

MOCA Tucson

Six Artists

20 June - 26 September 2015

Six Artists in the East Wing galleries is an opportunity for each practitioner to employ signature motifs as jumping-off points for fashioning completely new environments. Unpredictable and unexpected commonalities have arisen as individual styles simultaneously emerge, with surprising and unforeseen connections to the broad theme of recycling and reuse demonstrated by the Macro Sea Mobile Pools in the Great Hall. Unfettered creative freedom and experimentation are paramount in these exhibitions, in accordance with MOCA's mission to be a place where art is shown, but just as importantly, made. Each person working alone to realize their vision, with cross-pollination and fruitful interaction floating through the hallways, has fostered a convivial atmosphere very much in the spirit of MOCA Tucson.

Video Room

Andrew Shuta

~~I Want To~~ Believe

The ongoing de-skilling of the artist is a predominant concern in this feverish, and at times comically, senses-assaulting installation. The outcome of unremitting energy assails the viewer in an uneasy and contested push-and-pull between figuration and abstraction. Found objects - a bust of Sigmund Freud wearing a Coors Light can as a hat, a cardboard-cutout Elvira (aka the Mistress of the Dark), an inscrutably sad and creepy bear and its hooded young charge - mingle with handmade ceramic jaws, too-many-fingered hands, and strangely beautiful meteorite-like purplish blobs. An upside-down rug-wrapped mannequin is a self-portrait, there is an olfactory element, and shiny, garishly colored Mylar paintings face off against jauntily messy non-representative ones, with a background of neon mark-making on the walls. Juggling all that, Shuta's everything and the kitchen sink program manages the difficult feat of being completely au currant while transcending topicality.

Southwest Gallery

Ishi Glinsky

c/o Ishi Glinsky

Glinsky's off-kilter desk and hybrid file cabinet minimally raised off the floor are site-specific on a literal level, a subtly shifted office within what was once an actual fire department office. "Space judo" is achieved through a transfiguration of the artist's own working past at a desk, a skewering of the typical workplace with selected objects stretched in scale, resulting in six-inch long pushpins and a reverie on 19th-century tramp art frames begetting an extravagantly enlarged version steeped in a deep indigo raw pigment that, in the artist's words, "the eyes want to eat." A workplace trance, not a wild and crazy fantasy but a reimagining with nuanced changes that can be viewed from all angles as furniture gets distorted and a vintage desk starts disappearing into the wall. The mutation is from working small at "work," while daydreaming of bigger and stranger realities.

Southeast Gallery

Eli Burke

out/side

Memories of Cape Breton Island and the discovery at age twelve of a mysterious and forbidding hole in the Connecticut woods filled with candles and animal bones come together to conjure a slightly unsettling but also oddly comforting evocation of wilderness via cardboard ramparts, white plastic fallen leaves, and taped trees. "Getaway" on the wall possibly refers to that desire to escape society's constraints, while the "Thimble Rig" (another term for shell game) is an autobiographical reflection on the difficulty of navigating unknown, maybe momentarily life-changing choices. With an inviting simplified tent and a glowing artificial campfire, amongst other features, Burke creates a scrappily constructed yet poetically winsome evocation of an arena away, silent, in the forest. A place for recollection and self-reflection, an idyllic solitary edition of nature where no one is judged.

Drawing Room

Jessica James Lansdon

Untitled (Party Decorations)

Taking its inspiration from earlier endeavors called "Party Animals," this deliriously festooned cocoon consisting of crepe paper, vinyl, tape, curling ribbon, and balloons is the beginning of a three-part manifestation of Lansdon's entropic and happily claustrophobic setting. Initially existing as stage one, stage two will be a filmed "takedown" in which the artist will film her child relatives doing their best to tear it apart, creating a documentation of that anarchic destruction, and stage three is the aftermath on display through the end of the exhibition. There is a post-painterly abstract sensibility at play here, courtesy of an unrepentant over-the-top colorist. A landscape, a tangled streamer garden, excessive and disordered, counterbalanced by concerns about the throwaway, waste, and ecological fragility. Overwhelming and overwrought, this celebratory time-based work impedes movement, paradoxically promoting and preventing partying.

Northwest Gallery

Jason Wright

No One is Left Behind

Wright's conglomeration of found objects act as a memory archive, with the past informing the present, then turned into the future. Matter's trip through time is the keynote, with wood that started as tree, got cut down, made into something, then discarded to become the detritus that re-materializes in Wright's art. "Every passion borders on the chaotic, but the collector's passion borders on the chaos of memories," as Walter Benjamin wrote in *Illuminations*, is an apt quote. The omnivorous gathering and scavenging from thrift stores and old copies of *Playboy*, to the Internet, to the Santa Cruz riverbed, coalesces into an idiosyncratic one man's junk equals another's treasure situation. Sculpturally transformed into alternately a fort or the prow of a child's space ship jutting into the space, as emerald waterfalls, mirrored Rorschach mandalas, and multi-colored glossy strips of snatched imagery appear on the floor and walls, and

plastic cups and other flotsam, and a majestic stump complete the reconstituted Sonoran scene.

Northeast Gallery

Bryan Crow

Where is my Mind

The constructivist red, black, grey, and white palette Crow often applies so intensely and obsessively to his drawings is expanded here to fill the entire room, from the walls to the ceilings to the windows. A maze of cellular geometric shapes and lines with a discernible aboriginal dreamtime bent squirm and intertwine in an all-over covering of every flat surface, contrasting with the white canvas floor that will betray the traces of visitor's footprints over the duration. Three blue-lit human-sized black cones made of old canvases and pants and rebar salvaged from a backyard fence combine reclaiming with redemption. A story of a life imbedded in materials comes full circle, with a diminutive painted door leading to the unknown outside the labyrinth. Completing the sanctuary are hanging stalactites of wire, scraps of metal, wood, discards, and personally meaningful mementos. Symbolic and talismanic, they tie the possibly disquieting, though ultimately graphically and materially radiant whole, together.

Eli Burke

Born 1976, Bridgeport, Connecticut

Lives and works in Tucson, Arizona

A Merit Scholar, and holder of an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Burke is on the adjunct faculty of Pima Community College, has exhibited at AcreTV and Fulton Street Collective in Chicago, and has presented videos at Exploded View in Tucson.

Bryan Crow

Born 1979, Houston, Texas

Lives and works in Tucson, Arizona

Crow primarily works with acrylic paint and steel, ranging from large sculptures and paintings to post-it note illustrations. He studied sculpture at the University of Arizona and his work has been exhibited in Houston, Tucson, Phoenix, New York, and Pittsburgh.

Ishi Glinsky

Born 1982, Tucson, Arizona

Lives and works in Los Angeles

Glinsky is a sculptor, painter, and installation artist. He is inspired by materials, both industrial and organic, often formed through handmade methods. Glinsky's interest in historical events and ephemera of North American Native tribes (in particular, his own tribe, the Tohono O'odham Nation), have been further explored through paintings of textiles and new sculptural investigations into basketry.

Jessica James Lansdon

Born 1980, Tucson, Arizona

Lives and works in Tucson

Lansdon received an MFA from the University of Arizona, and has shown her work at the Museum of Contemporary art in Denver, Gallery ARCN in San Francisco, San Francisco Museum of Craft and Design, the Kitchen in New York City, and had a solo exhibition at MOCA Tucson in 2006.

Andrew Shuta

Born 1984, Tucson, Arizona

Lives and works in Tucson

Shuta runs Spork Press, a small-press publishing house/record label, and is an MFA candidate at the University of Arizona.

Jason Wright

Born 1965, Merced, California

Lives and works in Ypsilanti, Michigan

Wright works across a variety of media, from drawing and painting, to sculpture, video, and installation. In addition to his roots in the fine art tradition, Wright's practice is informed by a broad range of vernacular art-making traditions. In addition to making art, he teaches courses on self-taught artists at the University of Michigan. He has shown at

the Thread Waxing Space and Max Fish in New York, as well as Tabor Hill in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and the Ever Gold Gallery in San Francisco.