

Benny Andrews

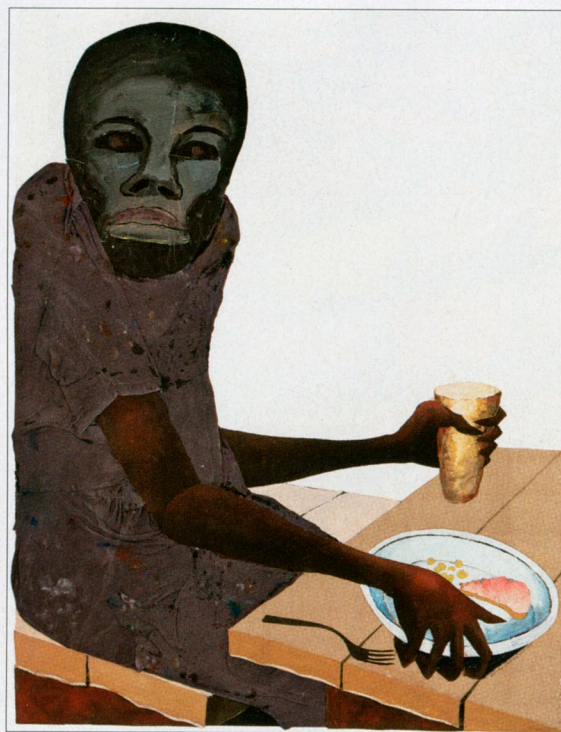
Michael Rosenfeld

Benny Andrews (1930–2006) was a complicated artist. An activist, always ready to speak out, he was also, first and foremost, a brilliant draftsman. Andrews used line to get at human emotion. And he used line to give each canvas its punch. This fine show—the first survey since his death—made it clear that he remains a force to be reckoned with.

Much of the artist's most political work looks remarkably fresh today. That may be due in part to Andrews's graphic sense, and in part to a ferocity that transcended technique. In *Study for Portrait of Oppression (Homage to Black South Africans)*, 1985, he transforms the standard props of protest—a chain, a bloodied shirt, a black man's upturned face—into a powerful collage that takes a page from Romare Bearden while retaining a controlled, steely voice. *Symbols Study #2 (Bicentennial Series)*, 1970, shows a fat-cat white man sitting on a safe, while a young girl, in red-and-white stripes, holds up a hornbook. At once Pop and acerbic, Andrews's style embodies its era yet speaks to ours.

One of his most unsettling pieces is *Poverty* (1990), which shows a hunched figure gripping a plate of food. The collaged, blue-black face is as geometric as an African mask. More fetish object than portrait, this work has the power to haunt. So does the unforgettable *Sexism Study #24* (1973), which depicts a muscular black woman flailing as she tries to walk under a tarp. It seems that somebody had attached ropes to the tarp and dropped it over her head. The ropes are real; so is the tarp. They sit on the white canvas like unwashed laundry. This painting is the stuff of nightmares, lingering ones.

—Mona Molarsky



Benny Andrews, *Poverty (America Series)*, 1990, oil and graphite on paper with painted fabric collage, 50 1/4" x 38 1/2" x 1/4". Michael Rosenfeld.

Wolfgang Tillmans

Andrea Rosen

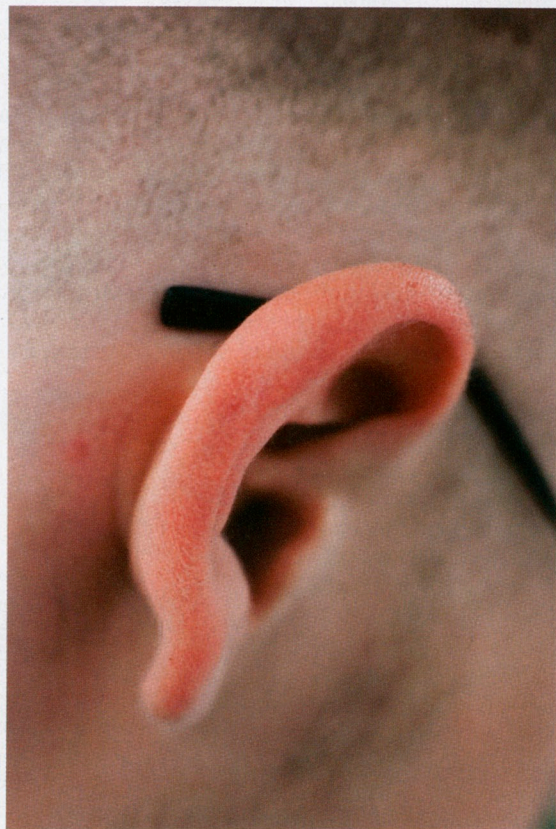
A close-up of an ear, a portrait of an Arabic man in a convenience store, a computer screen showing a program about telescopes, a luminous anti-septic fruit stand in Egypt, and boys playing a board game at night on a Shanghai street—these were some of the subjects in the photographs Wolfgang Tillmans installed in this luscious show.

Titled "from Neue Welt," after a four-year project Tillmans began in 2008, the show documented the artist's effort to capture fleeting moments of contemporary life in locations ranging from Tasmania to China, Africa to Bolivia, and Chile to India. Tillmans prints his images on standard commercial ink-

jet copiers available to everyone, using the latest ink and paper, rather than employing the more elitist custom-printing services. The pictures come in sizes from tiny to large, some framed and some suspended from clips. Reflections are a particular preoccupation, from the dizzying array of metallic escalators in a mall in Jeddah to the glittering mirrored surfaces of car headlights. There was one especially ambiguous close-up of an enormous fly feasting on a pile of lobster shells, and another distant shot of stars in the sky.

Refusing to let his photography be defined by any particular subject or place, Tillmans is impossible to pin down. His work is easier to define by what it is not than by what it is. Like all photographers, he captures what will soon disappear. His images, however, aren't romantic, nostalgic, prurient, or cruel; in fact, they express very little obvious emotion. Tillmans instead records the infinitely mutable outer appearances of a world of constant change.

—Elisabeth Kley



Wolfgang Tillmans, *Outer Ear*, 2012, ink-jet print on paper mounted on aluminum in artist's frame, 32 3/8" x 26 1/2". Andrea Rosen.