

Celina Teague: I Think Therefore I # at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

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Emily D'Silva

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With a title that immediately sparks an interest and raises questions, painter Celina Teague reveals her latest collection, *I Think Therefore I #*, at the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery. Dripping with vibrancy, colour and expression, Teague's work can be found, on the surface, to have a cartoon, pop-art-like appearance, but as the viewer studies further, a deeper and darker undertone is revealed.

The artist focuses on the power of social media and the online identities that seem to precede people in this day and age. Various new stories have inspired this topical collection: the attacks on the Parisian satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, the horrors of ISIS, as well as the usual daily updates of bombings, killings and the destruction of cities and societies. Teague's paintings are a representation of the absurd contrast between these terrible news stories and the vapid, insignificant updates of "selfies", holiday snaps and emoticons that are ingested from social media daily, before being dismissed instantly when scrolling through feeds.

The painting that lends its title to the entire collection is one of the most prominent pieces, displaying a headless, distorted body stretched out and caught up in a web of internet images and common tweets, suggesting that people exist without a brain or personal thought. It almost appears to be making fun of the stereotypical social media user, with an excess of "selfies" featuring cleavage and bottoms and yellow smiley faces that engulf the occasional politically inclined slogan. Teague further reveals a sarcastic humour with slogans such as: "You're only as deep as your most inspirational quote."

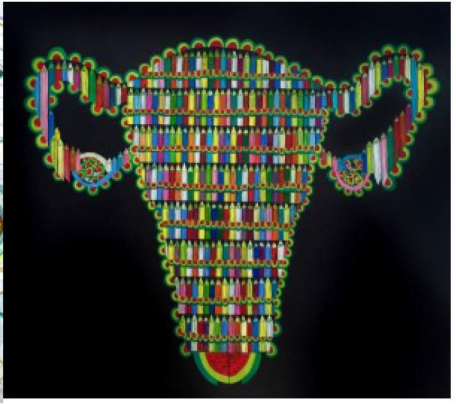
Every other painting in the collection equally tells a strong story. The punchy colour palette and composition of each piece sucks the viewer in, compelling him to take notice of its message. *Like Bees to Honey to Take Your Soul and Money* is particularly sinister, as it features a swarm of bees and human skeletons. Both the title and the actual image scream a horrendous message of addiction and subsequent death. In several of her paintings, Teague also recreates many of the

images that feature in the controversial Charlie Hebdo magazine. It is quite upsetting to see the stark reality of horrific events and shameful truths, which have been powerfully represented in this psychedelic visualisation. Teague successfully makes an impact, and initiates further debates and questions.

Verdict: ★★★★★

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Celina Teague: *I Think Therefore I #* is at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery from 6th August until 5th September 2015, for further information visit [here](#).



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