

THE THERAPEUTIC EFFECTS OF ART

Some might claim that art has no purpose or say that art has no real value, but these are delusional ideas. In moments of emotional turmoil, art can speak to an individual in an immeasurable way. People desire to view or possess this experience, which gives the images power. Art can be just entertaining, but great art also informs, nudges people towards ideas or big questions, and helps heal or transcend this world's problems if only for a moment. Before election day, I took a trip to see several art galleries.

I needed to get out and look at some art. I knew this act would help shed some of the anxiety I was feeling. So, I encourage you to see some shows before they close this weekend.

I encourage you to see James Buss' show at Holly Johnson Gallery. When I saw Buss' work at Site 131, I was intrigued with the pieces he had on the floor, but I think I was much more impressed with the objects Buss had on the gallery walls at Holly's. I think the small pieces just felt more involved with small details. This process of abstract work says a lot about how abstract painting isn't limited to paint. But rather Buss has hybridized painting and sculpture in interesting ways that you should take the time to inspect, then get lost in the shapes and lines that formed naturally.

Next door is Paul Manes at Cris Worley Fine Arts, whose paintings are also abstract, but more systematic, honeycomb like, and are traditional paintings on canvas. These are nice size works that speak to simple line and complex shapes. Down the street is a tasty painting show at Circuit 12. Casey Gary and Clark Goolsby pair up to bring you a real treat for your eyes. I saw Gary's work at Circuit 12's old space with his tropical themed paintings and it was just too pastel for me. This time around, the work feels better organized in the paintings and the new pallet of colors seems to work better with the images.

However, I am still amazed these are made with spray cans, because they don't come off as graffiti in much of the works. Goolsby's work was more abstract with a hint of collage. Some-times the paint was layered on thick and other times it was paper on canvas, but at all times things seemed to shift and move when you looked up close. I got really excited inspecting each inch of a few of his paintings.

Galleri Urbane has established artist Donald Martiny and emerging artist Loring Taoka. I think this pairing was quite inspired on their part. I found Martiny's abstract simulated brush strokes blown up to large scale a real contrast to the slick and clean shapes of Taoka's works. Martiny muddied up the brush strokes in some pieces this time, making the work feel more like an AbEx artist brush stroke. I looked at Taoka's work and I was made calm and I felt invited to speculate the process and meaning of the pieces.

Regina Jose Galindo's video titled Marabunta was riveting. When so many video art pieces only keep my attention for a short time, and I feel I pretty much get the texture and idea behind the work, Galindo's had me sit through the whole thing. Several men taking a car completely apart while she was in the vehicle was truly an amazing experience to watch. But you can only watch it at Liliana Bloch Gallery this weekend. Which also features works by local photographer Tim Best.

If you still can't get enough politics, you might swing over to RO2 Gallery which closes its show of Angel Cabrales. To paint his work with a broad brush, he is critical of the abuse of power and

the military industrial complex. Not your typical protest artist, Cabrales is criticizing the military's industrial complex, yet embracing their aesthetics. Thus his aims are not always obvious to the passive viewer.

So, go ease you mind, cleanse your spirit, and go see some art. It will be good for you and you won't get to see these shows again. This is the last weekend for all of them.