Activate: Market Street 13

The Space of the Everyday

Armisey Smith

July 8th - Aug. 31st, 2017
75 & 77 Market St.

Opening Reception
July 8th, 2017
7-10 pm at Gallery Aferro
73 Market Street

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The Space of the Everyday

Curated by Jo-El Lopez
Joseph O’Neal & Armisey Smith

Presented by Gallery Aferro, with the support of RBH Group

Gallery Aferro’s “Activate: Market Street” is a year-round public art project transforming hundreds of linear feet of vacant storefront windows in Newark’s historic downtown district. Storefronts owned by RBH Group on Market Street between Washington and University Streets are activated with installations, films, animation, neon sculptures, kinetic and interactive art, and performative public programming from local, national and international artists. Supported by RBH Group, and created by Gallery Aferro, the project delivers arresting, unexpected, and highly memorable experiences with contemporary art directly to the public, whether residents, students, workers or first-time visitors.
The Layered Ladies mask series explores the range and depth of women of color; their emotional, spiritual and physical being in a male-dominated world. Each piece in the series represents an amalgamation of strong and influential women, yet they are all somewhat androgynous in appearance. The viewer is forced to view each mask deeply due to the atypical appearance; therefore dispelling traditional notions of beauty. In addition, each piece represents diverse emotional, physical and mystical aspects of joy and pain with each layered shingle. Minuscule universes are brought together to create a face, a story and an experience for the artist and viewer. All the sculptures are mixed media; incorporating repurposed shingles, paper pulp, and acrylic paint. As with any visual cues, participants will be drawn to a piece which personally resonates with them.

Strength as a woman is divine. Sometimes there is vulnerability, but the strength is always ready to bubble to the surface. As a woman artist - particularly a woman of color artist, it is difficult to navigate multi-layered realms of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc., but you push through it to become a more evolved person. The paint brush, canvas, pencils, charcoal, etc., is the place to express feelings - to place it back into the universe with the hope of forgiving others and oneself.

Armisey Smith, a native of Brooklyn, New York received a BFA in Illustration from Parsons School of Design and a MPS in Arts and Cultural Management from Pratt Institute. Her training provided by Parsons School of Design, one of the premier design schools in the country, imbued her with the foundation to work through challenges and still produce an exceptional product. Ms. Smith lives in the Forest Hill section of Newark.