



*Intuition III* by Kirk Clark

#### SURFACE TREATMENT

What: Cosmic Connections: The Metaphysical Practice of Kirk Clark  
Where: International Museum of Art & Science, 1900 Nolana  
When: January 25-July 5, 2020  
Hours: 9am-3pm Tues-Wed-Thurs, 9am-5pm Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 1-5pm Sun  
9am-8pm on first Thursdays  
Contact: (956) 682-0123 or [ww.imasonline.org](http://ww.imasonline.org)

#### **A Legacy Lives On**

This Kirk Clark exhibition enlivens the Clark Gallery at IMAS, and includes a brief remembrance of Charles and Dorothy Clark.

BY NANCY MOYER

#### SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

IMAS continues its celebration of the Clark family art legacy with its new exhibition, "Cosmic Connections: The Metaphysical Practice of Kirk Clark". This exhibition offers a brief statement about the Clark legacy that was previously acknowledged in the exhibition, "Celebration of Spirit", and updates the overview of Kirk Clark's art works; there are new works along with selections from the earlier show as well as from another IMAS exhibition. Paintings, monprints, and sculptures are on view.

The identities of the Clark family expand at the gallery entrance with two portraits from the artist's "Soul Series: Father and Son" interpreting "Kirk's Soul" and "Alex's Soul." The artist's unique technique serves to bind the two into a familial relationship. These works provide a window into Clark's art that may be more easily accessed than his well-known generalized cosmic soul connections. In these works, we more easily grasp the intended identity of his subjects; the artist considers his as a metaphysical self-portrait. These and other paintings express the artist's impression of the harmonic resonances contained within a being and are informed by his synesthesia (the hearing of sounds resulting in the visualization of colors). Acrylic dots, minute slashes of paint, frenetic linear occurrences, vivid colors, and chaotic gestures combine to communicate the dynamic energy of a subject's essence.

Works from two new series include the "Intuition" paintings, and the "Who Do You Say I Am?" series. The former is notable as responsive or Interactive art. Clark paints with acrylics on Mylar - essentially plastic on plastic. "By painting on the plastic Mylar, I could move very fast," explained Clark, "and also allow the Mylar to come into play." The play of Mylar's characteristics is important to his concept. Paint could easily be moved and removed to allow the Mylar to come into play in certain areas, resulting in the phenomenon of color changes activated by motion; the background color is virtually re-applied by the movement of the viewer and expresses a significant visual force.

The "Who Do You Say I Am?" series was inspired by biblical history. "That's what Christ asked Pontius Pilot," said Clark, referring to his point of inspiration. When Pilot questioned his claim to be the son of God, Christ replied, "Who do you say I am?" Clark started thinking about those questions and projected a conversation about personal introspection for several paintings. With each one there is a visible vibration of colors resonating an attitude or feeling about the probability. "Who Do You Say I Am?" has an anthropomorphic feeling with a circular cluster of dots above surrounded by thorn-like shapes. "Who Am I?" consists of three circular sections of different hues, suggesting multiple personages. Clark compared the specific conversation to everyman; every person has more than one, perhaps many, facets/aspects to their personality. Different people may know someone by a different facet. "It becomes a conversation," he said, thinking of the facets of a diamond, "and as you go and look in each facet, you see different inclusions." Impelled by the concept, he explored the facets of "Who do you say I am?" and the bit of the conversation we see in these paintings evokes thoughts of ourselves and our own reactions to this kind of introspective thinking. Perhaps a metaphysical MRI for a state of mind.

"Cosmic Connections: The Metaphysical Practice of Kirk Clark" was curated by Joseph Bravo, art writer and past Director of IMAS.

*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)*