

TAOS NEWS

FEBRUARY 12, 2021

GHOSTLY PAINTINGS AND SAINTS ON LOWRIDERS: SPRING PREVIEW AT THE HARWOOD

by admin

One venue the pandemic has been unable to dim is the Harwood Museum of Art: Even when you cannot visit in person, Executive Director Juniper Leherissey Manley and staff have continued to curate first-rate exhibitions that shine like beacons in these difficult times.

Spring 2021 will be no exception. In addition to extending its popular juried exhibit of local talent - Contemporary Art/Taos 2020 - the Harwood will be welcoming the change of season with two new shows. One is a journey into an ephemeral, atmospheric otherworld, and the other is solidly, down-home Northern New Mexican. Below, find a sneak peak at these new must-see exhibitions.

March 2021

“In the Sliver of the Sun,” featuring the Bosnian-Herzegovinian artist Maja Ruznic, will premier in the Peter and Madeleine Martin Gallery with a virtual opening March 12 at 5:30 p.m.

The works in this series depict ghostly figures simultaneously fading into and emerging from the horizon, as if returning from a long journey, according to Harwood press for the exhibition. Nicole Dial-Kay, curator of exhibitions and collections for the Harwood, noted about Ruznic’s art, “In the haunting movement inherent in her work, the figures appear to be roaming through a realm not of this world.”

Ruznic’s tumultuous background - leaving her birthplace pre-war and living with her family in refugee camps for four years - is echoed in the techniques she applies to her paintings, a process that is “subtractive” and which “leaves a sense of ghostly materiality; an undefined absence,” Dial-Kay noted.

“Her paintings reflect the experiences of her early life with shared trauma, fleeing and loss reflected in the phenomenon of immigration,” noted Dial-Kay. “As she begins a painting she pauses to look for someone she recognizes: maybe family, maybe a friend, and tries to give them rest.”

Ruznic’s family resettled on the United States’ West Coast, where she completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts at University of California, Berkeley, and her Master of Fine Arts at California College of Art, San Francisco. In the past decade the star of this

young artist has risen rapidly in the skies of contemporary art, with shows in galleries throughout the U.S. and Europe, and a series of installation and performance art appearances which received wide media attention.

From San Francisco to Los Angeles to Dallas and, finally, to New Mexico - where she now resides - Ruznic credits the move here for the direction her palette ultimately took: on “the color of twilight,” the artist said. It surely lends an evocative, almost melancholic atmosphere to these exquisite paintings.

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