

Inside Out



In the upcoming exhibition *Inside: Out* at RJD Gallery, figurative pieces highlighting a person's inner landscape will take center stage. The show, curated by Didi Menendez of PoetsArtists and collector Dr. Elaine Melotti Schmidt, features artwork with a mix of elements that help bring to life diverse identities.

"A person's inner landscape is their personal representation of reality. It is a complex map that provides clues to one's culture, upbringing, nature, education and religious beliefs," says Melotti Schmidt. "This inner landscape contains references that give meaning to everyday life. It is our 'inside' or image that defines the space in which we live. This call for entries was designed to encourage artists to represent a snapshot of this image, the 'inside,' and create it on canvas, the 'out.' The inner landscape can be their own or of another."

Included in the exhibition will be paintings by 14 artists: **Timothy Robert Smith, Suzy Smith, Daniela Kovacic, Doug Webb, Grant Gilsdorf, Sonal Ramnath,**

Kelly Birkenruth, Yuniur Hurtado Torres, Scott Hutchison, Victor Wang, Geoffrey Laurence, Alessandro Tomassetti, Daniela Werneck and Rachel Linnemeier.

Torres' painting *Immersed in Time* reflects life in his native Cuba. "The piece talks about how trapped the Cuban people live in the past and the impossibility of knowing and seeing something beyond where they live," he explains. "The time stopped in a historical moment where there are no changes or progress. It is the face of a static and cold girl submerged in emptiness. And a reflection in the mask of the old and destroyed streets of Havana. It is a reflection looking from the inside." The work, which is an oil on canvas, also has the word "deep" in braille to "reinforce the meaning of obstacle or impediment."

Werneck also pays tribute to her heritage in the painting *The*

1 Daniela Werneck, *The Swallow*, watercolor on clay panel, 20 x 16"

2 Doug Webb *Birth of a New Frontier*, acrylic on linen, 14 x 12"

3 Geoffrey Laurence, *The Old Man's Shoes*, oil on canvas, 44 x 32"





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Swallow. She says, “In the Portuguese culture, due to the past of Portuguese navigators and their discoveries of new lands, it is common to find the figure of the swallow in various places and forms: murals, crafts, sculpture, poetry and songs. The swallow is monogamous; for this reason, it is associated with love and fidelity. But, this bird also refers to departure and return, like the Portuguese navigators. I did this painting just after I returned from a quick trip to Portugal in July. It was my first time in the country where I visited family members and met relatives. It represents the journey of the ancestors of many Brazilians, people who made their way to Brazil, leaving Portugal with their heart full of hope to find a better place to live. Especially my grandfather who left his homeland as a child, bravely alone in a ship, starving and cold. The model is my Portuguese niece who posed for me while I was there.”

1940s and '50s film noir, such as Stanley Kubrick's



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The Killing, was an inspiration for the narrative Laurence created in *The Old Man's Shoes*. In particular, he was drawn to the subdued lighting and hard shadows of those movies. “A model that I met seemed to fit so I decided to paint a film noir. I had also asked many of my female friends and models if they had ever as young children tried on their father's shoes when their dad wasn't around and all of them said that they had, which was the starting point for my drama,” he says of the composition. “Experimenting with color led me to make some very surprising choices to arrive at convincing flesh tones when surrounded by the intense purples. The real question is: Did she shoot him or is he just sleeping?”

Tomassetti's painting in the exhibition, *A Pain That I'm Used To*, depicts a contemplative moment that we have with ourselves. He elaborates, “[It] is about those moments of self-reflection when we negotiate what we

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Alessandro Tomassetti,
A Pain That I'm Used To,
oil on canvas,
24½ x 19¾"

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Scott Hutchison,
Curve A Presence and the Space Between, oil on aluminum, 38 x 28"

6
Yunior Hurtado Torres,
Immersed in Time, oil on canvas, 32 x 32"



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can tolerate, what we deserve and what we are willing to give up. The viewer follows the languid curve of the body to a face lost somewhere between concentration and resignation, a state further punctuated by the graphic stripes of sunlight that slice up the otherwise shadowed setting.”

Birth of a New Frontier, by Webb, was inspired specifically by the call for entries for the exhibition. “My painting depicts the portrait of an astronaut with a fetus almost at full term growing inside the helmet,” he says. “It’s a metaphor for a new dawn of future exploration and discovery in both

inner and outer levels of existence.”

Inside: Out will be on view at the Bridgehampton, New York-based gallery from November 9 through December 5. ●

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