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COLOR, LINE, AND ABSTRACTION CONVERSE

by Julie Kukral



Bosnian artist Maja Ruznic makes textile sculptures that relate to "phantom" figures in her paintings

Three international artists are showing at Tayloe Piggott Gallery this week. Maja Ruznic, Vicki Sher and Kaidi Dunstan will exhibit expressive bodies of work that study line, color and abstraction. There will be a free opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday.

"We first started thinking about this show because Maja Ruznic and Vicki Sher are new to the gallery," said Sophie Schwabacher, the gallery's manager. "We haven't shown their work before and felt like they had a wonderful conversation and that they play off of each other really well with their use of shape and line and form."

Bosnian artist Ruznic creates abstract, textile sculptures of "phantoms," which also appear in her paintings. Drawing upon her experiences and memories of being a refugee since she was 9 years old, Ruznic fashions disfigured forms that uncover the hidden emotional and physical trauma people experience in the world and that also challenge conceptions of beauty.

The phantom sculptures are the perfect companions pieces to her paintings, Schwabacher said.

"Her paintings have mysterious figures in them that pop out and have a narrative story," she said.

Sher uses a variety of media to create fluid, abstract geometric portraits and still lifes. She paints on both side of mylar film, creating a dimensional quality to her clean, geometric compositions.

"They play off of each other really well," Schwabacher said of the two new artists. "We were really taken by how fun and clean [Sher's] work is. It feels like a breath of fresh air. When you get sucked into Maja's paintings you can turn and look at Vicki's, and it feels like a clean space."

Sher's compositional emphasis on color and line complements Dunstan's abstract portraits.

Dunstan grew up in Jackson and lives in London. Like Ruznic she paints abstract, colorful human forms. Using oil, charcoal, gouache and acrylic on canvas or board, Dunstan creates fluid and shifting bodies that illuminate the mysterious ways in which individuals connect with their bodies and with one another.

"She has a similar narrative and enigmatic work that really reminds me of Maja's," Schwabacher said.

The artwork will be shown in Tayloe Piggott's Project Space. Schwabcher said the space lends itself to conversations among the three bodies of work.

"It's more intimate than the normal gallery space," she said.