



Leigh Suggs: Bent Out of Shape
March 11, 2022 - April 16, 2022

Grief changes you.

Grief changes the lens you see through.

Grief is wholeheartedly misunderstood by all of us. I still don't understand it.

How does one put the pieces back together? Maybe the pieces just get rearranged and shuffled into a new normal or a new way of existing.

-Leigh Suggs

Massey Klein Gallery is pleased to present *Bent Out of Shape*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Leigh Suggs. The exhibition will be on view from March 11th through April 16th. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, March 12 from 4-7pm. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery. For press inquiries or questions regarding works available, please email info@masseyklein.com.

Recently faced with the sudden loss of her father, Leigh Suggs found herself feeling disjointed, lost and hollow. Inevitably unprepared for this sudden loss, Suggs came to realize that what used to be so important no longer was in that moment. Empty, yet full of intense feeling, her work became fractured into parts and pieces that were only manageable in smaller bursts of time and energy.

Bent Out of Shape presents a new collection of cut-Yupo acrylic paintings. Her carefully selected colors and formulated surfaces are deliberate reflections of physical and psychological states. By exploring movement, light and translucency through the use of singular, pattern-producing gestures, her work's distinct ocular and auric nature produces an experience of seeing that is at once immediate and elusive. Suggs' paintings are deceptively simple and minimalistic in content. By obscuring normal perception, they demand that the viewer immerse themselves in patient contemplation. Like the artist's thoughts and feelings in recent months, the paintings have been chopped up, rearranged and pushed forward on an unexpected trajectory.

Created through a precise and distinctive process of cutting, drawing, tracing, taping and painting, perpetual addition *and* subtraction, Suggs' work is simultaneously tactile and conceptual, methodical and instinctual. Through the manipulation of shadows, color and reflections, her intricate cut and seemingly woven patterns bring the painted Yupo to life, producing reflective surfaces and vibrant intense colors.

In this exhibition, each painting is presented in a white frame that has been custom built to echo the shape of the artwork.

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Leigh Suggs' work has been featured in group exhibitions at institutions across the US, including the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (2022), the Taubman Museum in Roanoke, VA (2021-2022), The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, NC (2021), The Weatherspoon Art

Museum in Greensboro, NC (2020, 2021), The Visual Arts Center in Richmond, VA (2018-2019) and the Racine Art Museum in Racine, WI (2016). She has participated in numerous artist residencies, including the Penland School of Crafts in Penland, NC and the Quirk Hotel & Gallery in Richmond, VA. The artist has taught workshops and classes at the Penland School of Crafts, the Visual Art Center (Richmond, VA), the North Carolina Museum of Art, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

The artist's work has been featured in several print and online publications, including Style Weekly, American Craft Council Magazine, Surface Design Magazine, and Indy Weekly. Suggs has received numerous awards and grants, notably the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship Award (2020), the CultureWorks Building Capabilities Individual Artist Grant from the City of Richmond, VA (2020), the Fiberart International Janet Bass Award for Creativity & Innovation (2019) and the North Carolina Arts Council Artist Fellowship Award (2012). Her artwork can be found in the permanent collections of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the Weatherspoon Art Museum, as well as many notable corporate collections including Capital One, the Federal Reserve Bank, Deutsche Bank, Dominion, Honeywell, Fidelity Investments, and Suntrust Bank.

Suggs received a BFA from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in 2003 and an MFA from the Virginia Commonwealth University in 2015.

The artist lives and works in Richmond, VA.