



Stony Brook University MFA Graduates Launch Patchogue Summer Festival of Unity

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by Jennifer Gagliardi

Summer has returned and brings with it Patchogue Arts Council's Summer Festival presenting a vibrant slate of exhibitions and events to enliven the Long Island village with art. To kick things off, the Patchogue Arts Council (PAC) has curated exhibitions across Patchogue, NY featuring two recent MFA graduates of Stony Brook University.

Razieh Jafari and Jasna Boudard are both artists whose cultural backgrounds have greatly influenced their work. These influences are a perfect match for this year's festival theme: E Pluribus Unum. The festival and its featured exhibitions are designed to promote unity in a wide variety of ways.

"E Pluribus Unum translates as 'From Many (come) One' and I was thinking about the 'melting pot' concept, that the U.S. is a country of many ethnicities," Cino said. "In thinking about exhibiting art of a global perspective, it wasn't as much that I chose these artists as they chose me."

Cino, also an alumnus of Stony Brook University Fine Arts Program, has visited campus art studios for years and has included many other past graduates in local exhibitions. "Jasna and Razieh have each just earned their MFA and I have been watching their work for the past two years," he said. "Each has a unique relationship with a part of the world where we know very little about their contemporary culture."

Razieh Jafari

Razieh Jafari grew up in Iran during the Iran-Iraq war, where she learned to "battle hard situations through creative methods," according to the artist. Later, she earned a BA in Industrial Design from the University of Tehran. Before studying there, she was classically trained in Persian miniature painting and calligraphy, both of which appear in her current work in some capacity.

Jafari has developed a unique way of blending the classical and the contemporary through her work, taking her previous training and applying it through a lens of magical realism. "There are stories which happen in real world but yet you cannot talk about it directly, so you decide to reveal them through a surreal world, that's what I exactly do," she explained.



“Touching III” by Razieh Jafari, 2017. Watercolor on Paper, 23 x 35 inches. Courtesy of Patchogue Arts Council.

The art in her exhibition “The Things That Touch Me” at the Patchogue Medford Library portray the artist caught between two distinct cultures—her upbringing in Iran and her time studying contemporary art on Long Island. For Jafari, it is also very much about the delicacy of culture in times of conflict.

“In this series of work there is a story of different cultures and shows how beautiful and fragile they are,” she said. “The protections for cultural heritage are not set in stone, and we’ve seen cultural destruction throughout history. This series of work also has a narrative of how wars and foreign interventions can interfere with and interrupt in the natural development of nations. Defeated and invaded nations do not just lose their land, peace, and treasures; they also lose their history and their culture.”



“Touching” by Razieh Jafari, 2017. Watercolor on Paper, 16.5 x 20 inches. Courtesy of Patchogue Arts Council.

Jafari’s images are beautiful and delicate with a powerful message behind them. The use of watercolor and acrylics on paper gives the pieces a texture that is emphasized by each medium. Geometric patterns and abstract shapes give way to recognizable images such as trees, animals, and doors. Jafari always paints one of two trees, the cypress or the plane tree.

“A tree as one of the significant elements of nature is always respected and considered sacred among Iranian people upon which many myths have been written and created,” she explained “It has always been the symbol of happiness, rebirth and the return to single principle, a complete reflection of human and unique conception of man’s ancestry. In one of my paintings a tree has lost the leaves and (is) bleeding, which shows the nature’s sacrifice regarding human conflict and disruption happening by war in the Middle East.”



“Not Any More” by Razieh Jafari, 2017. Watercolor on Paper, 18 x 25 inches. Courtesy of Patchogue Arts Council.

Jasna Boudard

Jasna Boudard's photography in her show "Dancing the World" installed at the Patchogue Theatre for Performing Arts lobby transports the viewer across continents through the theme of dance and motion. She has travelled throughout the world living and exhibiting across four continents, which has definitely impacted her work.

"I would like to think it's got to do with everything in my work," she explained. "I feel like a lot of my work is kind of exploring not necessarily just my cultural heritage but also international/global tendencies, like people who are very worldly and fusions of cultures. Despite the differences in the world there are a lot of similarities."



"Starry Cloud" from "Le Circe" by Jasna Boudard, 2012. Courtesy of Patchogue Arts Council.

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The goal of Boudard's *Dancing the World* series—the namesake for her solo exhibition—is to create unity by showing "the movement of bodies around the world," she said. During her studies, Boudard worked at the intersection of photography and interactive work, transitioning from still photographs to working on installation and video projects, but always making time for both mediums.

"I would experience [the making of a photograph] and capture moments of it for my audience, but now it's about showing the audience that experience as well," she said.

Her use of color and textured backgrounds offers a stunningly curated set of locations for her dancers to move in, while she "explores visual nuances of movement, light, and space." The show is on view through June 24, 2018. The exhibition presents around one third of the entire series which can be viewed in its entirety at www.jasna-boudard.com.



"Red" from "Lucid Dreams" by Jasna Boudard, 2010.

Courtesy of Patchogue Arts Council.

Across the street, Boudard's earlier work is on view at Toast in "Le Circe/The Circus of Dreams," allowing viewers to see a spectrum of her art before her MFA and afterwards. The exhibition presents work that experiments with analog and digital photography as well as image manipulation. The art is on view in the Long Haul Gallery of the eatery from June 4 to August 30, 2018.

Even more of Boudard's art can be seen the weekend of June 22 to 24, 2018, when she presents the interactive installation *Ma* at the Patchogue Art Council Gallery. The installation has visitors moving through a labyrinth of fabric and projections and conjures her MFA thesis show, Boudard said. An Artist Reception and [VIP Kick Off for Arts on Terry](#) takes place on Friday, June 22, 2018 from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is \$10.

Mais one of the ways PAC's Arts on Terry celebrates the arts during its Street Artist Fair taking place on Sunday, June 24, 2018 from noon to six p.m. The open air event brings together artists and art organizations on Long Island. Click [here](#) for details.



"Hipnotika" from "Le Circe" by Jasna Boudard, 2013. Courtesy of Patchogue Arts Council.

The pair of artists represents a blending of many cultures that helps craft a festival that exemplifies the E Pluribus Unum theme.

"We are one humanity and offering a platform for the voices of those beyond our borders is one small way we can realize the unity of our human family," Cino said.

BASIC FACTS: Arts on Terry Street Artist Fair takes place on Sunday, June 24, 2018 from noon to 6 p.m. along Terry Street in Patchogue Village on Eastern Long Island. For the full line up of events and artist exhibitors, click [here](#) for details.

Maby Jasna Boudard is installed at the Patchogue Arts Council Gallery at 20 Terry Street, Suite 116, Patchogue, NY 11772. On view from June 22 to 24, 2018.

"Dancing the World" by Jasna Boudard is on view at the Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts Lobby Art Gallery from May 6 to June 24, 2018, located at 71 Main Street, Patchogue, NY 11772.

"Le Circe/Lucid Dreams" by Jasna Boudard is on view at Toast Coffeehouse Long Haul Gallery from June 4 to August 30, 2018, located at 46 East Main Street, Patchogue, NY 11772.

“The Things That Touch Me” by Razieh Jafar is on view at Patchogue Medford Library from June 1 to 30, 2018, located at 54-60 Main Street, Patchogue, NY 11772.

Jennifer Gagliardi is an adjunct instructor and teaches Art History and English at several institutions. She has a BFA in English from St. Joseph’s College and an MA from Stony Brook University in Art History and Criticism. She is the Media Education Coordinator at The Plaza Cinema and Media Arts Center in Patchogue, NY, where she organizes educational programming centered on film and media studies.

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