

Bert L. Long, Jr.

Biography

Bert L. Long, Jr. was born in Houston's historical Fifth Ward in 1940. He received his formal education from UCLA. In 1970, he began to explore folk art and assemblage to create a unique body of work, attracting the attention of Jim Harithas, then Director of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and artists John Alexander, Salvatore Scarpitta and James Surls. Long's paintings and sculptures incorporate a high level of skill and knowledge of art history, along with complex philosophical and social issues. Long describes the philosophy behind his work as "a quest to help people diagnose their inner self," believing his art to be "the vehicle to help facilitate such a process." The late Peter Marzio, former Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, said of Bert: "Bert Long does not avert his gaze from that which is painful, but as his artworks testify, he also brings a spirit of joy and redemption to his art. We can all learn from this great artist." Over Long's 33-year career as a painter, sculptor, and photographer, he was awarded several significant awards including the National Endowment for the Arts Grant in 1987 and the prestigious Prix de Rome fellowship in 1990.