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May 2006



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Upcoming Art Shows | by Vanessa Harless & Liz Hummer



Adam Sorensen's "Gerah-la-loo"

"FRESH" – Exciting New Work by 15 Artists & Malla Jensen – "Nature Studies"

Elizabeth Leach Gallery

Thru May 27

"FRESH" is the marriage of new work from seven of Elizabeth Leach Gallery's stable artists and their national peers, as well as emerging young Portland talent. The variety of candy-colored works feature abstract, landscape and still life paintings; mixed media fresco; collage installations; biographic photography; and sculpture. Elizabeth Leach hand-picked the combination of 15 artists after her travels around the country evoked musings on artists back home in Portland: "I was seeing all of this interesting work and it triggered thoughts about the artists here in Portland, especially the younger artists in the show. The work I was seeing seemed to be exploring or reflecting larger trends." Leach, who is currently the President of the Portland Art Dealers Association and serves on the boards of several art organizations and on the advisory committee for PNCA, decided to put together an exhibit that would mesh the work of mid-career artists with those emerging or "fresh" talents. She describes their collective works as "Artists creating other worlds, their own landscape, [their] own reality, fantasy," and hopes that viewers will be introduced to new artists. Although this common exploration ties these artists together, each artist provides a very different aesthetic. From active fictional environments and obsessive categorizations, to minimal line and form, more painterly pieces and photographic ruminations on daily life, "FRESH" is a journey in contemporary art that offers a little something for everyone. "It's an exhibit full of surprise and discovery, with an element of beauty and some challenging pieces as well," says Leach. Meanwhile, Jensen's bronze sculptures and drafts on paper depict animals in playful narratives. Both exhibits are a welcome to spring. —VH

Mø – "Little Jems"

Genuine Imitation Gallery

May

Twelve small-scale oil paintings, none larger than 10-inches across. Seems harmless enough. But look deeper. The starkly gothic dead tree in "Last Stand" hints at something much deeper going on in the otherwise warm landscape. And so it is with all of Mø's paintings, on display this month at Genuine Imitation Gallery. A multi-talented artist—one who draws and paints and designs elaborate electro-mechanical installations—Mø calls himself "an Artist with a capitol 'A'—an alchemical philosopher compelled beyond reason and desire to record and communicate the human experience." Painting is where this prolific Artist finds his center between large-scale projects like designing the interior of a 32-room luxury condo building in Beijing and directing the rebranding of a new InFocus projector system. "I'm focused so intensely on the process of painting that all other concerns rest," he explains. "I'm only concerned with the point of contact between the brush and the canvas, the brush and the palette." And when he does so, he creates a



Mø's "Façade"

duality for the viewer—a charming façade on the surface of the canvas that invites the viewer to delve deeper into the complexities beneath. What is he saying with the self-portrait "Façade," his blank face staring out from a painting on an easel within the very painting hanging on the wall? As Nike senior designer Mark Smith once wrote about Mø, "There is a stark realism to his paint works. Whether confronted with a single, simple image of an architectural object or a deeply personal self-portrait, this artist creates a distance from the viewer." But it is a distance that Mø invites you to traverse: "The more courageously I reveal my inner-most personal feelings, the closer I get to speaking of something everyone has the ability to connect to." —LH

Heart Art of Portland

The Drawing Studio

May 13, 5-10pm

Art is known to come from the heart, an expression of the artist's deepest emotions, and it often speaks to the heart, touching a viewer's rawest nerves, but it's not often that it actually helps the heart—until now. Heart Art of Portland is an evening exhibit of local artists who have agreed to donate proceeds (at least 25%) from the sale of their works on display to the American Heart Association. Heart disease and stroke are the number one and three causes of

death in men and women, respectively, and this first annual event strives to fund educational and treatment research; all contributions will be donated to the AHA through the Portland Heart Walk (May 20, heartwalk.kintera.org/portlandor). Oh yeah, and it's about talented local artists, too—like David Delamare, prolific painter of glowing fantasy-themed images, and Drawing Studio instructors William Park, Jeff Rood and Phil Sylvester, among many others. It's the perfect opportunity to purchase new art for the hearth and warm your heart at the same time. —LH

Michael Schultheis

Froelick Gallery

May 2-24

Michael Schultheis is a mathematician with the soul of an artist. He is passionate about his painting, which illustrates the beauty that can be achieved when both the right and left sides of the brain work together. Schultheis' paintings are considered contemporary abstract works, but more than that, these acrylics on canvas are mathematical equations. Schultheis left behind Econometrics, the study of Mathematical Economics, in the wake of this pseudosynaesthetic art form, in which he uses the language of math to reveal a stunning artistic visual presentation of equations and algorithms. He likens his work to the way classically trained musicians can read sheet music and hear the music in their heads—Schultheis works equations and sees their art. The simplest way to explain it: "Mathematicians speak a very visual language, we look at a formula such as $C = d \times \pi$ (3.14159265) and immediately translate that visually into a circle," he says. Schultheis' paintings, recently shown at the National Academy of Science, are like a chalkboard on which he works an algorithm, gradually layering the canvas with notations and illustrations, each canvas heavy with 20-30 layers of paint, a progression of ideas on a topic. Simply put, he translates the intricate world of numbers into something everyone can see and appreciate, creating bonds between math and human experience. —VH

Michael Schultheis' "Blue Spherical Lunes"

