

# Buffalo Arts Studio

Tri-Main Center  
2495 Main Street, Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14214  
(716) 833-4450  
www.buffaloartsstudio.org

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Friday 11am-5pm; Saturday 10am-2pm



Meghan Conley is completing her Masters of Fine Arts and Emerging Practices at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She earned a Bachelors of Fine Arts with Distinction in Painting from Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary Canada. Conley has exhibited throughout Buffalo as well as in Enfield, Connecticut and Toronto. In 2012, she participated in the School of Visual Art, Sculpture, Installation and New Media Summer Residency, New York City, NY.



Stacey Robinson is completing his Masters of Fine Art at the State University of New York at Buffalo where he was awarded the Authur Schomburg Fellowship. He also earned a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Art at Fayetteville State University. He is part of the collaborative team "Black Kirby" with artist John Jennings. Together, they create created comic books, gallery exhibitions and lectures that deconstruct the work of artist Jack Kirby and re-imagine Black resistance spaces inspired by Hip Hop, religion, the arts and sciences. Robinson is also an instructor for BAS's Jump Start program.

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Megan Conley  
*Assemblage*



Stacey Robinson  
*Binary ConScience*

March 27-May 2, 2015

Opening Reception: Friday, March 27, 2015



## Stacey Robinson: *Binary ConScience*

The title of the exhibition, as well as much of the work itself, explores W.E.D. Du Bois's idea of "double consciousness" through a post-modern lens. In Robinson's work, the "double consciousness" refers to the "two-ness" of being American and of being Black. It also acknowledges what Du Bois described as "the sense of always looking at one-self through the eyes of others." In current culture, those external views of self are both constructed through and delivered by the media. Robinson considers the complexity of cultural Black exploitation through a variety of mediums including comic books, "reality" television and the music industry. He dismantles disseminated ideas of derogatory Black relations by distilling both form and content into graphic representations of the binary. Robinson layers historical and contemporary images and ideas to form complex collages reflective of his own multifaceted experience as American and Black.

Robinson's multimedia works also serve as resistance to Black oppression in post-colonial America. His drawings, paintings, comics, writings and performances examine Black culture and the use of the Black body as a technology; a scientific method used to achieve a commercial or industrial objective. Cultural symbols, machinery, and non-human life forms function as survivalist metaphors for the Black experience. His work illustrates the conflicts of integration, unresolved slavery, and incomplete emancipation. It also offers hope. Some works offer visual "utopias" meant as inspiration to imagine endless possibilities of Black existence away from colonial factors. These images focus on escaping the influence of misrepresentation by creating spaces of healing, empowerment, organization and government, which Robinson argues hasn't taken place uninterrupted anywhere globally in the last several centuries.

Cover image: *Blood Sport, the Die Man Conflict*, digital image, 2014



*Money Tree*, digital image, 2014



*Untitled*, photography, 5ft x 3 ft, 2015

## Megan Conley, *Assemblage*

Conley's work explores the construction of self and identity in a methodical, systematic way. Her work is based in personal experiences dealing with her own facial and dental deformity that required a decade-long correction process that is still on-going. Through her art, she publicly reveals a private experience that was strongly influenced by societal pressures to conform to narrow constructs of acceptability, desirability, and beauty.

Conley began her creative process by exploring her own face through performance, disrupting and manipulating her appearance using toothpaste and petroleum jelly; materials used medicinally and cosmetically during her reconstruction process. Her movements left tracks in the residue, forming a cartography of her own explorative actions and reactions. She recorded the performance, creating stills that she reused and reinterpreted repeatedly. The resulting images were distorted further, distilled into plastic and steel, and in some cases, photographed again. The reliance on technology to process and produce her "portraits" create another level of manipulation and abstraction. "I intentionally take myself out of everyday normalcy and transform myself into the grotesque." The final result is the expansive multi-media installation that deals with both the topography of appearance and the multiple mappings of identity. "The mask is used to re-create the first half of my life, a memory that cannot be reversed back. Since the corrective process is permanent, this is the death mask of my grotesque identity." Through her artwork, Conley controls the outcome of each process, revealing that which lays beneath her skin, both structurally and spiritually.

Cover image: *Layers Revealed (Mapping #1)*, multi-media, 2014