

Five and Under



Every August, Arcadia Contemporary hosts an exhibition they call *Five and Under*, where artists submit works that are priced at \$5,000 or less. This year will feature a variety of themes, styles and mediums by 30 to 40 artists from around the world. “A lot of these painters regularly create works that usually sell for more,” says gallery owner Steve Diamant, “but they are willing to create finished works (not studies) and will have them priced so they can be included in the exhibition.”

Diamant adds, “There is no ‘theme’ in the exhibition. The diversity of styles and imagery is what makes the show so exciting! The artists can paint whatever they want in whatever medium they want. The works can be [small] or incredibly large, real or fantasy, still life, figurative or landscape. It does not matter, the only

criteria is that the works be representational and be available for sale at \$5,000 or less.”

The show is an invitational, where some artists are asked to return from past shows, but the gallery loves to “shake things up” by adding new imagery and artists that their collectors have never seen before.

This diversity can be seen in works by **Jake Messing**, who has submitted three images as part of an avian series. He conducted a lot of research into the behavior of birds, and after a lot of observation and book reading, he created pieces such as *Cardinals*, a gorgeous watercolor depicting a large grouping of cardinals swarming around mirrors. “Male cardinals are known to be very territorial and will attack other male cardinals in their area,” Messing explains. “They often mistake their

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Hiroshi Hayakawa,
Vanitas 2, graphite on
paper, 20 x 26"

2
Jake Messing, *Cardinals*,
watercolor on paper,
30 x 22"

3
Ivan Franco Fraga,
Luminance, colored
pencil on paper, 8 x 6"

4
Scott Burdick,
*Meditations on Past
and Future*, oil on panel,
20 x 16"



2

own reflection with another male and will aggressively attack that reflection.

"This series is a departure from my previous works in both medium and color," he continues. "I felt these avian works needed some levity and lightness to reflect their subject. Using watercolors on archival arches paper is a big step away from my previous canvas or wood substrates, and oil or acrylic mediums with black backgrounds."

Returning to the show is artist **Hiroshi Hayakawa**, who is known for his figurative works but has also been exploring a different medium in recent years. In the piece *Vanitas 2*, showing a highly realistic female figure and pomegranate, Hayakawa

uses graphite instead of charcoal, among many other mediums he's known for, which he used for many years for its fluid quality.

"I borrowed the theme of *Vanitas* from one of the still life painting themes that was popular in 17th-century Netherlands. The cracked open pomegranate represents the basic [concept] of *Vanitas*: warning about brevity and fragility of earthly pleasure and beauty in life. I decided to incorporate my interest in a figurative element and make the figure also a communicator of the theme."

Another artist to watch for is **Ivan Franco Fraga**, who will have three colored pencil pieces as part of his *Unfocused* series, including the piece *Luminance*, depicting a slightly blurred image of a woman turned



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away from the viewer. "The images that I make have a strong connection to photography," says Fraga. "I like to think that if the viewer is deceived when he looks at an image, he can see the reality that surrounds him in another way. In this sense, my work focuses on creating a photographic atmosphere with blur, grain, etc., which is very present every day in our lives."

Join Arcadia Contemporary in celebrating a talented group of artists through September 12. A special artist reception will take place August 14, from 4 to 6 p.m. ●

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