



Aaron Curry, installation view of "Fragments from a Collective Unity," 2018. Photo: STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery

Aaron Curry

[June 12, 2019](#) by [Christine Han](#)

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[STPI Creative Workshop & Gallery](#)

Aaron Curry's ebullient sculptures, recently surveyed in "Fragments from a Collective Unity," are stretched, swollen, sometimes barbed, and slightly off-kilter. A plethora of organic-looking things filled an entire wall, some wriggling from side to side, some becoming jack-in-the-boxes and popping up from an opening here or there, and yet others more closely approximating bones and remains than life itself. *WE R 1-24* (2018) expresses a humorous narrative situation through a largely abstract language of symbols, signs, markings, and quirky forms.

The sculptures are part of Curry's romantic fantasy world, which he explores in two and three dimensions. Using colors contrasts between the primaries (red, yellow, and blue) and complementaries (green, orange, indigo, and violet), he imbues his vibrant sculptures

Surrealism and Cubist collage in the form of Picasso's word play. Curry's writing on the wall—from the exhibition title to his sign-off—was an implicit part of the objects, fusing reading and seeing so that the whole ensemble became immersive and experiential.

The exhibition made one thing clear. Curry's inspiration doesn't just come from the history of painting. He also draws from popular culture, including movies, punk, science fiction, and cosmology. One could say that "Fragments from a Collective Unity" began with punk. Curry grew up playing music and has a fondness for the guitar. The exhibition presented many layers, from overtly punk surface—the music, skateboarding—to deeper levels that explained the sum of its different influences, the power of its images, and how its language is also about the readymade, and about appropriation in contemporary art.

For example, the grid—a structure that remains emblematic of Modernism—is a constant motif in Curry's work. *Grid Trip* (2018) features four sculptures in his idiosyncratic style, sitting on top of electric-blue, grid-based paintings rendered in broad, strong, long and short brushstrokes, each one creating illusionistic space on paper and wall. The four objects, based on found forms such as the guitar, protrude outward into the viewer's space. *Grid Trip* goes beyond the flatness of collage to become an abstract spatial relief rendered in aluminum and plastic. The juxtaposition of surfaces, the biomorphic shapes, and the contrast in colors emanate an atmosphere of happy optimism.

Curry is equally at ease manipulating a monochrome color scheme to create an emotional sensation. His black and white "Ghost Bone" series (2018) tickles the funny bone, and he appears to ask questions about the nature of his work simply by pushing its boundaries. Can feelings be expressed simply by the way that these things are taken apart and put back together? Could such an oddly shaped object really be a painting or sculpture?

Curry delivers freshness and an instinctual quality in opposition to staid abstraction, a kind of beauty that has something dangerously romantic about it. You can lose your sense of self in the experience.

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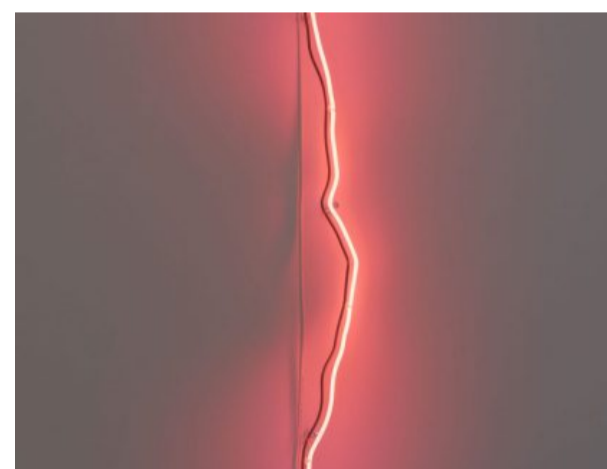
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