Tony Lewis
Biography

Tony Lewis was born in 1986 in Los Angeles. He currently lives and works in Chicago.

Lewis' practice focuses on the relationship between semiotics and language to confront social and political topics such as race, power, communication, and labour. Lewis creates drawings using graphite, pencil and paper, mediums the artist uses to trace and develop abstract narratives and reflections on the notion of the gestural. By pushing the boundaries of drawing and the possibilities of abstraction, he expands the use of the "material" of language.

As expressed by Melissa Chiu, Director of Hirshhorn Museum: 'Lewis has quickly established himself in the contemporary art world by forming a distinct visual vocabulary that integrates poetry and text with the properties of abstraction, and his monochromatic drawings pull from various visual and written sources, ranging from the personal to the political. Separating, rearranging, and erasing text, he shifts the way we move through language to open up new and unexpected readings'.

Lewis' work is in the permanent collections of The Zabludowicz Collection, London; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; among others. Lewis participated the 2014 Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

Solo exhibitions

2025

2025 - What drawing can be: four responses, The Menil Collection, Houston, TX, USA
2025 - TBT (forthcoming), Olney Gleason, New York, USA

2024

2024 - I Came to Peep, University of Chicago John W. Boyer Center, Paris, F

2023

2023 - New Song We Wrest! Who Throng Heat Yet? Tone Got Flower Work., MASSIMODECARLO, Hong Kong, HK
2023 - CASUAL T, MASSIMODECARLO Pièce Unique, Paris , F
2023 - CASUAL T, MASSIMODECARLO Pièce Unique, Paris , F
2023 - CASUAL T, Orange County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA
2023 - New Song We Wrest! Who Throng Heat Yet? Tone Got Flower Work., MASSIMODECARLO, Hong Kong, HK

2022

2022 - EONS OF NEON NESCIENT PEONS POPCORN INFLUENCE AND SUCH, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA

2021

2021 - Sing Plunder, Think Gentle Damage, Maintain Tomorrow, Et al., MASSIMODECARLO, London,

UK
2021 - Noise! Yourself, Also Distrain, MASSIMODECARLO, London, UK

2020

2020 - The Dangers (As Far As I Can See), Massimo De Carlo, Milano, I
2020 - The Dangers (As Far As I Can See), Massimo De Carlo, Milano, I

2019

2019 - Charlatan And Ultimately A Boring Man, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA

2018

2018 - Engine Insist Itself Nothing Short Etc., Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong, HK
2018 - Campo de juego, Art Projects Ibiza, Ibiza, E
2018 - Engine Insist Itself Nothing Short Etc., Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong, HK
2018 - Anthology 2014-2016, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, USA. Catalogue
2018 - Campo de juego, Art Projects Ibiza, Ibiza, E

2017

2017 - When I Felt Like I Could Sing That, Then I Felt Like I Was In, Massimo De Carlo, London, UK
2017 - When I Felt Like I Could Sing That, Then I Felt Like I Was In, Massimo De Carlo, London, UK
2017 - Plunder, Rose Art Museum, Waltham, USA
2017 - Jot, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA

2016

2016 - Alms, Comity and Plunder, Marino Marini Museum, Florence, I
2016 - Alms, Comity and Plunder, Marino Marini Museum, Florence, I

2015

2015 - Tony Lewis: nomenclature movement free pressure power weight, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, Cleveland, USA. Catalogue
2015 - Wordnonpseudo, Massimo De Carlo, Milano, I
2015 - Pall, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago, USA. Catalogue
2015 - Art Basel Unlimited, Basel, CH

2014

2014 - I Believe History Is a Force, Massimo De Carlo, London, UK

2012

2012 - Nine Drawings for Charles, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago, USA

2011

2011 - Autumn Space Presents: Tony Lewis, Autumn Space Gallery, Chicago, USA

Group exhibitions

2024

2024 - The Death and Untimes of Jackson and CASUAL T, Anthony Gallery, Chicago, IL, USA
2024 - RETROaction (part two), curated by Homi K. Bahba, Kate Fowle, Charles Gaines, Ellen Tani, Hauser & Wirth, Hauser & Wirth, Los Angeles, USA
2024 - Come One, Come All, Anthony Gallery, Chicago, USA
2024 - WORKS BY: Tony Lewis with Bethany Collins, Devin T. Mays & Ellen Rothenberg, Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society, Chicago, USA

2023

2023 - Levity, Alexander Berggruen, New York, USA
2023 - BARELY FAIR, Color Club, Chicago, USA

2022

2022 - Citing Black Geographies, GRAY Gallery, Chicago, USA
2022 - Winter Wunderkammer, MASSIMODECARLO, VSpace, I
2022 - Sympathy for the Translator, The ICA at MECA&D, Portland, USA

2022 - In With The New…, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, USA
2022 - Sculpture as Verb, Gund Gallery, Gambier, USA
2022 - Reading a Wave, curated by Douglas Fogle and Hanneke Skerath, Palomar, Pognana, I
2022 - In With The New…, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, USA
2022 - Sympathy for the Translator, ICA at Maine Collage of Art & Design, Portland, USA
2022 - MINIMALISM-MAXIMALISM-MECHANISSMMM, curated by Jacob Fabricius, ArtSonjeCenter, Seoul, ROK
2022 - In These Truths, Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, New York, USA
2022 - Winter Wunderkammer, MASSIMODECARLO, VSpace, I

2021

2021 - Villa Chiuminatto, Villa Chiuminatto, Torino, I
2021 - Thing, The Gerald Luss House, Ossining, New York, USA
2021 - Grain of a Hand: Drawings with Charcoal, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA
2021 - At The Luss House: Blum & Poe, Mendes Wood DM and Object & Thing, The Gerald Luss House, Ossining, NY, USA
2021 - Hiding in Plain Sight, Pace Gallery, New York, USA

2020

2020 - The Long Dream, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA
2020 - 5,471 miles, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA

2019

2019 - Words, Alexander Berggruen Gallery LLC, New York, USA

2018

2018 - Under Erasure, curated by Heather and Raphael Rubinstein, Pierogi, New York, USA
2018 - Second Sight: The Paradox of Vision in Contemporary Art, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, USA
2018 - This is a Pipe: Realism and the Found Object in Contemporary Art, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago, USA
2018 - Untitled (Monochrome), 1957-2017, Richard Taittinger Gallery, New York, USA

2017

2017 - The Gap Between the Fridge and the Cooker, The Modern Institute, Glasgow, UK
2017 - Color People, Rental Gallery, East Hampton, USA
2017 - Speech/Acts, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, PA

2016

2016 - The Revolution Will Not Be Grey, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, USA
2016 - Michel François, Liz Larner, Tony Lewis, Virginia Overton, Morgan Fisher, Bortolami Gallery, New York, USA
2016 - Self, Massimo De Carlo, London, UK
2016 - Chicago Invites Chicago, Galerie Lelong, New York, USA
2016 - Chicago and Vicinity, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago, USA
2016 - Imitation of Life: Melodrama and Race in the 21st Century, Home Museum, Manchester, UK

2015

2015 - Sharon Hayes, Tony Lewis, Adam Pendleton, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, USA
2015 - The Works: Artists in and from Chicago, curated by Dieter Roelstraete and Abigail Winograd, CAB Contemporary Art, Bruxelles, B
2015 - Synecdoche, Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco, USA
2015 - SAIC Anniversary Alumni Exhibition, curated by Scott and Tyson Reeder, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago, USA

2014

2014 - Walls and Words, Eldridge Street Synagogue, New York, USA
2014 - Whitney Biennial 2014, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA
2014 - Black Eye, curated by Nicola Vassell, 57 Walker Street, New York, USA
2014 - Retreat, curated by Theaster Gates, Valerie Carberry Gallery and Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, USA

2014 - NEXT, Arsenal Contemporary Art, Montréal, CDN
2014 - Tony Lewis / Nate Young, Room East, New York, USA

2013

2013 - Edge, Order, Rupture: Geometric Abstraction, Galerie Lelong, New York, USA
2013 - Mark Jackson/Tony Lewis/John Neff, LUMP Projects, Raleigh, USA
2013 - …BUT THE CLOUDS…, Room East, New York, USA
2013 - Beyond the Object, Brand New Gallery, Milan, I
2013 - Art Statement, Art Basel (with Shane Campbell Gallery), Basel, CH

2012

2012 - Kindred Visions, Blanc Gallery, Chicago, USA
2012 - 2nd Floor Rear: 24-Hour Festival, It's a Pony Projects, Chicago, USA
2012 - Assemble, Carousel Space Projects, Chicago, USA
2012 - News From Chicago and New York City, Galerie Fiebach, Minninger, Cologne, D
2012 - People of Color, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, USA
2012 - Ground Floor, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, USA
2012 - SAIC MFA Painting, curated by Philip Vanderhyden, Monya Rowe Gallery, New York, USA
2012 - And Then She's Like / And She Goes, curated by Chris Campe, A+D Gallery at Columbia College, Chicago, USA
2012 - SAIC Graduate Exhibition, School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA

2011

2011 - Umlaut, Dank Haus, German American Cultural Center, Chicago, USA
2011 - Midnight Snacks: Chicago, 1366 Space, Chicago, USA
2011 - Love, Sex, and Violence, The Fine Arts Building, Chicago, USA
2011 - Autumn Space Presents: Instructions Sets, Autumn Space Gallery, Chicago, USA
2011 - Roger's Grocery, Mess Hall, Chicago, USA
2011 - Dialogical Self, School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA

Bibliography

2021

"MASSIMODECARLO opens a virtual exhibition curated by gallery artist Tony Lewis", *Artdaily*, april 2021.

2020

Giorgini, Elena. "Il potere della grafite. Tony Lewis e il sogno (bianco) americano in scena da Massimo de Carlo", *ArtsLife*, February 2020.

2019

Zara, Janelle. "'It's a Call to Action': Why Artist Tony Lewis Is Battling the Legacy of William F. Buckley, the Godfather of American Conservatism", *Artnet News*, May 31 2019.

2018

"Hirshhorn to Present Tony Lewis' Comic Strip-Based "Anthology 2014-2016" Collages Together for the First Time", *Webwire.com*, February 2018.
Catlin, Roger. "This Artist Deconstructed His Love and Fascination for Calvin and Hobbes", *Smithsonianmag.com*, March 2018.
Gould, Jocelyn. "Tony Lewis Recounts His Evolution as an Artist and His Exploration of Creating Drawings", *Thejustice.org*, April 2018.
Hallé, Isabelle. "Graphite and Collaboration: Drawing on the Walls with Tony Lewis", *Bowdoinorient.com*, February 2018.
Lewis, Tony.*Anthology 2014-2016*, exhibition catalogue, Chicago: Candor Arts, 2018.

2017

"With 'Plunder' Tony Lewis Deconstructs Racial Language, History", *Bay State Banner*, December 2017.

2016

"At LAXArt, boundary-blurring drawing as a form of sculpture", *LA Times*, 2 May 2016.
"Intervista ad Alberto Salvadori", *Zero*, Aprile 2016.
"Tony Lewis", *Flash Art Edizione Italiana*, n. 326, March/April 2016, 47.
Fassi, Luigi. "Tony Lewis 'Alms Comity and Plunder' at Museo Marino Marini", *Mousse Magazine*, 2016.

2015

"Reviews", *ARTFORUM*, Nov 2015.
"Tony Lewis's Epigrammatic Abstractions", *Inside/Within*, 2015.
Tony Lewis: Free movement power nomenclature pressure weight, exhibition catalogue, . Cleveland, North Coast Litho, 2015.
Fabricius, Jacob. "Tony Lewis: Pall", *Mousse*, n. Summer, 2015, pp 205-207.
Fabricius, Jacob.*Making Room for Drawing Series*, exhibition catalogue, Pork Salad Press, 2015.
Michalska, Julia. "Black Art Matters", *The Art Newspaper*, June 18th 2015.

2014

"Whitney Biennial 2014", *museumagazine online*, 2014.
Tony Lewis speaks with Dr. Robert P. Vande Kappelle. New York, Whitney Biennial 2014, 2014, p. 363-364.
Blake, Kevin. "Drawing Lines of Communcation: A conversation with Tony Lewis", *Bad at Sports*, April 2014.
Duray, Dan, Andrew Russeth e Zoe Lescaze. *12 Things to Do in New York's Art World Before May 11th*. Gallerist NY, 2014.
Foumberg, Jason. "Eye Exam: Chicago Art News", *Newcity*, 2014.
Pechman, Ali. "Walls and Words", *Art Forum*, 2014.
Samuels Gibbs, Adrienne. "The 312: Theaster Gates Curates a 'Retreat' Exhibition for Black Artists", *Chicago Sunday Times*, 2014.

2013

Judd, Jason. "Tony Lewis", *Make Space*, 2013.
Niendorf, Emmaline. "Simply Magnificent: Top Art Exhibitions for January 2013", *Simply Magnificent*, 2013.
Schouweiler, Susannah. "Tony Lewis' exhibition leaves its mark at the Bindery Projects", *Knight Arts*, 2013.

Public Collections

Italy

Collezione La Gaia, Busca

United Kingdom

The Zabludowicz Collection, London

United States of America

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo
Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland
Museum of Modern Art, New York
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia
Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C.
Studio Museum in Harlem, New York
University of Michigan Museum of Art, in Ann Arbor, Michigan