



*Road to Awe (detail)*, 2014, 98x114 inches, Ink, acrylic, oil & paper on canvas

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# JASON SHAWN ALEXANDER

NO GOOD AT EXITS

APRIL 5 – MAY 24, 2014

OPENING APRIL 5, 7-9PM

101/EXHIBIT proudly presents *No Good At Exits*, a solo exhibition from American artist Jason Shawn Alexander. This is the artist's fourth solo showing with the gallery and will include new paintings on canvas and drawings. The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color 45-page catalogue that will feature essays written by Los Angeles critics Peter Frank and Shana Nys Dambrot. The opening reception with the artist will be held on Saturday, April 5th, from 7 – 9pm, and will conclude on May 24th. 101 / EXHIBIT is located in Hollywood at 6205 Santa Monica Blvd. on the corner of North El Centro Ave, one block east of Vine St.

This opening will also serve as the inaugural launch celebration of 101 / EXHIBIT's newly completed 3,000 square foot gallery space. This space will allow us to properly accommodate exhibitions of large-scale works or extensive ambition in addition to our smaller, concurrently operated 8920 Melrose Avenue space in West Hollywood. We are honored to showcase a new body of Alexander's work to kick off this new gallery location, just as his previous series of paintings, entitled *{SIC}*, was for our first exhibition in Los Angeles in October of 2012.

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For his fourth exhibition, figurative painter Jason Shawn Alexander returns to his provocative and courageously revealing form of image-making that perpetuated the pivotal earlier works of his career, particularly those of the *Insomnius* and *Undertow* series. Whereas some viewers may conclude that Alexander is coming full-circle from his experimental peripheries of recent years to the early work that gained him much notoriety, this would be an untenable analysis at best.

What we have with *No Good At Exits* is instead a clear and praiseworthy example of an artist's maturation and grit, where the element of time is graciously allowed to make its impact on one's craft. By abandoning what is expected and automatic, Jason Shawn Alexander has gone into a willful state of production over the past year that does not aim to appease current tastes and trends; these works were made to satisfy himself as a contemporary painter. Ever a student of the art historical game, looking towards greats such as Francisco de Goya and Richard Diebenkorn, Alexander has decidedly executed thoroughly informed works that remain unique to his personal aesthetic.

Traditionally, Jason Shawn Alexander's work prompts the human connection. Writers, critics, and casual observers have brought up the "emotive" qualities of his figures on numerous occasions. This is agreeable to the extent that a certain brand of emotion is present. Psychoanalytically, Alexander's content causes one to think of Jacques Lacan and the manner in which the philosopher beautifully distinguished desire from need and demand. What is left after the requisite demand for needs is satisfied? Simply put, unsatisfied desire and hence the yearning, writhing, and counter-posed nature of the figures in his paintings.

The revealing element that is ever apparent in the content of his works is exponentially driven by Alexander's remarkable painting process. By now, he has become well known as a gunslinger with the brush; anatomically true figures seemingly materialize at will. These figures then serve as springboards or departures into a rigorous, exposed, instinctual, experimental, and abstracted investigation of the paintings' ultimate compositional destination.

The contours, negative space and handling of other spatial considerations, the fields of excavated color, these are the moments that take the poignant undertones of Jason's new work from the proverbially emotive to a truly scintillating experience. Says critic Shana Nys Dambrot in her catalogue essay entitled *Jason Shawn Alexander: Paint It Out*, "Alexander's deployment of color is uncoupled from an aspiration to naturalism. His compositions often depict three or more figures, each rendered in a different style; sometimes more than one style of representation exists within a single figure. Furthermore, both the pictorial space and the figures are in perpetual danger of dissolving back into the same tempest of total abstraction from which they emerge. Not one figure in the series is fully rendered, but neither is anything missing."

Jason Shawn Alexander was born in Tennessee in 1975. He lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. He has participated in American and international solo and group exhibitions at numerous galleries, museums, and art fairs including Art From the New World at the Bristol City Museum, Bristol, England, Outwin Boochever Portrait Painting and Sculpture Exhibition at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC, Art Miami, Miami Project, Scope Miami, Strychnin Gallery in Berlin, Germany, and Merry Karnowski Gallery in Los Angeles, CA.

101 / EXHIBIT was founded in 2008 by Sloan Schaffer in Miami, FL. Named after its original location, 101 NE 40th St., the gallery actively represents an international group of prolific emerging and established contemporary artists. Initially built around artists who emphasize the human form and figurative concerns, the gallery program embraces unparalleled craft, counter trend experimentation, New Media, and deviations into abstraction, installation-forward, and object-based works to expand the greater initiative of the program.