

ARTISTS SPACE

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Programs:

Artists Space
Exhibitions and Events

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROJECT: PURVIS YOUNG

Selected by Cesar Trasobares
Opening Reception: Thursday, November 17, 6-8pm
November 17 - January 7, 1988
Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11-6



A native of Miami, **Young** began painting in the 1970's. He painted murals on scraps of plywood as well as other found materials, and propped them up against the rundown buildings due to be torn down by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in his neighborhood, Overtown, a historic inner-city neighborhood in Miami. Young's work then took a private turn and he began making sketchbooks. Initially he used discarded library books for storing his drawings. He later began to glue his drawings to the pages and the resulting books are accordion-like paper sculptures.

In 1984, **Young's** work took a public turn again and his murals covered the walls of the auditorium of Miami Dade Public Library with his visions of the troubled streets of Overtown. A self-taught artist, **Young** spends a great deal of time in Miami's libraries as well as on his bicycle riding around the city and observing life on its streets. Through the years he has developed a personal iconography that includes the images he observes daily (including tenements, men in unemployment lines, football players, construction workers, trains, trucks, police cars, children playing, crying mothers, crowds gathered around dead bodies and the ocean) as well as images from his imagination (including a Black Christ, Black people with halos, long necked mythological horses, the "Moon People," sexual fantasies, imaginary landscapes, and his elongated figures reaching skyward for something forever just out of reach). Trasobares describes **Young's** compulsion to document the life he observes around him: "It is parallel to the 'griot,' the historian in African cultures. Each tribe with its oral tradition has someone who maintains the history of the tribe and its manners."

Young's installation at Artists Space will include paintings as well as books of drawings.

With the 1988-89 season, Artists Space has initiated a new exhibition series entitled Projects which has been designed to highlight the work of one artist. This year there will be 3 Visual Arts Projects, 2 Architecture Projects, and 1 Video Project.

Cesar Trasobares, Executive Director of Art in Public Places, Metropolitan Dade County, Florida, was invited to select an artist for the second in the Projects series. He selected **Purvis Young**, a Miami artist he has worked with before who most recently completed a mural for the Northside Metrorail station for Art in Public Places.

This Project was made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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Artists Space is a member of the National Association of Artists Organizations (NAAO) and Media Alliance.