



*The Day of the Nuke*

#### SURFACE TREATMENT

What: "Veronica Jaeger: Dichotomies"  
Where: Galeria 409, 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Brownsville  
When: Nov 16-Dec 15, 2018  
Hours: 12-5pm Thurs-Sat, and by appointment  
Contact: (956) 455 3599

#### **Simulated Realities**

The works in this collection depict realities at odds with each other, but hope shines through.

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

The era of fake news has caught up with artist, Veronica Jaeger. Her work being shown at Galeria 409 in Brownsville crashes head on into the artifice, the fantasies, and the variables that optional realities can offer. Whereas in past works, man-made structures threatened a takeover of passive female figures, In this new exhibition, "Dichotomies", the fake and natural realities actively battle each other for physical and mental supremacy. This exhibit consists of oil paintings, pencil drawings, and three mixed-media pieces. Faces dominate the paintings, although a lot is still going on within their space.

Vulnerable large-eyed females impinged upon by man-made objects in Jaeger's previous works has led us to believe that her dystopian world was fully formed and upon us. But this exhibit

proves us wrong – dystopia has been further unleashed with a strong dash of futurism. We can't help but feel a mental reflection of our current social situation where fake news has been a headliner and we are often unsure about what is real and what isn't. Jaeger is confronting this confused and chaotic feeling with an attempt to synthesize, to integrate the air, the clouds, the earth, and beings, of which everything in her imaginary dimension is fake. "That's what my paintings are about; a simulated reality," professed Jaeger. "It's like an analogy for life where everyone's living in a fake reality. It's a fantasy world where everything is fake." The pencil drawing, "Mother-N", is a humorous, sarcastic, and ultimately scary structure suggesting a nightmare mutation, and Jaeger's work can be appreciated on all of those levels depending on the viewer's inclinations.

The concept of dichotomies enters into works as the natural world versus the man-made world. This is the struggle we have seen previously, except here, Jaeger says the figures are fighting back to return to nature. In "The Day of the Nukes" we see the battle in full force. There are natural objects as well as artificial ones. The two women are together and wield a gun shooting bubbles, Jaeger's symbol for the way to connect with all natural things. The bubble symbolism is a focus in the large "Stargate Bubbles" painting and is analogous to the body of a living being since it must hold air within itself to exist. The bubble rising from the chest of the figure symbolizes a replenishing of life.

The third eye on the face adds a dimensional intelligence that we need in order to survive; a storyline of survival has entered into Jaeger's imagery. There is also a new eclecticism in terms of objects that populate these works; a sacred cow from the Hindu tradition even occurs once. This is a search for wholeness, a broad coming together of typically disparate ideas. In looking for a logical and true reality, she says, "I have created my own reality from different pieces." After the metaphysical adventures with take-overs by man-made structures, Jaeger wants to get her figures back to a natural source. The oil painting, "Terra Maison" is one such attempt. Here, the house is made of earth, and natural objects fill the picture plane. But the dystopian visage remains with its unrelated and surreal appendages. The drawings from "Dichotomies" will continue till the end of the exhibit, but the paintings were on view for only one night.

*Nancy Moyer, Professor Emerita of Art, UTRGV, is an art critic for The Monitor. She may be reached at [nmoyer@rgv.rr.com](mailto:nmoyer@rgv.rr.com)*