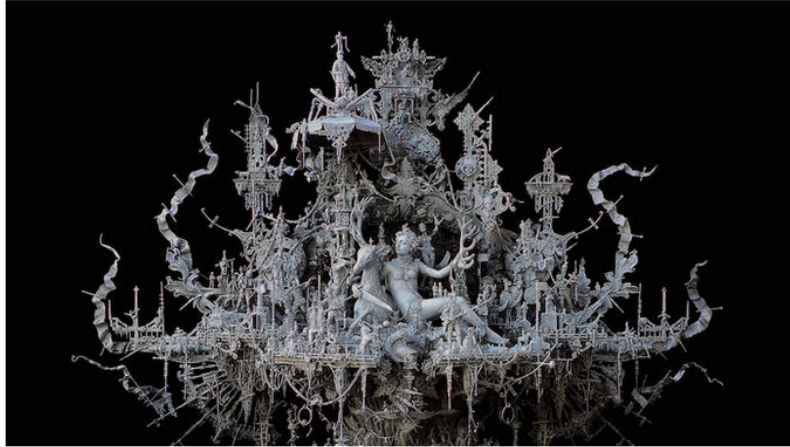


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Review Kris Kuksi's sculptures at Mark Moore Gallery are intensely detailed



"Artemis of Stockholm" by Kris Kuksi. (Kris Kuksi/Mark Moore Gallery)

By **DAVID PAGEL**

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The insanely detailed sculptures in Kris Kuksi's exhibition "Antiquity in the Faux" are 3-D versions of graphic novels whose imagery has taken up all the space and left no room for text.

In Kuksi's hands, that's not a bad trade-off. It leaves viewers free to let our eyeballs race wildly, running every which way as stories get tangled up in Gordian knots of mind-blowing complexity.

Similarly, speechlessness is not a bad reaction to the Kansas-based artist's over-the-top arrangements of variously scaled figurines, which, in some pieces, number well into the thousands. If not quite awe-inspiring, Kuksi's nine sculptures at Mark Moore Gallery are awesome.

Depicting ancient, medieval and contemporary warriors, as well as dinosaurs, bears and mythical beasts, along with nudes lifted from classical masterpieces, glossy magazines and salacious websites, Kuksi's Baroque confections treat history as primordial soup — a burbling stew of thrilling highlights and epic tragedies that not only resonate in the mind's eye but also inspire all sorts of emotions — good, bad and otherwise.

Symmetry is essential to Kuksi's wall reliefs. The same goes for pattern. Both provide enough structure to hold the excessiveness of his works in check.

Shifts in scale intensify the chaos, ratcheting up the tension between joy and despair, order and chaos, immersion and detachment. Sex and death figure prominently in Kuksi's pieces, as does faith and its absence.

If the devil is in the details, Kuksi's sculptures are among today's most devilish.

Mark Moore Gallery, 5790 Washington Blvd., Culver City, (310) 453-3031, through Dec. 20. Closed Sundays and Mondays. www.markmooregallery.com