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"Art Insider: Tire tread expresses the complexity of the human experience," KCRW, September 22, 2020



Art Insider: Tire tread expresses the complexity of the human experience



Kim Dacres, "Wisdom Embedded in the Threads," (installation view). Image courtesy of the artist and Gavlak Gallery

Figures made out of tire tread convey the complexity of identity. Layered paintings delve into subject matter of the heart. And mixed media paintings blend abstraction and representation.

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Kim Dacres at Gavlak

At Gavlak downtown, 11 busts sit proudly on white plinths. Made out of found tires (bikes, cars, motorcycles), each of Kim Dacres' figures in her exhibition ["Wisdom Embedded in the Treads"](#) is textural and layered. Rubber bike tubes are manipulated to become delicate sweeping rows of braided hair. Bike chains stand in for body piercings. Flat strips of tires are screwed in place to become contorted facial features. In "Whitney," a single bike seat stands in for the pop singer's nose. Through the specificity of each figure, Dacres hopes to convey the multiplicity of her community. "Skin color and hairstyles alone do not singularly tell the story of an individual," Dacres explains in the press release. The work is a celebration of her community. People should be honored "for their everyday experience and roles in society," she tells me.

Sourced from tire shops around New York, Dacres is deeply interested in the past lives of the tire material. Throughout their lives, tires become worn and the tread wears down, but each becomes a unique representation of the places and experiences they've encountered. "The material reminds me to think of people with full and whole experiences that are similar to mine and also different in ways I can learn from. ... In the making process, I'm transforming pain, journey, and experience into a figure [that is] easier to identify with. I don't think any other material has the same draw for me," Dacres says.

On view: September 12 – October 24, 2020

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Linda Stark at David Kordansky



Linda Stark, "Cyclops Fountain" 2020, detail. Oil on linen over panel, 20.5 x 20.5 x 2.5 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles. Photo by Lee Thompson.

I've always responded to the slow wit of Linda Stark's textural paintings. At first glance, some of the work might read as cheeky pop, like the cartoon Minion eye in "Cyclops Fountain" (2020) that dramatically sobs rivers of silvery-blue tears. Yet, Stark's work builds emotionally, conceptually, and literally.

To create the paintings, the artist painstakingly builds up layers and layers of oil paint (some of the modestly-sized works take her years to produce), molding each layer carefully to create her textured effects. With each layer of paint, the sincerity of the work seems to build. Each work becomes a labored treasure that the artist is deeply connected to.

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For her new exhibition [“Hearts,”](#) Stark iterates on the theme of Purple Hearts, bleeding hearts, and heart-shaped candy boxes. “Sacred Heart” (2020) pictures the Catholic devotional symbol radiating with gold. Yet the center of the heart contains an outline of delicately rendered ovaries. A feminist message undergirds much of Stark’s work, and here, the artist commandeers a religious symbol that might stand in for the repression of women’s bodies, and transforms it into a celebratory ode to the female form.

On view: Sept. 19 – Oct. 24, 2020

Yevgeniya Baras at the Landing



Yevgeniya Baras, “Untitled,” 2020. Oil, paper pulp, and wood on canvas. 44.5" x 73" Photo: Joshua White Photography

In [“I Sit by the Window”](#) at the Landing Gallery, Yevgeniya Baras has presented dozens of new paintings. Each one is a sculptural puzzle. Built up on burlap fabric, the artist embeds rope, paper pulp, wood, and other mixed material to create

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idiosyncratic and textural surfaces that she then layers on top of with gloopy paint. Inspired by recent time spent in Texas, the artist uses a colorful yet muted color palette across the exhibition. Bright ocrs melt into muddy browns and pock-marked blues. Built-up dimensional ridges create organic forms across that canvas that dually read as aerial landscapes or microscopic bodily organisms.

Many of the untitled paintings contain letter forms that stack onomatopoeically across the canvas, integrating with abstract geometries though never culminating in any readable words. These clues prompt you to search for more legibility in each work — either textual or narrative. And while the artist references specific experiences in each work, she coyly withholds that clarity from the viewer. The work instead revels in a middle ground between knowable forms and abstraction, always pushing you to search its layered depths for more.

On view: September 16 – October 28, 2020