



How to Save \$1.7 Billion on Wall Street Jesse Amado

SURFACE TREATMENT

What: "Sensoria" by Jesse Amado
Where: STC Library Art Galleries, Bldg F, 3201 W Pecan Blvd
When: March 6-May 10, 2018
Hours: 7am-9:30pm Mon-Thurs, 8am-7pm Friday
Info: 956) 872-3488

Feelings of Felt

Cause and effect become much more interesting in this sensual and intelligent exhibition.

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

Jesse Amado's "Sensoria" confronts us with bravados of feeling - from the feel-good pulses of his saturated circles and their ultimate consequences, to the James Baldwin references that the writer never could have imagined. Offering a selection of some of this acclaimed San Antonio artist's directions as well as focusing in on his dynamic felt works, "Sensoria" is currently on display in the STC Library Art Gallery. "Sensoria is like a spate of beings that are directing and dictating what you do," said Amado. "It doesn't play a great role, it's just engaging in the activity and process. I follow my intuition and my experiences with my senses and allow that to be what directs the work." While Amado's senses stir his artistic process, his finished works have become a sensoria themselves, directing and engulfing our senses.

The opioid works fit right into this scenario. Luxuriously colored felt constructions and deconstructions effectively balance and reflect the reality of action and consequence. The large precision-cut circular works were triggered by a discussion with a close friend who was considering taking pharmaceutical anti-depressants for depression. Amado realized that there are many people experiencing not only antidepressants but painkillers, and because much of his work has been born of personal experiences, the discussion inspired him to perceive more closely the sensorial realities of the drug industry. He began making "tablets" out of brightly colored French-made virgin-wool felt purchased years earlier. "When you're using these

wonderful colors, they (tablets) look even more seductive and desirable,” posited Amado, “along with the alternate reality that you’re going to slip into.” The three-foot-diameter work, “Antidepressant Tablet, 20mg”, projects a powerful red and yellow chroma that demands our immediate attention. Next, visually addressing its psychological impact on the human organism, “Tablet Dissolving” describes a breakdown of shapes in the center of a more emotionally nuanced tablet. We are brought into the life of the tablet’s process as well as that of the artist. The relationship between the artist’s process and the subject again unfolds with the hanging 3-D piece, “Opioid Consequences.” Remnants from the cut-out tablets exist as the consequences of cutting out the circular shapes as well as a commentary on the consequences of drug usage. Sometimes the consequences may be helpful, in which case this soft sculpture is perceived as an open shape at ease in its own beauty. But when the drug is abused and takes people to a place they shouldn’t be, then “Opioid Consequences” becomes a used and empty shell. Its purpose of being is gone.

A surprising use of the consequence shapes occurs in the work, “I Am Not Your Mexican.” Using the biggest chicharrones I’ve ever seen, this 3-D wall hanging was inspired by the James Baldwin documentary, “I Am Not Your Negro.” Initially this piece suggests a humorous touch, but a longer look reveals the sense of something wrong; it comments on discrimination and abuse, as consequences hang from the popular Mexican-American snack.

“My motto is *Ars longa, vita brevis*: art is long life is short,” concluded Amado. “I had my first solo show in 1989 and when I look back and realize it’s been thirty years, suddenly it seems short, but my art is still there and substantial, and it’s part of who I am regardless of how far I’ve come. When you’re engaged in the creative process, you think about those things.”

Nancy Moyer, Professor Emerita of Art, UTRGV, is an art critic for The Monitor. She may be reached at nmoyer@rgv.rr.com