



Talley-Countdown to Stardust

SURFACE TREATMENT

What: "Borderigena" by Jesus De La Rosa
Where: STC Library Art Galleries, Bldg. F, 3201 W Pecan Blvd
When: Oct 17-Dec 12, 2010
Contact: (956) 872-2488

Borderland Dynamics

Paintings and prints reflect the dynamics of the land and inhabitants of the borderland.

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

While Jesus De La Rosa's "Borderigena" refers to the content of his art, his silkscreen print, "Valluco", tells us what this exhibition is about: the cycle of leaving and returning. The exhibition shows a few new prints along with works that were exhibited elsewhere in the Valley, but previously have not been available in McAllen. "These are works I did a while back and want to showcase them again," explained De La Rosa. "I've tied everything together to show their progression and how they evolved." The artworks are in transit across the borderland as are the border's people. Now on display at the Downstairs Gallery at the STC Library, "Borderigena" consists of large mixed media works, small acrylic paintings, and prints.

De La Rosa,, Associate Professor of Art at TAMUK, perceives the borderland as a rich and fascinating place even though he grew up thinking the Valley was demonized. "They told me there's violence out there," exclaimed De La Rosa, "and for me there was some of that, but there was also the opposite." "Valluco" (Rio Grande Valley) is from a portfolio called "Healers, Saints, and the Demonized", and features a God-like figure directing us to a border map showing the RGV. It is an introduction to the visual travelogue that is De La Rosa's borderland world. As one enters the Valley through this print, there are the iconic palm trees with the Topo Chico logo floating in a corner (for several decades, purchases of Topo Chico mineral water

from Monterrey were limited to the Mexico border region; now international, it greets him on this side and represents coming home). The small group of prints features social commentaries.

A regular traveler throughout South Texas and Tamaulipas, De La Rosa's works convey a sense of the ongoing movement and feeling of the area; the Rio Grande is an inspirational focal point. Although he works with flat images in his prints, the large mixed media abstractions consist of layers of paint, vellum, and pieces of torn prints, suggesting the debris of an archeological dig. His physical materials synthesize with obscured knowledge partially hidden above and below the landscape.

About his abstract direction, De La Rosa posited, "I think everything is abstract, there's just the spectrum where you want to be." His expressions break from the expected landscape representation just short of leaving altogether. Perceptions of the border landscapes become odes to its character in "Talley: Countdown to Stardust", where the land-sky division could be seen as abstract – or not. Farming and violence, art, the movement of people, and maybe the weather are noted. "Shared Space" presents a recurring theme. His use of incongruent images within the work become different lives tightly existing within spatial boundaries. He considers different media to be different languages of art, and here they symbolize the variety along the border. Shapes become meaningful words. The rosette pattern of the jaguar, a boundary crosser, becomes a visual word for people in transit.

The small acrylic paintings are travel memories and impressions. Depicting the ever-changing landscape as it exists empirically and mentally, De La Rosa compresses its changes into single visual moments.

The exhibit serves as a rich selection from the artist's work, and if you missed seeing his shows in Harlingen and Brownsville, this is an excellent chance to catch up.

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