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KEMPER MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART ACQUIRES PAINTING BY NEW YORK ARTIST BO JOSEPH

The Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri, has acquired a painting by New York artist Bo Joseph, *Untitled*, 2005, which is currently on display in the museum's central gallery along with other recent acquisitions by artists such as Damien Hirst, Petah Coyne, Gajin Fujita and Trenton Doyle Hancock. This acquisition marks Joseph's second inclusion in a museum collection, whose 1992 painting *Silent Running* is in the Springfield Museum of Art in Ohio.

In *Untitled*, 2005, Bo Joseph employs abstraction as a means to explore and reconcile vast systems of widely disparate world-views, mythologies and cultures by superimposing a network of silhouettes of tribal icons over layers of collage and gestural forms. Scavenging reproductions found in books or even auction catalogues, Joseph transcribes the outlines of ritualistic masks and ceremonial objects, obtaining a selection of unusual and distinct shapes that he then combines. Through this technique, he abstracts the highly symbolic artifacts and succeeds in stripping off any inherent meaning or point of reference and withdrawing any cultural context, lending a kind of universal access to these otherwise esoteric sources.

"The reality of loss has deluded us into believing that scarcity and competition must dictate our existence," says Joseph. "I mirror this in the work through deconstructive techniques, like rinsing, sanding or masking, while at the same time distilling form to a sort of vital essence, an essence that perhaps resonates an alternative truth. My effort is to coax the viewer into a labyrinthian recognition of our contemporary interdependence—cultural, economic, creative, spiritual."

Bo Joseph will have his first solo exhibition with Sears-Peyton Gallery entitled *Archetypes and Anomalies* from April 19-May 25, 2007.



Installation at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art
left to right: Bo Joseph, Petah Coyne, Damien Hirst



Bo Joseph, *Untitled*, 2005, ink, acrylic, tempera, charcoal
and collage on canvas, 22 5/8 x 30 1/8 inches (57.5 x 76.5 cm)