

Lucien Shapiro's show *Eternal Circle* is an exploration of circularity. In mathematical thought, a circle is a closed shape that symbolizes certainty, fixation, equality, and perfection. According to Pythagoras (570-495BC), nothing exists without a center around which it resolves. The center of a circle is the cause that is beyond understanding, but like a seed, it is always expanding. In Daoist thought, the circle is an open, evolving and spinning process, like seasons that are rotating and never ending. The circle of Dao means uncertainty, it's revolving yet constantly changing and transforming. There is no beginning and no end, only eternity.

Shapiro enacts all of these distinctive and unique perspectives to create a body of work that ultimately returns to the root, to the center of the circle. He guides us through a journey to discover that things are neither formed nor destroyed, but open for connection and oneness. His brilliant and extraordinary art demonstrates and clarifies three significant thoughts in our daily life: Materials are not wasted but reused and revitalized; living is about simplicity and returning to the center; and we must shape and fashion our mind like a mirror.

### **Materials for revitalization**

Shapiro uses found and collected materials in his work, from bottle caps to self-described "Street Diamonds," which are pieces of glass from car windows that have been broken by car robberies. He meticulously recycles these materials, which otherwise would be thrown away, thereby exemplifying that objects, ingredients and things have a reset value. His art ultimately embodies simplicity, meaning, and joy. It takes Earth as a source of all existence and protects it through revitalization.

### **Returning to the center of living**

The center refers to returning to the root and the axis of our living. Shapiro's Portals are a radical invitation to stand at your own epicenter of existence and face what lies there. By confronting our own deepest wishes, fears, challenges, and intentions, we can embrace and transform our inner landscape, laying a concrete road map for the actualization and development of ourselves.

### **Fashioning and Shaping the mind like a mirror**

Mirroring the mind signifies one is grounded in genuine authenticity and becomes a real individual without preconceived, biased judgments and socially-formed standards and views. Shapiro's self portraits emulate this internal dialogue and function like the mirror: rejecting nothing and welcoming nothing. They respond but are not reacting or storing. "Heaven and earth are born together with me, and the 10,000 things and I are one... In motion be like water, in stillness like a mirror, in responding like an echo." – *Zhuangzi* (3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE).

Shapiro's art is the core of inspiration in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: transformation with prosperity. Prosperity, rather than a straight and thin line of progress, is cyclical and moves thickly, encompassing multiplicity and all dimensions of a flourishing, sustainable, and joyful life!

-Robin R. Wang, Ph.D, Professor of Philosophy