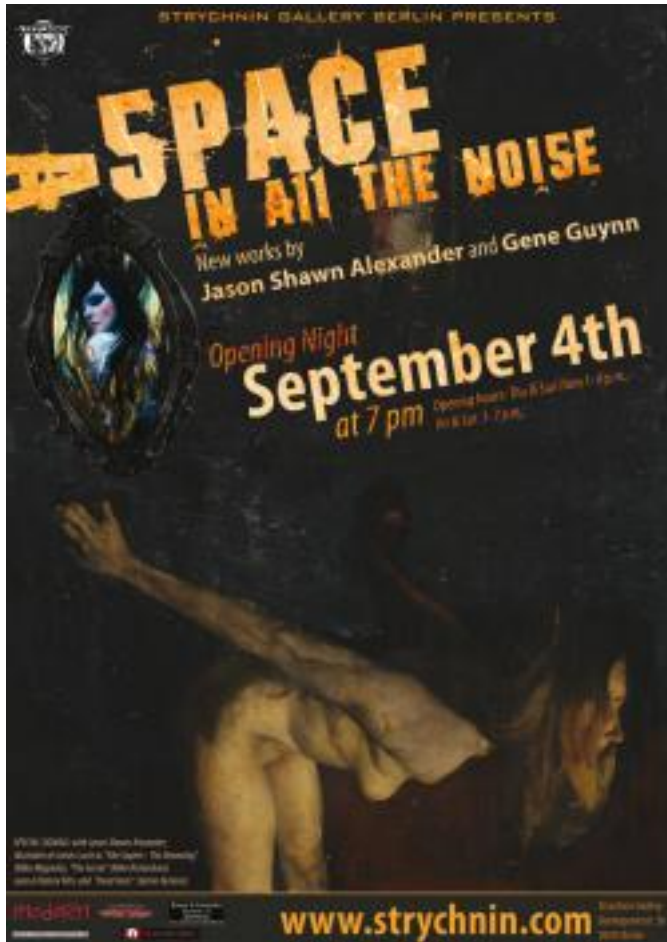


Strychnin Gallery Berlin presents: A Space in all the Noise. New Works by Jason Shawn Alexander and Gene Guynn

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Press release from: [Strychnin Gallery](#)



American painter Jason Shawn Alexander is a self-taught artist: never having attended formal art school, art language and "isms" mean nothing to him. The things that matter in his work are honesty and emotion, and while it is his aim to make people think, it is first and foremost to make them feel. His works have been exhibited all over the USA, most recently also in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington DC, and in Europe. Bringing to mind painters such as Lucian Freud, his portraits often picture uncomfortably physical embodiments of his subjects' emotions. Gene Guynn, originally from Texas, defines his portraits through a symbolic scar that stands for each person's past experiences, memories and emotions. Reception for the artists on September 4th, 2009, at 7 pm.

Alexander's work tries to touch a place deep inside his viewers, often proving to be uncomfortably close and highly emotional. His works tend to be executed using a sombre, earthy color palette strong in browns and grays, with occasional shades of red and blue, contrasting and yet complimenting the inner turmoil of his subjects. Bringing to mind painters such as Anselm Kiefer as far as color goes, his human figures are reminiscent of portraits by Lucian Freud or Francis Bacon: they are very physical in their presence – their skin sometimes has an unhealthy color, veins show through an almost transparent skin that often doesn't quite seem to fit, metaphorically blurring the lines between form and content. Innermost feelings are embodied in physical discomfort, limbs appear elongated and sometimes distorted, personalities are split in two with eerie doubles and masks – Alexander's bodies are fascinating even though they are sometimes uncomfortable to look at.

Born and raised in a small town in Tennessee where people tended to be honest, real, and genuine, Jason Shawn Alexander has since moved to Los Angeles, yet his rural upbringing shapes his work until today. Not unlike good blues (which he is a fan of), it often explores the darker side of life. The ultimate expression, however, is one of survival, if not hope. He has also produced illustrations for Warner Brothers, Hasboro, White Wolf Inc, and Dalmatian Press. He has received the Silver Medal Award from The Society of illustrators-Los Angeles as well as two Eisner Award Nominations for his illustrative work, which includes “Abe Sapien – The Drowning” for Mike Magnola (“Hellboy”).

Gene Guynn was born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas, and from a very young age was immersed in the world of art. With a painter for a mother and a musician for a father, his world was always one of creativity and expression. Gene takes inspiration from the thriving urban, outsider, and lowbrow art culture of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York City, and combines it with a fine art sophistication. His painting process usually begins by combining loose charcoal pencil work with expressive paint work, using lots of washes and tons of solvent that he then gradually thickens, bringing more and more control and care to the brush strokes as the painting progresses. He creates his work by gradually pulling his figures into order out of the depths of chaos that each of his paintings starts out with, strategically juxtaposing order and chaos. He likes his work to have a sensuous and luxurious feeling when it comes to the application of the paint, while it has many elements of anonymity conceptually speaking: many of the women he paints look very similar, and often have no eyes or covered eyes, which strips them of their individuality, leaving their soul only to be defined by the scar in the painting. This scar is the defining element of his latest series of works, symbolizing each person's past experiences, memories, emotions, and in essence their soul.

A Space in all the Noise. Jason Shawn Alexander and Gene Guynn.
Opens September 4th at 7 pm
Runs until: October 4th 2009
Opening hours: Thu & Sun from 1- 6 p.m., Fri & Sat. 1- 7 p.m.

With galleries in three bustling hotspots – New York City, Berlin, and London – Strychnin Gallery is a playground for artists from all around the globe. It is a place where collaboration is encouraged, new projects are constantly developed and creativity is the one and only thing that truly counts.

Owned by charismatic curator Yasha Young, Strychnin is dedicated to presenting emerging American artists to the European art world and vice versa. It features a variety of artists with particular individual styles rather than artists belonging to a collective “hip” movement. If you insist on putting a label on them, try lowbrow turned highbrow, pop surrealism or fantastic realism among others.

Founded in Brooklyn in 1998, the gallery opened a European showroom in Berlin in 2002. The US gallery has since moved to a location in Manhattan’s Chelsea district, opening with a group show featuring over 70 artists in October of 2006. Strychnin Gallery opened a third location in East London’s vibrant art scene right off of Brick Lane in October 2007.

The gallery participates in major international art fairs on a regular basis, including Bridge Art Fair, Liste, or Art Fair 21 in Cologne, which appointed gallery owner Yasha Young to its selection committee in 2008.

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[You can find this press release here](#)