



Puro Chile by Julian Rodriguez

SURFACE TREATMENT

What: *Faculty Art Exhibition*
Where: Visual Arts Gallery, UTRGV Visual Arts Building, S. Closner, Edinburg
When: Through March 10. Hours: 9am–5 pm weekdays
Info: Ma. Elena Macias at 956-665-3480

All Inclusive Show

Now's your chance to get a look at the faculty artwork that informs UTRGV art. This year's University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley *Faculty Art Exhibition* is an all-inclusive one, representing art faculty from both campuses for a total of nineteen artists. The show reflects a sense of peaceful status quo; even the exhibit installation seems subdued with wall pieces evenly hung while 3-D pieces are placed in a loose circular pattern in front of them. Each participant was limited to a single work. This exhibition is currently on display in the Visual Arts Gallery on Closner.

The overall tone of the art is contemporary-conservative, with the exception of a laser-cut felt neckpiece by Donna Mason Swiegert. This progressive work is the result of code generated sound arrayed pattern and is an extension of her work in 3-D modeling. Other than that, we see continuing directions. There are no other experimental surprises that one might expect from artists allowed a platform of academic freedom - not that there couldn't be with this group of notable artists.

Scanning the show for similarities and contrasts, Donald Lyles depicts a deceased cicada against a pink background in the small personal painting, "The Eagle has Landed." Maria Elena Macias offers a darkly abstract painting reflecting similar content, but her black and neutral tones almost smother the glimmer of warm golden undertone.

Paul Valadez' acrylic painting, "Mestizo," along with the mixed media, "Tom Burrell 'Brainwashed,'" by Lorenzo Pace, offer relevant social direction and commentary, while social statements by Alejandro Macias and M.C. Farris take on tired, already exhausted themes from the political arena. In his painting, "Make America Hate Again!," Macias comments on Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's public speech style with a static tangle of lines spitting from the candidate's mouth, but the expression seems easy and obvious. I'm hoping that this is just one of a series by Macias visualizing the verbal content of all the presidential candidates, which could result in some viable interpretations. But just the one image feels simple. M.C. Farris continues his fascination

with guns in the painting, "No Piece No Peace" The compositional style is reminiscent of early 20th century political cartoons. Here, Farris's signature black-masked confrontational characters appear; one in plain garb carries a gun and yells "No Peace" at the ornately and richly dressed other character who carries a bottle and a razor.

3-D works by Susan Fitzsimmons, Alexander Comminos, and Stephen Hawks continue previous directions. A surprise is Julian Rodriguez' shift from clay into mesquite and metal sculpture with his "Puro Chile."

Rick Fatica shows a photographic c-print and Reynaldo Santiago presents "Black Drum Dream," a mixed media print. There are also digital works by Erika M Balogh, Marilyn Carren, Philip S Field, E. Corinne Whittemore, Ping Xu, and Robert Gilbert.

Interesting student and faculty works are on display throughout the building for additional worthwhile viewing.

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