

RICK LOWE

Rick Lowe is an artist, educator and community activist.

Born	Eufaula (Alabama), 1961
Education	Columbus College, GA (79-82) and Texas Southern University, Houston (90-92)
Resides	Lives and works in Houston, TX

Biography

Born in rural Alabama, Lowe is a distinguished artist whose remarkable achievements in the art world are mirrored by his championship of people and communities through social and community engaged art projects, as evidenced, in particular, through Houston's noteworthy Project Row Houses. Founded in 1993 by Lowe, Project Row Houses is an arts and cultural community located in Houston's significant, historical Third Ward – one of the city's oldest African American neighbourhoods. Much of Lowe's interest and adept skill with collaboration comes from his family upbringing, where he was surrounded by a large family of four brothers and seven sisters. This sense of familial community is closely mirrored in many of his projects that focuses on building and nurturing relationships.

Lowe is represented by Louise Alexander Gallery/AF Projects in Los Angeles , California and Porto Cervo, Italy, Hiram Butler Gallery in Houston, Texas, as well as Storage, in New York. He has exhibited in numerous institutions worldwide, including exhibitions at the following the Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona; Contemporary arts Museum, Houston, Texas; Museum of Contemporary Arts, Los Angeles, California; Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York; Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston, Texas; Glassell School of Art, Houston, Texas; the Kumamoto State Museum, Kumamoto, Japan; and the Zora Neale Hurston Museum, Eatonville, Florida, among others.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2020 Rick Lowe, New Paintings and Drawings (2017-2020), Art League Houston
- 2019 Rick Lowe, At the humility table, Louise Alexander Gallery/AF Projects, Los Angeles
- 2018 Rick Lowe, Drawings, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston

Group Exhibitions

- 2021 Toward Common Cause: Art, Social Change, and the MacArthur Fellows Program at 40, Smart Museum, Chicago, IL
- 2020 "Storage_", Storage, New York, NY
- 2020 The Souls of Black Folk, Houston Museum of African American Culture (HMAAC), Houston, TX
- 2019 To construct the Gender, a.antonopoulou.art, Athens, Greece

2019 Place, Hiram Butler Gallery, Houston, TX
2017 documenta 14, Benaki Museum of Greek Culture, Athens, Greece
2014 The People's Biennial, MOCAD, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit, MI
2013 Nasher XChange, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX
2013 Arte Útil Lab, Queens Museum of Art, Queens, NY
2013 Social Documents. Stills, Edinburgh, UK
2013 Economy, The Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, Scotland
2009 In The Brown Foundation Gallery, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, TX
2009 No Zoning: Artists Engage Houston, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, TX

Awards

1997 Silver Medal by the Rudy Bruner Awards in Urban Excellence (jointly with PRH)
2000 American Institute of Architecture Keystone Award
2001-2002 Loeb Fellow at Harvard University (September 2001-June 2002)
2002 Theresa Heinz Award in the Arts and Humanities
2005 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Governors Award
2005-2006 Osher Fellow at the Exploratorium in San Francisco
2006 Brandywine Lifetime Achievement Award
2007 Innovator Fellow with the Japan Society
2009 Skandalaris Award for Art and Architecture
2009 US. Artists Booth Fellowship
2010 Creative Time Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change
2011 Visual arts "master artist" at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in New Smyrna Beach, FL
2013 President Barack Obama appointed Rick to the National Council on the Arts
2014 MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship
2014 Mel Kind Fellow at MIT
2015 Auburn University Breedan Scholar
2015 University of Houston's President's Medallion Award
2015 Hon. Doctorate degrees from the Maryland Institute College of Art & Otis College of Art
2016 Served as the Stanford University Haas Center Distinguish Visitor
2016 University of Houston, associate professor of art

Bibliography

2020 *Collective Creative Actions: Project Row Houses at 25*, Duke University
2020 *Rick Lowe, Paintings and Drawings 2017-2020*, Art League Houston
2015 *Place and Revolution: In Conversation*, Rick Lowe, Lisa Lee, Open Engagement In Print
2014 *Future Imperfect: A Blade of Grass*, Elizabeth M. Grady, A Blade of Grass Books
2005 *Rick Lowe: toward social sculpture*, Valerie Loupe, Olsen Glassell School of Art of the MFAH

2000 *Outbound - Passages from the 90s*, Lynn Herbert, Contemporary Arts Museum

Press

2021 ArtForum "Storage_"

<https://www.artforum.com/print/reviews/202101/storage-84682>

2020 The New York Times, "The 25 Most Influential Works of American Protest Art Since World War II"

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/t-magazine/most-influential-protest-art.html>

2018 Houston Chronicles, "Rick Lowe's latest project - reclaiming his own art"

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/culture/arts/article/Rick-Lowe-s-latest-project-reclaiming-his-13448282.php>

2015 The New York Times Style Mag "Three Artists Who Think Outside the Box: Theaster Gates, Mark Bradford and Rick Lowe"

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/03/t-magazine/art/theaster-gates-mark-bradford-rick-low-profile.html>

2006 The New York Times, "In Houston, Art Is Where the Home Is"

<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/17/arts/design/17kimm.html>

Images



Untitled, 2020
Acrylic on canvas
182.88 x 152.4 cm
(72 x 60 in)



Black Wall Street Journey, 2020
Acrylic and paper collage
on paper
122.6 x 132.7 cm
(48 1/4 x 52 1/4 in)



Untitled, 2020
Acrylic paint and paper on
canvas
182.88 x 152.4 cm
(72 x 60 in)



Untitled, 2020
Acrylic paint and paper on
canvas
121.92 x 91.44 cm
(48 x 36 in)



Art League Houston,
2020



Art League Houston,
2020



Art League Houston,
2020



Art League Houston,
2020

Contacts

Louise Alexander Gallery / AF Projects
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About Project Row Houses (1993-ongoing)



History

Project Row Houses' work with the Third Ward community began in 1993 when seven visionary African-American artists—James Bettison (1958-1997), Bert Long, Jr. (1940-2013), Jesse Lott, Rick Lowe, Floyd Newsum, Bert Samples, and George Smith—recognized real potential in a block and a half of derelict shotgun houses at the corner of Holman and Live Oak. Where others saw poverty, these artists saw a future site for positive, creative, and transformative experiences in the Third Ward. Together they began to explore how they could be a resource to the community and how art could be an engine for social transformation. This is how the PRH story began.

As the founders engaged with a community of creative thinkers and the neighbors around them, Project Row Houses quickly began to shift the understanding of art from traditional studio practice to a more conceptual base of transforming the social environment. While they were artists, they were also advocates.

Over the next twenty-seven years the organization brought together groups and pooled resources to materialize sustainable opportunities for artists, young mothers, small businesses, and Third Ward Residents helping to cultivate independent change agents by supporting people and their ideas so that they have tools and capacity to do the same for others.

PRH is, and has always been, a unique experiment in activating the intersections between art, enrichment, and preservation.

The Influence of Dr. John Biggers PRH was inspired in part by Joseph Beuys, a German artist who coined the term Social Sculpture to represent the way in which people shape the world around them, and Dr. John Biggers, a Houston-based artist and educator whose work challenged African American stereotypes and often highlighted architecture and its significance to community.

Early conversations between Dr. Biggers and PRH founder Rick Lowe about the rich history and symbolism of the shotgun houses that dot the physical landscape of Third Ward informed and shaped the ideals of Project Row Houses. It was a style that originated in West Africa and was brought to the US via the slave trade – first through the Caribbean up to New Orleans and then across the country.

Mindful of the history and depth of symbolism in these houses, the founders began to brainstorm what a project would look like if it encompassed 22 houses.

About Greenwood Art Project (2020-ongoing)

Starting on June 1, 1921, in the Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa, Oklahoma, nearly 300 African Americans lost their lives. Forty square blocks of homes, hospitals, schools, and churches were looted and burned to the ground, leaving nearly 9,000 homeless. The area, which was once the home of hundreds of bustling African American businesses and popularly known as Black Wall Street, had been wiped out in a matter of days.

Unfortunately, this racially motivated destruction of a once-flourishing community has been largely forgotten in our national consciousness. However, as we approach the centennial anniversary of the massacre, the City of Tulsa has launched a new project that seeks to raise awareness of the historic massacre and celebrate its historically significant Greenwood neighborhood.

Through “The Greenwood Art Project,” MacArthur Fellow Rick Lowe will work alongside local artists to bring the story of the Black Wall Street to light. In creating a series of art installations located at significant sites throughout the historic district, Lowe and his team hope to tell a story of vulnerability and resilience.

Lead Artists: William Cordova, Rick Lowe

Program Director: Jerica Wortham

Social Media Archivist + Anthropologist: Marlon Hall

Project Coordinator: Jeff Van Hanken

Deputy Chief of Community Development & Policy/City of Tulsa: Ashley Philippsen

This project is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.
