

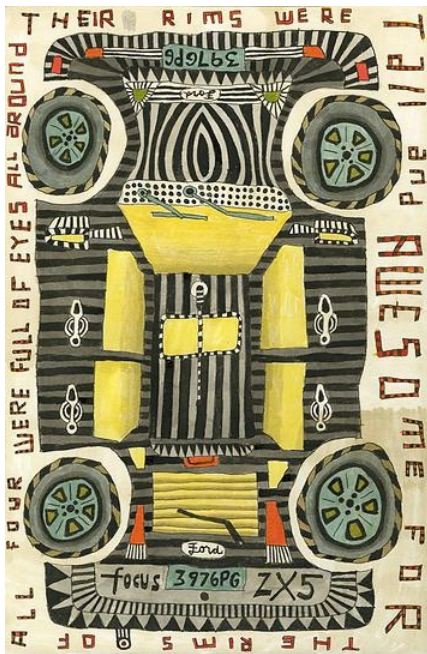
Michon Weeks

Thompson, Nancy. "Michon Weeks, Wheel Within a Wheel." *Material Collective*, April 15, 2015.

<http://thematerialcollective.org/wheel-within-a-wheel/>

Michon Weeks, Wheel Within a Wheel

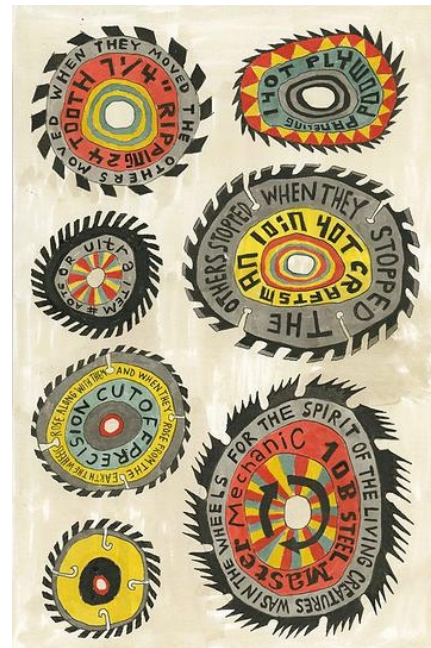
April 15, 2015 by Nancy Thompson



In her 2014 series of paintings, *Wheel Within a Wheel*, painter Michon Weeks enlivens the seemingly inert objects in her garage with words from the prophetic book of Ezekiel. A [17th-century Ethiopian manuscript](#) in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts inspired Weeks' bold black outlines and palette of mostly reds, yellows, and greens, visual elements that recall the manuscripts and panel paintings still created by Ethiopian Christian artists today. The colors and lines in Weeks' paintings vibrate within tightly compressed spaces: objects appear flattened and unable to breathe as they

crowd right up against the picture plane. These objects, which at first appear as a simple inventory of the objects in Weeks' garage, are distorted to show us their forms. Cars are squashed, but their intact wheels are bent under to reveal complete and potentially spinning forms.

The objects in Weeks' garage are anything but static. Instead, like the work of the Ethiopian artists whose work inspired Weeks, they are illuminated and energized by a sacred text: the vision of the prophet Ezekiel, written down in Hebrew in the 6th century BCE while the Judeans were exiled in Babylonia. Ezekiel's vision is wild and supernatural, describing the merging of stones, wheels, and animals into hybrid beings. In Weeks' paintings, the words of Ezekiel's vision sometimes appear on table-saw blades or bike hooks; other times the words organize themselves into rectangular shapes or banners that move in and around the objects.



At certain key moments, words describing Ezekiel's visions of wheels appear on and around wheel-like objects such as table saw blades, rolls of tape, and bicycle wheels. There are wheels that make machines move, that cut and shape other materials like wood and metal, wheels that move by human power. Saws bite into wood with their sharp teeth, wrenches and screwdrivers move with thick lines and vibrant patterns.

Ignited and enlivened by Ezekiel's prophetic words, the items in Weeks' garage tell their own story of a sacred and powerful reality. And these buzzing, humming and spinning objects tell Weeks' personal story, communicating the way that she sees the sacred in her everyday experiences.

* This essay was originally written to accompany Weeks' exhibit for [Art in Odd Places](#) in Indianapolis in October, 2014.