Stay the Course, cast resin and enamel paint, 36" x 66" x 11",
(91.44 cm x 167.64 cm x 27.94 cm), 2006





Spasm Study # 1, oil on canvas, 8" x 10",
(20.32 cm x 25.4 cm), 2007
Private collection, St. Petersburg, Florida



Spasm Study # 9, oil on canvas, 12" x 16",
(30.48 cm x 40.64 cm), 2007



Spasm Perspective, oil on canvas, 22" x 30", (55.88 cm x 76.2 cm), 2007
Collection of Betsy D-Jamoos and Leigh Shein, Bonita Springs, Florida



Proud Patron of Refined Culture, oil on canvas, 60" x 48", (152.4 cm x 121.92 cm), 2007



The Spasm Between the Infinities

The Spasm Between the Infinities, video installation, 3 projectors with audio, 12 minute loop.
Commissioned by the Tampa Museum of Art, South Seas Hotel, December 2006 during Art Basel Miami Beach



Day view of *The Spasm Between the Infinities* video installation. Approximate size: 9 feet by 30 feet.

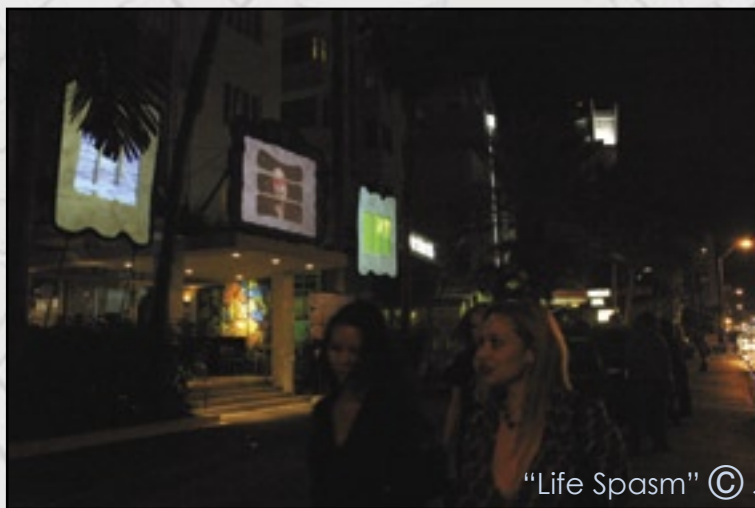
[CLICK HERE TO SEE VIDEOS ABOUT THIS PROJECT ON THE JEFF WHIPPLE WEBSITE](#)



"The Spasm Between the Infinities" was a video and art installation at a hotel in Miami Beach during the week of Art Basel Miami Beach in December 2006. The video was 12 minutes long and ran on a loop nightly for a week. There was also an exhibition of 32 of my paintings, photographs and sculptures throughout the first floor lobbies and hallways of the hotel. I made large transparent paintings on plastic panels for the two front lobby windows that were illuminated at night.

The video was projected into three sculptural screens suspended above the hotel entrance. It worked as a single composition with images coordinated in time and audio. "The Spasm Between the Infinities" is about the perception of the brief "spasm" of life between the infinite amount of time before birth and the infinity of time after death. The video has three actors in recurring scenes portraying people who talk about their perspective on the brevity of life. There are time-lapse images of Spasm sculptures melting or burning like candles to represent lifetimes. There are male and female figures dancing in recurring scenes where they are progressively covered with Spasm shapes until they can't move.

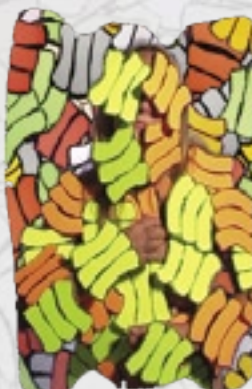
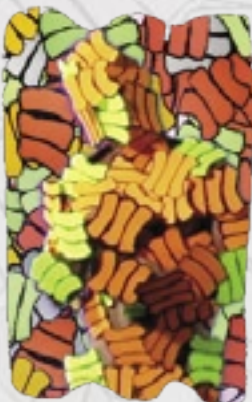
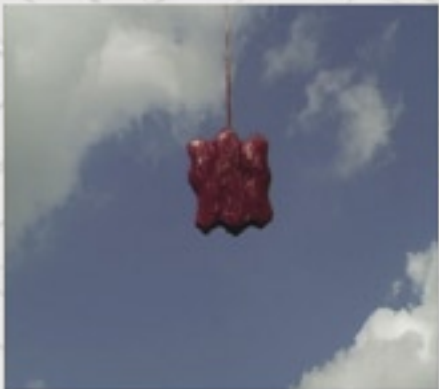
I also created a musical score for the video.





These are still shots from the three videos that make up *The Spasm Between the Infinities*. They are coordinated to the exact time so they work as one video on the three screens.

Note that the side videos are turned vertical. The videos were edited horizontally as they normally are but they were designed for the projectors to be turned on their sides. After I made the side screens, I trimmed the rectangular videos to fit the unique shape of each screen. That kept the video projections within the screen shapes and there was no spillover on surrounding buildings.





Animated Spasms were projected on the rear façade of the South Seas Hotel. The bar and pool areas were covered with dozens of large Spasm shaped paper cut-outs.

The posters, postcards and signs were based on this design.

TAMPA MUSEUM OF ART
presents
The Spasm Between the Infinities

A large-scale outdoor video installation by
JEFF WHIPPLE
December 7 – 10, 6 p.m. – 12 a.m.
South Seas Hotel, 1751 Collins Ave., Miami Beach
VIP Reception: December 7, 8 – 10 p.m.
By Special Invitation (Art Basel VIPs welcome)

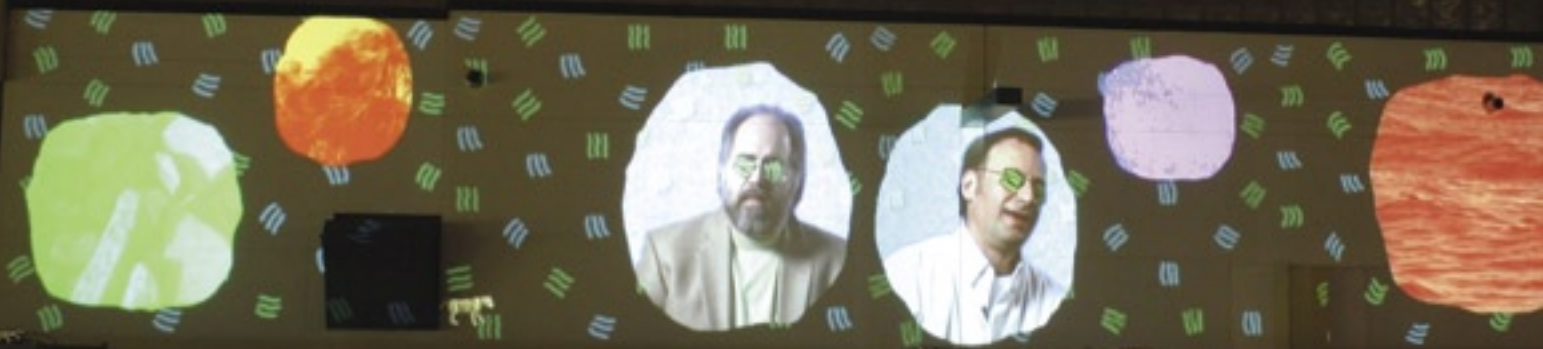
There is also an exhibition of Jeff Whipple's paintings, sculpture and photographs in the lobby, hallway and restaurant of the hotel.

Atlantic Seas HOTELS & CRUISES | TAMPA MUSEUM OF ART | PROSECCO | TAMPA MUSEUM OF ART | STARBUCKS COFFEE

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Long Time No See

T A M P A M U S E U M O F A R T



Long Time No See, video from four projectors, 15 minute loop, 15' x 75', 2006

“Long Time No See” was commissioned by the City of Tampa Public Art Program. It is a fifteen-minute long video that was projected on the façade of the Tampa Museum of Art. The video played on a loop from sunset until 11 p.m. for four weeks.

Creating the video to fit the wide length of the façade required making four separate videos to be projected from four projectors. The videos were carefully coordinated to work as one long piece with continuous interaction from one side to the other.

“Long Time No See” is an exploration of how the general public looks at and appreciates art. I performed in the video along with five actors. The dialogue is poetic and there are dozens of symbolic images presented in animated, organically shaped vignettes.

I wrote the screenplay, shot the video, animated elements, created music, edited and directed “Long Time No See.”

“In this acerbic yet frisky commentary on what we talk about when we talk about art, familiar faces pop up in pulsing thought balloons, each person trying to explain what he or she sees, can't see, refuses to see or sees better than you.”

David Warner, Editor, *Weekly Planet*



Illuminations of Ruminations



Illuminations of Ruminations, hand-painted lighted mural, 4 feet x 300 feet, (1.22 m x 91.44 m), 2006 Plaza of the Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa, Florida

This mural was commissioned by the City of Tampa Public Art Program. It is transparent paint on white plastic panels that are illuminated by lights installed in the wall behind the panels. The mural was made as a companion piece to the video, "Long Time No See." It is visible during the day and lights up at sunset every night.

"Illuminations of Ruminations" has images that reflect my thoughts or "ruminations" about my life and experiences.



The Ephemeral Spasm



The Ephemeral Spasm, video from five projectors, 9 minute loop, 15' x 80', 2008

This video installation was created for the final exhibition at the Tampa Museum of Art before the building was demolished. They have since made a new building but this event was a big party for everyone to see the building for the last time. Several thousand people were there on a warm night in January.

The video contains hand-drawn animations along with videos of images. To accommodate the large scale I made five separate videos and linked them together by carefully lining up each edge to the next video edge and coordinating them with the exact timing. I then projected the five videos using five DVD players and five projectors.

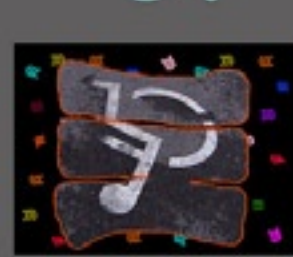
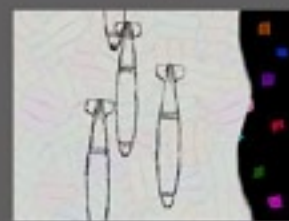
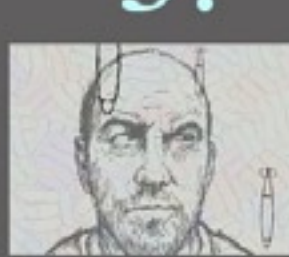
[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE VIDEO ON THE JEFF WHIPPLE WEBSITE](#)



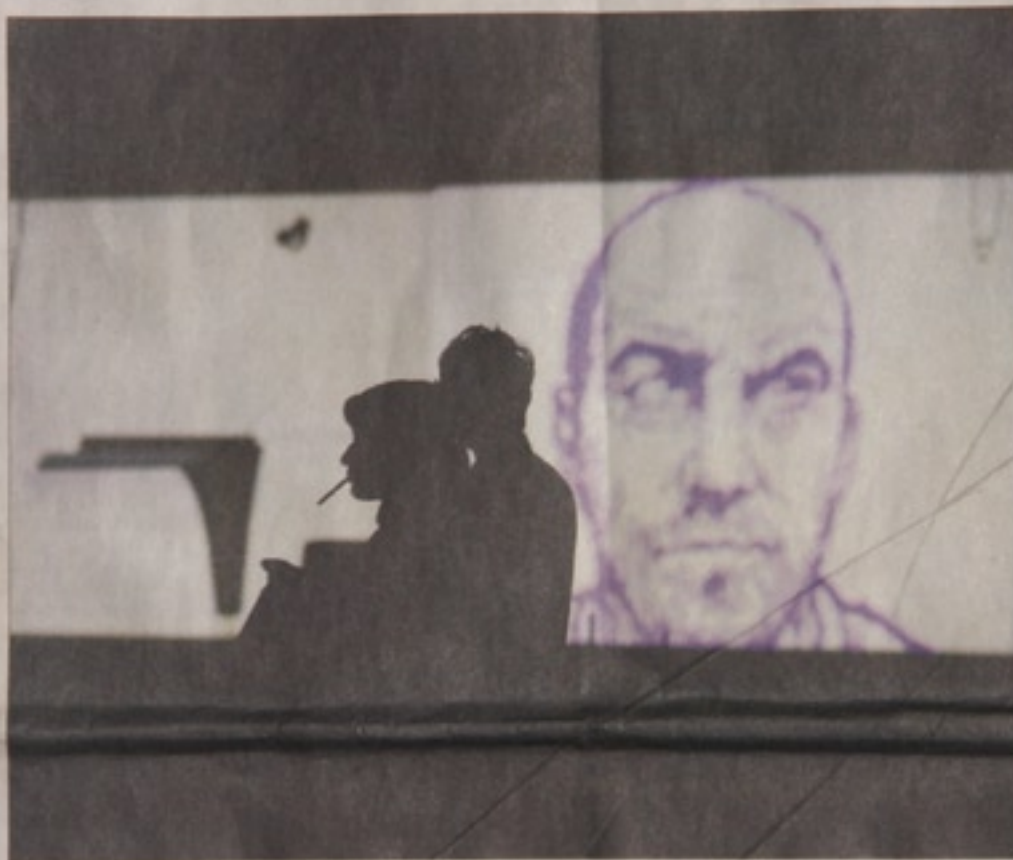


The above photographs were assembled from five still frames from the exact same point in the five coordinated videos.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.



Friday's Art After Dark at the Museum of Art was more than an exhibit. It was a farewell.



Aileen Painter, 16, left, and Eric Ondina stand in front of *The Ephemeral Spasm*, a video installation by Jeff Whipple, on Friday at the Tampa Museum of Art. Friday's exhibits were the last at the museum's current location, which will be demolished in February. The impetus of Friday's event was "retro/perspectives: Looking back, Looking forward."

KATHLEEN FLYNN | Times

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This photograph was in the St. Petersburg Times.



Have A Nice Spasm, hand-cast wax with wick, 6" x 4" x 2",
(15.2 cm x 10.16 x 5 cm), 2010

This candle was cast from the same mold as the resin version. As a candle it becomes a sort of parody of votive and holiday themed candles.





Various hand-painted 3D Spasms, cast Aqua-Resin or gypsum cement and acrylic paint, approximately 6" x 6" x 1/2", (15.24 cm x 15.24 cm x 1.27 cm), 2007. All are cast from molds. Artist's Proofs, 1/1, unique colors

The photograph below shows how the pieces were displayed at the Museum of Florida art in 2010.





Looking Up, cast Aqua-Resin and acrylic paint, 10" x 5" x 8 1/2", (25.4 cm x 12.7 cm x 20.32 cm), 2007
Artist's Proof, 1/1, unique color. Collection of Janet and John Costin, Tampa, Florida

These sculptures are cast from rubber molds made from clay originals. They can be cast in bronze too.



Wall Spasm #1, cast gypsum cement and acrylic paint, 10" x 10" x 1 1/2", (25.4 cm x 25.4 cm x 3.81 cm), 2007,
Artist's Proof, 1/1, unique color.
Private Collection, Tampa, Florida



Rebirth, Aqua-Resin and acrylic paint, 10" x 10" x 5", (25.4 cm x 25.4 cm x 12.7 cm), 2007
Artist's Proof, 1/1, unique color. Private collection, Panama City, Florida

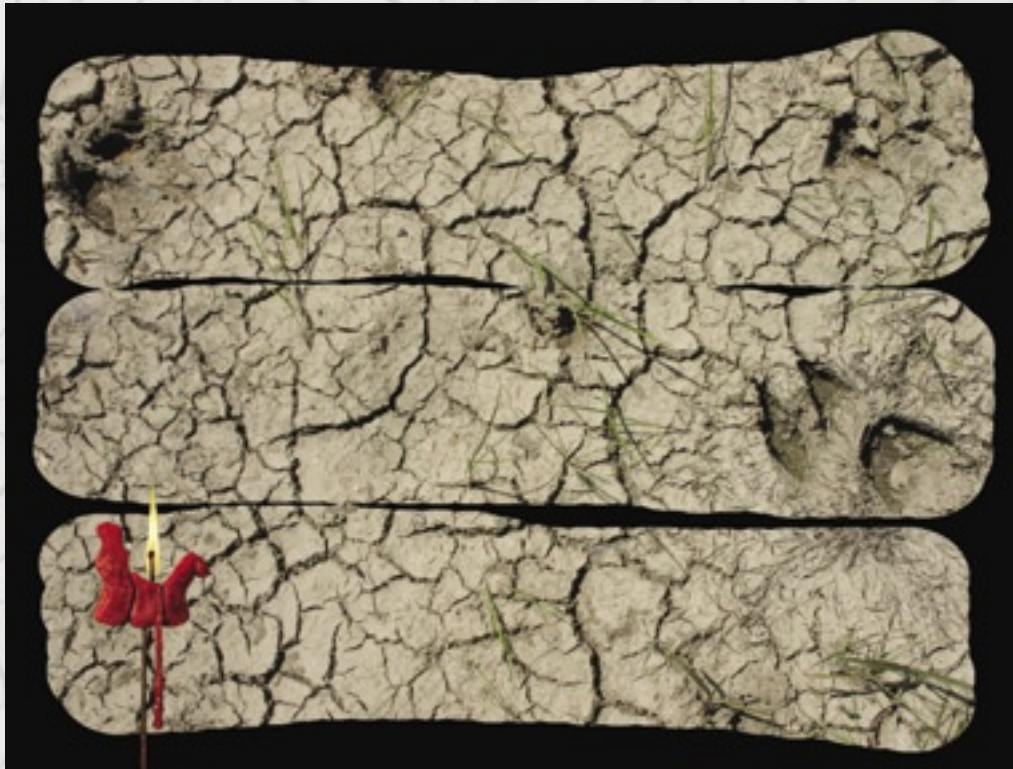


Going, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2006

These photographs are from a series of sixteen that have images presented within a Spasm shape.



Spasm Seer, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2006



Spasm Tracks, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6. cm), 2006



The Artist Under Spasms, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6. cm), 2006



Abundance of Life, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2006



Seeing Through the Spasms, digital photograph, 30" x 40", (76.2 cm x 101.6 cm), 2006



Birth, cast Aqua-Resin and acrylic paint, 10" x 10" x 5", (25.4 cm x 25.4 cm x 12.7 cm), 2007, Artist's Proof, 1/10

This sculpture of a man bursting from a Spasm is a symbol for the birth of a person who is worried about the difficulties and confusions of life.





Portrait of the Artist in Spasms, oil on canvas, 18" x 24", (45.72 cm x 60.96 cm), 2007

It's a self-portrait seen through a break in a wall of life symbols. Do I fit in that wall? Is that wall our society or is it my tormentors or is it the pantheon of artists and poets in history? Do I need to look past that wall to really see? My eyes are covered by Spasm shapes. I can only see life from the perspective of my life and the view is always affected by other lives. The Spasm shapes in the wall are unified in sections by color. That could represent the way people are grouped together by politics, tastes, ethnicities or personalities.

Lil' Spasmie



Happy Spasmie, oil on canvas, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2010

This series is a spoof on popular culture and marketing. Little Spasmie is a cartoon character that has adventures and often gets into trouble. He/she is a life symbol that's been made cutesy to sell products or entertainment. His/her cuteness is contrasted in these images with the harsh reality of life. This is just the beginning of Spasmie's adventures and I'll continue to use him/her to express how commercialization simplifies and dehumanizes modern life.



Scared Spasmie, oil on canvas, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2010



Burning Spasmie, oil on canvas, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2010



Murdered Spasmie, oil on canvas, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2010



Spasmie Bound, oil on canvas, 16" x 12", (40.64 cm x 30.48 cm), 2010



Spasmie Bound, hand-cast Aqua Resin and acrylic paint, 6 ½" x 10" x 3", (16.51 cm x 16.51 cm x 7.62 cm), 2010





Scared Spasmie, hand-cast Aqua Resin and acrylic paint, 6 ½" x 10" x 3", (16.51 cm x 25.4 cm x 7.62), 2010





Spasm Soap

This is a series of Spasm image soap. They are cast in rubber molds with fragrance and dyes.

I also made Spasm Soap packaging that is a spoof on modern marketing.

I like the idea of the Spasm life symbol slowly melting away as people wash themselves.







Spasm Soap Medium Size, cast soap, 2 1/2" x 3" x 1", (6.35 cm x 7.62 cm x 2.54), 2010

Packaging size: 7" x 4" x 1", (17.78 cm x 10.16 cm x 2.54 cm)

FRONT VIEW OF PACKAGE

Spasm Soap

Spasms are FUN!



Experience the serene philosophical essence of Spasm Soap. As you get clean, Spasm Soap magically melts away! It's just like life! Enjoy it while you're dirty!

www.jeffwhipple.com
For philosophical and aesthetic use only.

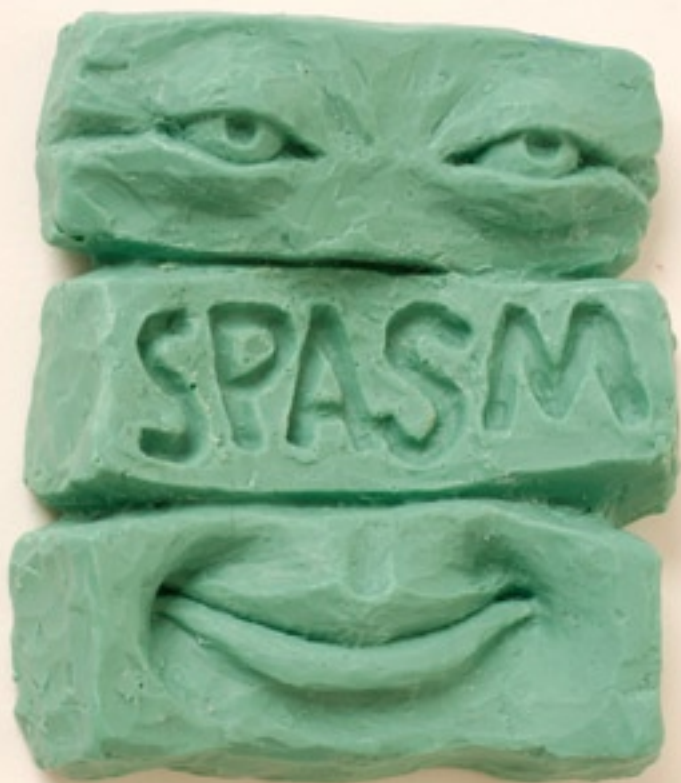
MADE IN U.S.A.



REAR VIEW OF PACKAGE



Spasm Soap Deluxe Size, cast soap, fragrance and dye, 3.5" x 3" x 1", (8.89 cm x 7.62 cm x 2.54 cm), 2010
Packaging size: 10" x 6" x 1", (25.4 cm x 15.24 cm x 2.54 cm)







Only \$6
Baby Size!
Spasm Soap®
For philosophical and aesthetic use only.

Only \$6
Baby Size!
Spasm Soap®
For philosophical and aesthetic use only.

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Spasm Soap®
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Spasm Soap Baby Size, cast soap, fragrance and dye, 1" x 1" x 1/4", (2.54 cm x 2.54 cm x .64 cm), 2010

Packaging size: 4" x 2" x 1/4", (10.16 cm x 5.08 cm x .64 cm)



22



621 Gallery, Tallahassee, Florida

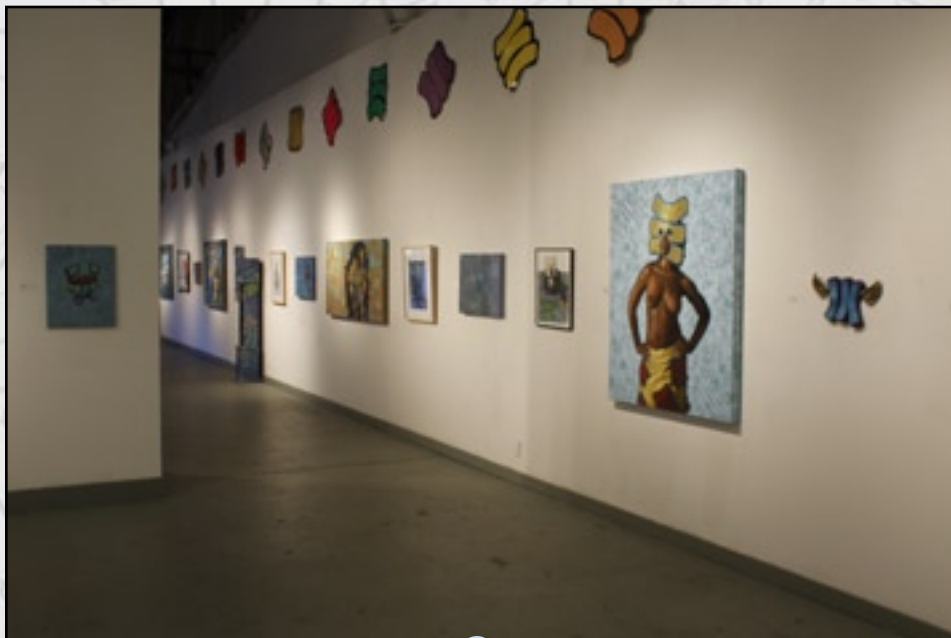


Installation views of “The Ambivalent Genesis of Being”, a solo exhibition in May/June, 2010 at 621 Gallery, Tallahassee, Florida

This show had 65 pieces dating from mostly 2008 to 2010. This gallery is a thirty-year-old alternative space near the Florida state capitol and wedged between Florida State University and Florida A&M University. The First Friday events typically have several thousand visitors.

There is a smaller gallery attached to this room where I showed the video for “The Spasm Between the Infinities.” It ran on a loop throughout the exhibition.







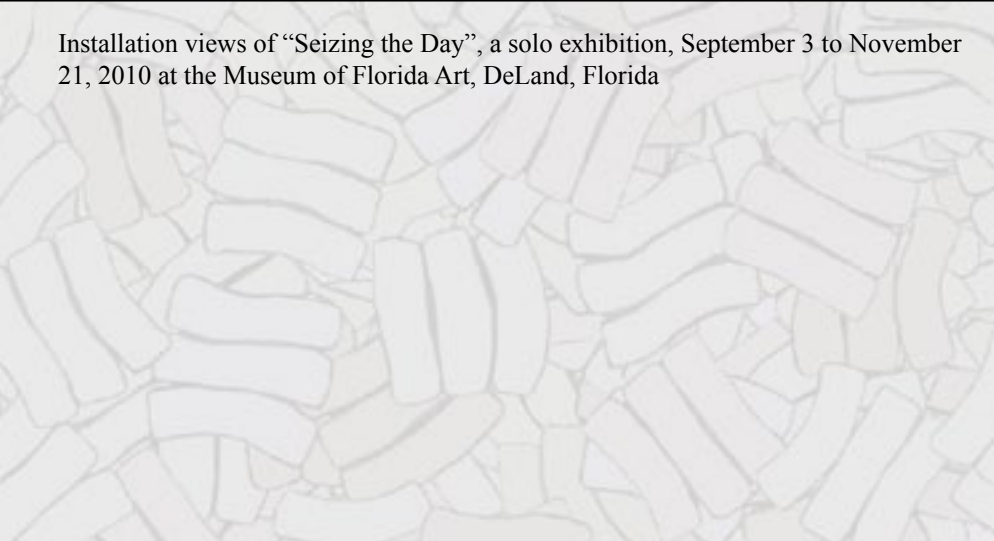
These are shots from the First Friday opening reception at 621 Gallery. The First Friday events at this gallery typically have several thousand visitors.



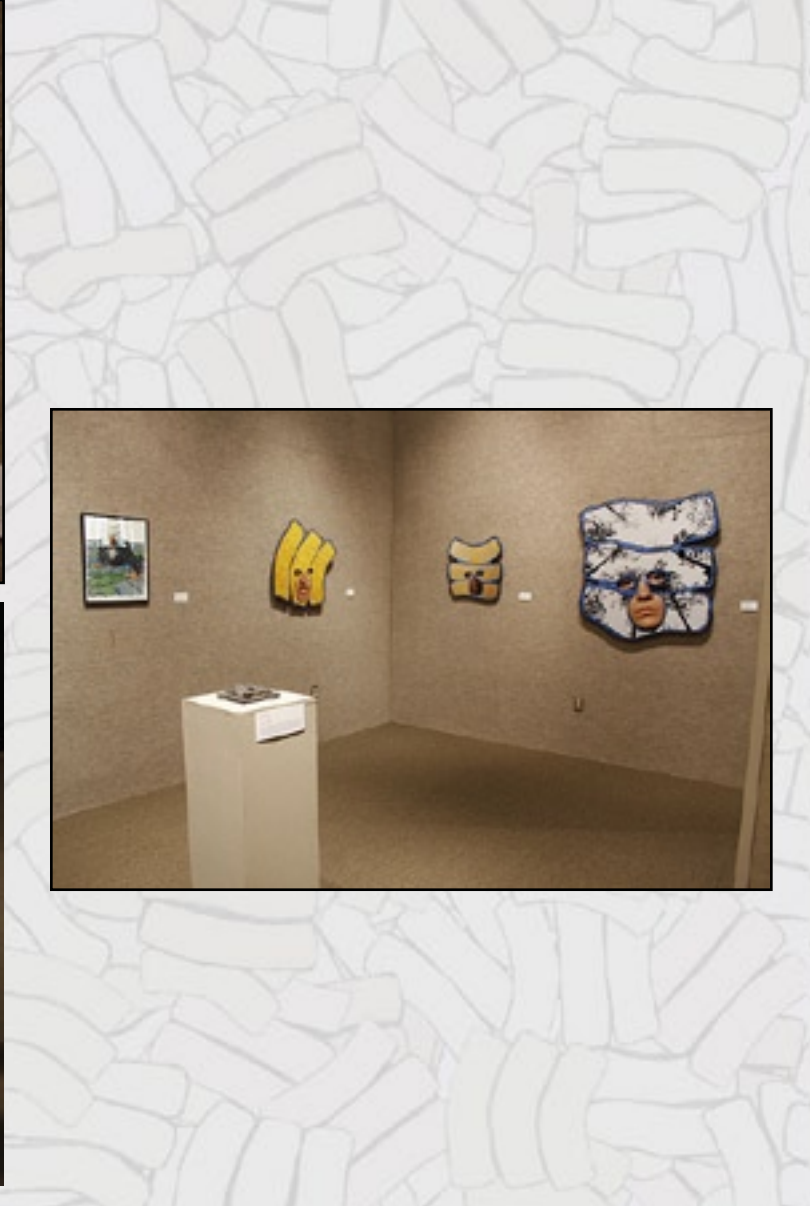
Museum of Florida Art



Installation views of "Seizing the Day", a solo exhibition, September 3 to November 21, 2010 at the Museum of Florida Art, DeLand, Florida







"Life Spasm" © Jeff Whipple 2010



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