

Meliksetian MB Briggs

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ARTS ENTERTAINMENT: VISUAL ARTS



David-Jeremiah has been one of the most provocative artists in Dallas for more than a decade, working as an actor, a performance artist and a visual artist.

At Gallery 12.26, David-Jeremiah finds a new vehicle to explore Black masculinity

The artist's Lamborghini-inspired 'I Drive Thee' exhibition is on display through March 5

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For more than a decade, David-Jeremiah has been one of the most provocative artists in Dallas. He first made a name for himself as an actor, then as a performance artist. As a visual artist, he's gone from zero to 60 in two years flat, a feat as impressive as the 2.2 seconds it takes a Huracán from Lamborghini, the car brand that inspired the work in Jeremiah's exhibition "I Drive Thee," now on display at Gallery 12.26.

Jeremiah references Lamborghini specifically because the company names its car models after bulls who have been victorious over matadors

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in the tradition of Spanish bullfighting. This series of eight circular paintings, or tondos, are painted in the slick bright red, black or yellow colors popular for sports cars. These steering wheel-shaped works, such as 2021's El Cobarde, are aggressive in size but subtle in imagery, invoking elements of the human male form, or more particularly the corpse.

The works continue Jeremiah's exploration of Black masculinity, both in art and performance, this time through a blurry mixture of luxury car culture and gladiator sport. The underlying commentary, visually understated though it may be, connects the exploitation of Black men in contemporary society with that of the bull in the arena: vilified for sport, killed in the public arena, rarely victorious. Certainly these connections with important contemporary conversations are not hurting Jeremiah's swift rise to prominence. In his rear-view mirror is an impressive smattering of exhibitions in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Dallas.

But this might be his most commercially impressive exhibition yet. Within the first week, six of the eight works were acquired, including one by a major museum. When it comes to his career, Jeremiah is sitting in the driver's seat.