



International Inspiration Revealed in Artist Talk

March 26, 2015

by Pat Rogers

“Remembering Things Past” wraps up with a flourish on Sunday when a group of exhibiting artists gathers to discuss the show and the inspiration for the work on view. All exhibiting artist have origins other than the United States.

On Sunday, seven artists join the two exhibit curators for a Gallery Walk & Talk from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the Islip Art Museum. Artists featured in the talk have roots in Lebanon, China, Romania, Canada, Pakistan, England, Israel and Mexico. The show also includes works by artists born in Ecuador, Taiwan and Botswana. The show’s premise is to present work by artists now living in America who were born elsewhere to examine the role a dual cultural experience plays in their art.

On Sunday, expect to find artists Linda Abadjian, Cui Fei, Ana Golici, Jason Paradis, Fatima Shakil, Annemarie Waugh and Shirley Wegner. Also on hand will be exhibition curators and artists John Cino and Jay Schuck. Admission is \$10 per person and includes light refreshments. RSVP is encouraged as space is limited. To reserve, call 631-224-5402.

“Remembering Things Past” presents art as diverse as the artist’s countries of origin. Expect to find installation, ceramics, paintings, mixed media and drawings. Works include abstraction, text art, figurative, fantasy, ceramic and sculpture.



“Icon III” by Ana Golici, 2014. Printed collage.

The artists also vary in the point of their career. One string tying them together is a dual-culture life. The impact of being part of two cultures plays out in the art in several ways.

The before-and-after of countries torn by war present in two of the artists. Linda Abadjian fled the Lebanese Civil War as a child. A return trip in 2005 allowed for her to witness the destruction which led to a change of process to mirror her new perspective. Hope for the future is as much a part of her art as the tattered remains of her home.

Shirley Wegner’s art incorporates changes wrought in her home country of Israel from war, urban decay and natural disasters but through the larger lens of memory, nostalgia and identity.

Intermingling influences from both cultures finds itself as a primary force for some exhibiting artists. Cui Fei intermarries Chinese and American philosophy and Ana Golici trades icons in traditional Eastern European Christian paintings with microbiology forms found beneath microscopes.

Anti Liu imbibes works inspired channeling serious Asian current events with fun-loving American pop culture imagery and Annemarie Waugh acts as translator for British phrases for American “ears” in her text art.



“Across the Pond” by Annemarie Waugh.

Other artists are inspired by childhood experiences from their home countries. Pablo Caviedes work is directly inspired by his experience of collecting animal bones while exploring the Andes Mountain.



“This makes my Mouth Water” by Pablo Caviedes, 2002. Bone, resin, leather.

Jason Paradis’s installations and mixed media works channel life-changing moments for the artist while spending time in the vast northern wilderness with clear night skies and endless star constellations to ponder.



“The Snake” by Jason Paradis, 2011. Mixed media on panel.

Fatima Shakil took her experience of becoming a trained miniature painter in Pakistan and ran with it. Her art incorporates her interest in textile design, including Persian rugs, and miniatures to make work woven with material made in South Asia that symbolically connects her memories with traditional miniature painters of the past.



“Tangible III” by Fatima Shakil, 2014. Gouache on paper.

Art world concerns that also straddle cultures manifest themselves in work by two exhibiting artists. Meleko Mokgosi of Botswana’s text-based series uses museum exhibition labels as jumping point to channel perception, interpretation, colonization and re-inscriptions. The work is in reaction to a Metropolitan Museum of Art’s 2012 exhibition “African Art, New York, and the Avant-Garde”.

England-born Richard Smith’s work rose during a time when Abstract Expressionism and consumer-oriented British Pop Art found themselves vying for the hearts of young artists, according to the museum. His work combines elements of both to create his signature style of art.

“Remembering Things Past” runs through Sunday, March 29, 2015. Artists attending Sunday’s talk will discuss the exhibition them and their work. The curators will be on hand to discuss art without the artist in attendance.

BASIC FACTS: A Gallery Walk & Talk for “Remembering Things Past” will be held on Sunday from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at Islip Art Museum. Seven artists will discuss the exhibition theme and artwork in the show. It will be led by exhibition curators John Cino and Jay Schuck. Admission is \$10 per person. Light refreshments will be served. Space is limited. To RSVP, call 631-224-5402.

The Islip Art Museum is located at 50 Irish Lane, East Islip, NY 11730. www.islipartmuseum.org.