



# International Art Creates a Strong Show for ArtHamptons

July 13, 2014

by Pat Rogers

It seems like change has arrived to ArtHamptons. This year, the art fair presented a diverse slate of work with quality art to be found in painting, installation, sculpture and mixed media. The inclusion of the Korean Art Show does much to introduce art worth seeing (and buying) to the art fair. That said, an international focus of artists and galleries resulted in an interesting art fair that could be considered its strongest show yet.

Catching my eye were a few conceptual artworks, a wide range of figurative painting and a smattering of abstraction. Taken together, the art reveal a diverse range of human experiences inspired by the artist's individual experience or concern, couched in his or her cultural background. Loss of family, societal examination through a political lens, the fragility of the human body, the joy or irony of living are a few of the experiences captured in the art on view at ArtHamptons.

Cuban-based artist Kadir Lopez's installation *Molotov* was a centerpiece to a near solo show of his political-inspired art that pulls from histories around the world. Each makes use of historic photographs. One series are mixed media works with banned photographs from the fifties as the centerpiece for the works that asks viewers to consider cultural taboos from the long lens of history, said Lopez. A sculpture series based on the Rubik's cube are built from either iconic images from Washington DC and the Capital of Havana or historical portraits of politicians. Both works pose the question of whether the layers of power and politics can be solved by most.

*Molotov* was the work that stayed with me. The piece includes over 100 glass bottles installed on the wall and anchored with rows of bottles on the floor to form a solid base for the flowing work. Every bottle seems to be from the past and each contained a historic photographic scrolled inside. Faces peered from within and seemed to ask for answers. Lopez explained that each bottle represents a different time period representing iconic chapters from world history. Each chapter was selected as a moment where the human race (or parts of it) fell under siege and its continuation was questionable.

The title of the piece goes straight the point – Are we determined to destroy the human race? Are we systemically building the explosive that will ultimately succeed?

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Kadir Lopez installation exhibited by Art Contemporaneo (Havana, Cuba).

Photo by Pat Rogers.



Molotov by Kadir Lopez, detail.

Considering the impacts of another type of invasion is the series “Hypochondria” by Klari Reis of San Francisco. Reis explores the biological impact on individuals when medications are introduced to fight illness. Art in this series typically features colorful (and almost happy) abstract images tucked into Plexiglas Petri dishes that are then used to create an installation. A single installation was exhibited by The Cynthia Corbett Gallery (London, England). Breaking from her typical color drenched works, *Hypochondria NOir* is primarily black and white.

Reis was inspired to direct her art in a scientific direction after being diagnosed with Crohn’s Disease, the gallery explained. She works with biotech agencies to gather the inspiration for her abstract compositions – biological reactions viewed from an electronic microscope, according to [Wired Magazine](#). Drawing on memory alone, Reis layers pigmented epoxy that is heated and cooled to recreate the visual of the human body’s reaction to medication. The works are then tucked into Plexiglas Petri dishes.

*Hypochondria NOir* is a compelling piece that encourages lingering. After all, there’s a mini-world contained within each circle and preserved beneath glass. It’s a natural to visually ponder the details, take in the entire view and then go back for more. (If you miss Reis’s work at ArtHamptons, the gallery and Reis’s work returns to the Hamptons with Art Southampton later this month.



Hypochondria Noir, 150 by Klari Reis. Mixed media. Petri Dishes, Tee Nuts and Steel Rods, 60 inches diameter. Exhibited The Cynthia Corbett Gallery



Hypochondria Noir, 150 by Klari Reis. Detail. Mixed media. Exhibited The Cynthia Corbett Gallery

Paintings by SUH Yoonhee of South Korea are both beautiful and unexpected. Exhibited by Um Gallery at ArtHamptons, the booth is devoted to Suh Yoonhee’s “Memory Gap” series. The works

are abstract fields of sweeping motion that can conjure cloud swept skies, storm-tossed or sun dappled waters, or lands that appear to be captured from above. These abstract fields are the most important part of the paintings, she explained through a translator. Created through a methodical process that is meditative, the works are layered with washes of paint from above and created in a style akin to traditional ink painting. Infused with the paint are painful experiences from her past, including being separated from her children. The process of painting is both a meditation and a healing where her emotions are directed into the art, she said through a translator.

Subtly tucked among the abstract and mysterious landscapes are tiny figures—almost so small to be missed. The figures represent family archetypes going about the ordinary business of living. Sons, daughters, fathers, uncles, cousins and mothers can be found fishing, walking or positioned in the composition, mostly in small groupings that invokes the idea of a village community. These figures are realistically rendered and form a compelling counterpoint to the abstract world in which they live.

Following ArtHamptons, SUH Yoonhee's Memory Gap series will be the subject of a solo show at bcs gallery of ARPNY (Artist Residency Program) in Long Island City from July 14 to 25, 2014, according to an exhibition catalogue.



"Memory Gap – Geum river 1" by Yoonhee Suh, 2004. Mixed media, 104 x 119 cm. Photo by Pat Rogers.



Detail from a painting from Suh Yoonhee's "Memory Gap" series. Exhibited by Um Gallery.

Portraying the aggressive side of human nature are portraitures by Ellen de Meijer (b. 1955, Amsterdam). Exhibited with UNIX New York, the paintings each feature slightly macabre people from contemporary society. The figures can don business suites or dresses but don't look for an expression. On view at ArtHamptons are paintings from de Meijer's "Digital Divide" series featuring "ceremony portraits" of human qualities that have become distorted from man's modern struggle to survive, according to an artist statement. Visually, this struggle is depicted through interpretive archetypes of sophisticated businesspeople. Like life, the obvious or eye catching can be a distraction for the heart of the matter.

While the figure's oversize faces that also disturb from the lack of human emotion is what makes people stop and stare, it's the details that keep them there. Stare back at the picture of a bizarre

girl going eye-to-eye with you...but look down to notice the strange dog at her feet and her iPod on. She's look at you but she's not listening. Consider the suited-up man who seems about to start giving you grief, with his pack of business posse to back him up, but notice that they may not really be with him.

de Meijer's intent is to reveal what might go unnoticed about her figures. Behind the bravado or conquering aggressor, there are underpinnings of smallness, emotional limitation and vulnerability, according the artist statement. Still, there's hope. The children depicted in "Digital Divide" may surmount and survive the onslaught of a relentless digital information world and the hunt for material wealth. The adults may be a different story. de Meijer is based in the Netherlands.



"Wall Street Bully" by Ellen de Meijer.  
2013. Oil on canvas, 78 x 39 inches.  
Exhibited UNIX Gallery.



"Down The Wall" by Ellen de Meijer, 2011. Oil  
on canvas, 78 x 47 inches. Exhibited UNIX  
Gallery (New York, NY)

American Painter Craig Alan (b. 1971, San Bernardino, CA) seems to be on a roll with a series of paintings portraying wedding dresses as a dramatic figure and the continuation of what could be consider fractured fairy tales.



"Anstral Coquette" by Craig Alan. Oil on canvas, 48 x 60 inches.  
Exhibited Lawrence Cantor Fine Art (Venice, CA)



"Fracture" by Craig Alan. Oil and mixed media, 48 x 60  
inches Exhibited Lawrence Cantor Fine Art (Venice, CA)



"Fall Out Again" by Craig Alan. Oil on canvas, 48 x 60 inches.  
Exhibited Lawrence Cantor Fine Art (Venice, CA)

Also worth noting was a figurative painting by Katie O'Hagan (b. Scotland, currently living in Hudson, NY). Placing her daughter as central figure, the work is narrative. The surface is smooth-almost mysteriously so-with window views that are obscured through abstraction and add mystery and depth to an already intriguing work. Looking forward to seeing more from this painter. Exhibited at Arthamptons by RJD Gallery of Sag Harbor, NY.



"Figment" by Katie O'Hagan. Oil on linen, 62 x 52 inches. Exhibited RJD Gallery (Sag Harbor, NY)

Moving to the lighter side, paintings by Nathalie Boissonnault (Toronto) present life's contrasts in lighthearted compositions. Playing with both visuals and text, wordplay and irony all have a part to play. Easy to like, the paintings are well-executed and the administering of paint-whether thick from a palette brush with expressionist marks or thinly applied so the figure is what's noticeable, Boissonnault is presenting a complete package. Boissonnault uses three different models to create her paintings. All have brown hair (like the artist, the gallery noted) and span childhood to the early thirties.



"Nos Destins au gre des marees" by Nathalie Boissonnault, painting, 48 x 30 inches. Exhibited Arteria Gallery (Bromont, Canada)



"Etions Differents" by Nathalie Boissonnault. Painting, 18 x 36 inches.  
Exhibited Arteria Gallery (Bromont, Canada)



Two paintings by Nathalie Boissonnault. Exhibited by Arteria Gallery (Bromont, Canada)

A quiet yet powerful joy can be found in watercolor and ink paintings by Park Tea-Who. Exhibited by Nine Gallery, the works draw from traditional Korean ink painting to make works that are fully contemporary. The artist is concerned with the simplicity of line, space and the layering of color in making his work.



A quartet of paintings by Park, Tea-Who. Exhibited by Nine Gallery.



A detail from a painting by Park Tea-Who.

Works by Nina Jun may be some of the happiest art at ArtHamptons. They may also be the easiest works to miss. Installed near the tops of The Cynthia Corbett Gallery booth, they appear to be leftovers from a party now over. Brightly colored, they appear to be helium balloons that have lost their string. Instead, they are glazed ceramics.

Nina Jun explained her work aims to capture the uncapturable: fleeting moments. Centering on happiness, helium balloons purchased to celebrate happy occasions seemed the best way to symbolize modern happiness. Jun was born in Korea and now lives in the Los Angeles area.

"Art is about taking something, reflecting on it and then putting it into your work," she said. "This is what I am doing. Balloons lose their air and no longer float. With my art, they stay this way forever and remind of happy moments. It's simple."



"Orbit TQDM" by Nina Jun, 2014. Glazed ceramic, 15 x 14 x 7.5 inches. Exhibited The Cynthia Corbett Gallery (London)



“Snovae Passion” by Nina Jun, 2014. Glazed ceramic, 14 x 13 x 8 inches. Exhibited The Cynthia Corbett Gallery

**BASIC FACTS:** ArtHamptons 2014 takes place from July 10 – July 13, 2014 at the Sculpture Fields of Nova’s Ark. The Sculpture Fields of Nova’s Ark are located at 60 Millstone Road, Bridgehampton, NY 11932. [www.arthamptons.com](http://www.arthamptons.com).

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