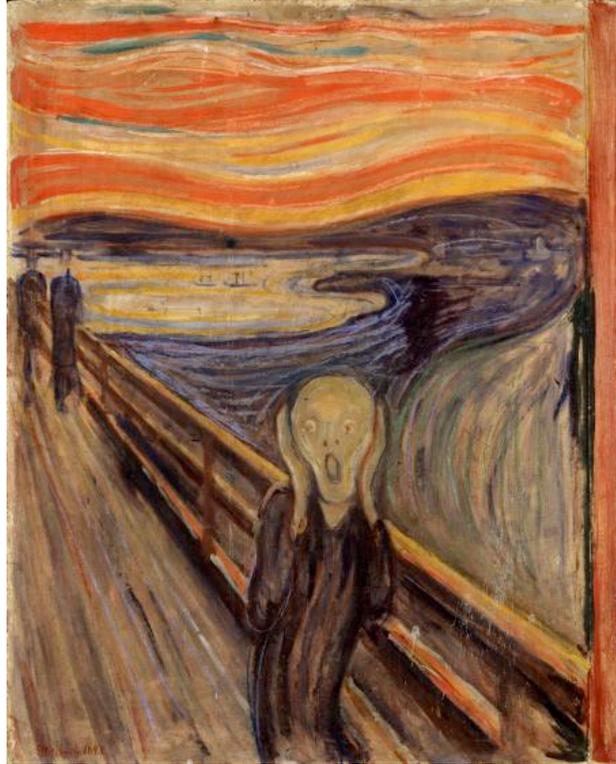




Judith Bernstein on Edvard Munch

Apr 8, 2017 | Modern



Edvard Munch, *The Scream*, 1893, Oil, pastel, cardboard, tempera, 29 x 32 inches.

In my work, I always look to “*NAIL IT!*,” meaning that I aim for my artwork to have the highest possible impact while addressing the severest aspects of humanity – that’s why I’ve chosen to speak on Edvard Munch’s *The Scream*. This work feels most connected to my oeuvre.

The Scream is an iconic artwork that has reached the masses, beyond a fine arts audience, to become a staple of pop culture. Munch paints the Norwegian sky with the primordial energy one expects of his screaming figure. He created a vertigo inducing composition, extraordinary in its manifestation of Existentialism, a movement of constant self-analysis in an unfathomable universe. I believe that all of the elements of the universe are linked in a complex system that parallel human interaction.

As a graduate student at Yale, I was influenced by men’s bathroom graffiti. I realized that graffiti has psychological depth because when someone’s alone and releasing on the toilet they’re also releasing from the subconscious. In my *Fuck Vietnam Series* (1960s), *Screw Series* (1970s), and *Signature Piece* (1980s), I employ the phallus as a symbol for male posturing. I’ve always been fascinated by the artist’s ego, a subject that I address head on in my large scale *Signature Piece* (reaching 16’ x 66’ at New Museum, New York). The signature becomes my self-portrait- it’s about fame, male posturing, and my own ego. I am here – DEAL WITH IT!!!





Judith Bernstein, *Birth of the Universe: Gold Cunt*, 2013, Oil on canvas, 236 x 238 cm

In my fluorescent *Birth of the Universe* series, I address a humorous but also rageful relationship between men, women, and the universe. Like Munch's *Scream*, my work is subversive to the point of threatening: while mining the subconscious it tears down and redefines what came before it – becoming an amalgamation of sexuality, feminism, and warfare.



Judith Bernstein, *Double Header*, 1976, Charcoal and paper, 9 x 28 feet

For over fifty years, New York based artist [Judith Bernstein](#) has created expressive drawings and paintings that boldly address the underlying psychological connection between warfare and sexual aggression. She is currently taking on today's political atrocities with her latest series *Cabinet of Horrors*, which will be the title of her upcoming solo show at The Drawing Center (October 2017 – January 2018).