

HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

Watchlist: Captivating Contemporary Artists

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Two works from from two talented contemporary artists: Left: "Orbital" (2012) by Ali Smith; Right: "Fancy Pants, (2011) by Christopher Davison. Both artists currently have solo shows at Mark Moore Gallery in LA.



Smith also pays homage to past and present art-world greats. "I find my own work connected to a lot of early to mid-century artists: Max Ernst, Matta, Gorky, Joan Mitchell, Cy Twombly, Philip Guston, Lee Bontecou," she says:

"I'm not concerned with whether their own visual language is abstract or figurative: some of these artists are more about a surrealist, inventive language, and with others, it's their raw, very emotional sensibility that I respond to, often just a certain spirit about how to approach painting that interests me... I am also really inspired by looking at sculpture, sometimes more so than painting -- I often imagine what my work would look like in 3-D form, and I'm envious of sculptors who can make work that is ambiguous, whimsical; it seems really difficult with the limitations of gravity and material."

Yet Smith has managed to capture that very essence in her art, as her vividly painted pieces have a palpable sculptural aspect to them - the colors seem almost alive in their intricate, unfurling tendrils. Smith's paintings play tricks on the eye, drawing the viewer into abstract worlds that feel like whimsical 3D structures, captivating and inviting audiences to partake in her kaleidoscopic creations. "My work is never about the audience having a didactic experience with the work or illustrating a certain idea: instead, it's about a multi-layered visual experience that I hope is generous and as honest as possible." With equal candor she addresses the issue of meaning behind her art.

"Abstract painting can be tough to discuss because it's not about a certain specific narrative, nor is it about decoding certain symbols, and I think sometimes viewers feel uncomfortable with that ambiguity. Instead, it's essential to learn to "read" a painting on a more visual level, and to me, that's where the meaning lies."

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mutualart/contemporary-art_b_1369854.html