

Jenkins Johnson Gallery

Jae Jarrell

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Established 1996. Member AIPAD and the San Francisco Art Dealers Association

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JAE JARRELL

Jae Jarrell (b. 1935, Cleveland, OH), is a fashion designer, painter, sculptor, and a founding member of AfriCOBRA (African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists)*. AfriCOBRA, founded on the South Side of Chicago in 1968 by a collective of young Black artists, created one of the most distinctive visual voices in 20th Century American art through the exploration of their interest in Transnational Black. The characteristics of the classic AfriCOBRA look are vibrant “Cool Ade” colors, bold text and positive images of Black people, essential to everyday life in the community from which the movement emerged. AfriCOBRA established a philosophical and aesthetic foundation for the Black Arts movement of the 1960s, and 70s. The founders’ vision has its roots in the streets, classrooms, studios, and living rooms of the South Side of Chicago, yet its impact has extended around the world, influencing artists such as Kerry James Marshall and Kehinde Wiley. Throughout her career, Jae has celebrated the struggles, strengths and beauty of African Americans in her art.

Jae Jarrell is known for her revolution-themed clothing. Her garments exalt black families and culture and are worn by the artist in her daily life. Her grandfather was a professional tailor, and her uncle was a haberdasher and sold the notions needed for sewing. Jae taught herself how to make her own clothing and reveled in the fact that her fashion was unique, and had a secret vintage past. Jarrell has deftness for combining a variety of media. In her practice she combines her passion for music and the board game Scrabble. Akin to the core values of the AfriCOBRA collective, jazz occupies a global presence and demonstrates to the world the creativity and innovation belonging to Black artists. However, it is not uncommon for the brilliant work of a Black artist to be celebrated while their personhood or identity is forgotten.

Exhibitions from the past years include *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* organized by Tate Modern which traveled to Brooklyn Museum of Art, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, The Broad, and ended at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Mrs. Jarrell was also featured in *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women 1965-1985*, *AfricaCOBRA: Nation Time* an official collateral event of the 58th Venice Biennale, Cleveland Museum of Art, Smart Museum of Art, ICA Boston, and MoCA North Miami. Other recent exhibitions *The Time Is Now! Art Worlds of Chicago’s South Side 1960-1980* at the Smart Museum of Art, the Toronto Biennial of Art, *The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now* at MCA Chicago, ICA Philadelphia, and *The Studio Museum in Harlem*, and *Heritage: Wadsworth and Jae Jarrell* at The Cleveland Museum of Art. Mrs. Jarrell is in institutional collections including the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Rennie Collection, and the Smart Museum of Art. In 2022 Wadsworth and Jae Jarrell will have solo exhibitions at Jenkins Johnson Gallery. Mrs. Jarrell attended the Art Institute of Chicago and Howard University. She lives and works in Cleveland, OH.

*Five AfriCOBRA Founding Members:

Jeff Donaldson, Jae Jarrell, Wadsworth Jarrell, Barbara Jones-Hogu and Gerald Williams.



Jae Jarrell, *Gents Great Coat*
1973, suede, 60 x 21 x 12 inches



Jae Jarrell, *Dahomey Ensemble*, 1973-2021
71 x 44 x 36 1/2 in



Jae Jarrell

Bird of Paradise Ensemble, Ode to Tie-Dyed Suede, 1993/2017

suede

80 x 20 x 20 inches

signed on authenticity placard provided by artist

JAE JARRELL

BORN:

1935 Cleveland, OH, lives and works in Cleveland, OH

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

- 2022 Title TBA, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco, CA (forthcoming)
- 2021 Art Basel Miami Beach, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, Miami, FL
The Art Show 2021, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, New York, NY
Invincible Summer, Minnesota Street Projects, San Francisco, CA
- 2020 Art Basel Miami Beach, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, Virtual Exhibition
Art Basel OVR:20c, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, Virtual Exhibition
Frieze London, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, Virtual Exhibition
Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power, Museum of Fine Art, Houston, TX
The Armory Show, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, New York, NY
FOG Art and Design, Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2019 *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, The Broad, Los Angeles, CA traveled to: de Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
AfriCOBRA: Nation Time, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
- 2018 *AfriCOBRA: Messages to the People*, Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Miami, FL
The Time is Now! Art Worlds of Chicago's South Side, 1960-1980, Smart Museum of Art, Chicago, IL
Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY, traveled to: Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR
We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-1985, ICA Boston, Boston, MA
AfriCOBRA: Now, Kravets Wehby Gallery, New York, NY
Heritage: Wadsworth and Jae Jarrell, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH
- 2017 *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, Tate Modern, London, UK
IFDPA Fine Art Print Fair 2017, Aaron Galleries, New York, NY
We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-1985, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY
Art of the Rebellion: Black Art of the Civil Rights Movement, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI
- 2016 *The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now*, ICA Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
It Takes a Nation: Art for Social Justice with Emory Douglas and the Black Panther Party, AfriCOBRA, and Contemporary Washington Artists, American University Museum, Washington, D.C.
- 2015 *The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now*, MCA Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 2013 *AfriCOBRA: Philosophy*, Logan Center Gallery, Chicago, IL
AfriCOBRA: Art and Impact, The DuSable Museum of African American History, Chicago, IL
- 1977 *AfriCOBRA/Farafindugu*, Afro-American Historic & Cultural Museum, Philadelphia, PA
- 1973 *AfriCOBRA III*, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA
AfriCOBRA III, Howard University, Washington, D.C.
- 1972 *AfriCOBRA II*, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL
AfriCOBRA II, Howard University, Washington, D.C.
AfriCOBRA II, Malcom X College, Chicago, IL
AfriCOBRA II, Hati Gallery, Rochester, NY
AfriCOBRA II, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY
- 1971 *AfriCOBRA II*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY
AfriCOBRA II, Langston Hughes Center for Visual & Performing Arts, Buffalo, NY
AfriCOBRA I, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL
- 1970 *AfriCOBRA I*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY
AfriCOBRA I, Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists, Roxbury, MA
AfriCOBRA I, Black Expo, Chicago, IL

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 2021 Bradley, Adam. "The Creative Collectives Finding Strength in Numbers." *The New York Times*, 13 October 2021. Online.
- Litt, Steven. "Cleveland artist Wadsworth Jarrell sets record straight on history of revolutionary AfriCOBRA collective in new book." *Cleveland.com*, 10 January 2021. Online.
- 2020 Ruggiero, Bob. "Timely 'Soul of a Nation' Finally Reaches the MFAH. But See It, Quick!" *Houston Press*, 29 June 2020. Online.
- Hutton, Belle. "Then and Now: Art in the Age of Black Power." *AnOther Magazine*, 10 June 2020. Online.
- Artsy Editorial. "Black-Owner Galleries to Support across United States." *Artsy*, 10 June 2020. Online.
- Valentine, Victoria L. "AfriCOBRA Artists Honored at School of the Art Institute of Chicago 2020 Virtual Commencement, Offer Advice to Graduates." *Culture Type*, 29 May 2020. Online.
- 2019 Valentine, Victoria L. "AFRICOBRA in Venice: Curated by Jeffreen Hayes, 'Nation Time' Explores the Powerful Roots and History of the Collective." *Culture Type*, 23 November 2019. Online.
- Wheeler, André. "How the art of black power shook off the white gaze." *The Guardian*, 9 November 2019. Online.
- Shaw, A.R. "Black power and beauty on display as 'Soul of a Nation' opens in San Francisco." *Rollingout*, 8 November 2019. Online.
- D'Arcy, David. "Toronto Biennial of Art Emphasizes Homegrown Talent in Its Ambitious Debut." *Observer*, 19 September 2019. Online.
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- Schwendener, Martha. "New York Art Galleries, What to See Right Now." *The New York Times*, 21 March 2019. Online.
- Martinez, Enrique. "The Broad Brings 'Soul of a Nation' Exhibition to West Coast." *Hypebeast*, 13 March 2019. Online.
- 2018 Carter, Holland. "Radiant and Radical: 20 Years of Defining the Soul of Black Art." *The New York Times*, 13 September 2018. Online.
- Martin, Liv. "First Giordanos, Portillos. Now, Mia brings 'Art from Chicago.'" *Minnesota Daily*. 3 September 2018. Online.
- Carrigan, Margaret. "These Radical, Long-Running Artist Collectives Are Models for Effective Activism." *Observer*, 11 July 2018, Online.
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- 2017 Litt, Steven. "Cleveland Museum of Art pays tribute to artist heritage of Wadsworth and Jae Jarrell." *Cleveland.com*, 19 November 2017. Online.
- Weber, Jasmine. "Fifty Years of AfriCOBRA's Radical, 'Cool Ade Colored' Art." *Hyperallergic*, 14 February 2017. Online.
- 2015 Sargent, Antwaun. "Chicago's Black Avant-Garde Art and Music Tradition Goes on Display." 12 November 2015. Online.
- 2013 Vogel, Carol. "New Showcase for a Neglected Era." *The New York Times*, 17 January 2013. Online.
- 1996 Douglas, Robert L., and Wadsworth Jarrell. "Wadsworth Jarrell: the Artist as Revolutionary." Pomegranate Artbooks, 1996.

SELECTED PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND ARTISTS TALKS:

- 2020 *The Interview Project: Jae and Wadsworth Jarrell in conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist.*
Conversations on Culture: Jae and Wadsworth Jarrell in conversation with Reto Thuring, Online.
- 2018 *Panel Discussion: AfriCOBRA, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, AR.*
- 2016 *AfriCOBRA NOW: Panel Discussion, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, AR.*
- 2015 *Points of View: AfriCOBRA: Power, Politics + Pride, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, OH.*
- 2014 *Artist Talk: Jae Jarrell and Wadsworth Jarrell, The Hood Museum of Art, NH.*
- 2013 *AfriCOBRA: Panel Discussion with Founding Members of AfriCOBRA, University of Chicago, IL.*

SELECTED COLLECTIONS:

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY
Smart Museum of Art, Chicago, IL
Rennie Collection, Vancouver, Canada