

Edgar Arceneaux: A Joyner/Giuffrida Visiting Artist Program

Multi-media artist Edgar Arceneaux's (b. 1972) artistic approach begins with three guiding principles that propel his work forward—a material investigation, a rigorous engagement with history, and his own personal connection to the given subject. Based in Los Angeles, Arceneaux engages many different styles and subjects, and his practice encompasses drawing, painting, performance, video, sculpture, and installation.

This gallery presents paintings from Arceneaux's series *Skinning the Mirror*, which he started in 2021. In this expansive body of work, he uses the mirror as a device to explore the formulation and fracturing of identity, specifically in relation to memory. Using found mirrors, Arceneaux laboriously separates the silver-nitrate backing from the sheet of glass, which he then applies to a prepared canvas. The process of "skinning" a mirror becomes an exercise of control and chance, often leading to imperfections. Cracks, flaws, and small shards of glass remain on the fabric's surface during the decoupling. Once the separation is complete, Arceneaux places the paintings at sites tied to a historical narrative he is investigating. Over time, the atmosphere of the selected locale alters the surface of the canvas, imbuing it with the environment so that the work itself becomes a part of the history that Arceneaux is exploring.

The entire series was made in response to Arceneaux's mother's passing, as an amalgamation of loss and mourning while he was caring for his ailing mother. Arceneaux's *Skinning the Mirror* series has also reflected the changing of the seasons, riverways in the Midwest, and the often fraught and conflicting spectrum of racial, political, and cultural perspectives that transform a location into a place of interest.

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