

N'NAMDI CONTEMPORARY

GREGORY COATES.

Born in 1961, Gregory Coates, the second oldest of eight, grew up in Washington, DC. After attending Corcoran School of Art, in 1985 Coates traveled abroad for 18 months to Germany, while attending the prestigious Kunst Akademie in Duesseldorf. He continued to make figurative art. Most importantly, the opportunity to create his first installation was awarded to him by Paul Pozzoza Museum, Ddf. This piece was reviewed by, Sabine Schults in Kunst Forum, Germany. For Coates, living and working as an artist in Germany was a formative experience, "Art was my only form of communication". Coates is inventive with his usages of found materials. Artistically, Coates enjoyed painting---mostly the female figure---though abstracted, and lines substituted by rubber hose or rope.

It was Al Loving, his mentor, who pointed at a boisterous collage made with wood, metal and cardboard and said in his matter of fact way, "that's your art, there!" That path found, Coates left behind the tradition of using the brush. With an urge towards the experimental and the highly skilled use of unorthodox material, the shift was gradual, but the art started to be not about the use of material, but the material itself --- the material as subject matter. By 2000, Coates had established himself on the big stage, was consequently awarded Joan Mitchell, Pollock Krasner, and Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Fellowship Grants, in addition to the New York State Foundation Grant. His work is shown internationally, most recently at Galerie Denkraum in Vienna, where his show "Strut" got raving reviews in a full-page color spread in the Wiener Zeitung.

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