

RON HICKS

Breaking the Rules



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In recent years, painter Ron Hicks has been looking at his work with a thoughtful eye. "What have I been hiding behind?" he asked himself. The answer was the confines of art itself. To get out, he would have to break some stuff.

"I found that I was using representational art as a pretext to keep my work a certain way," he says. "That's what I was hiding behind. And to get out, I had to move toward my own truth and do it in a creative way that wasn't dictated by rules and discipline. There is this notion that, 'This is what art is.' And it doesn't have to be."

Hicks elaborates that he had built walls around his own work in his head, and felt like he was bound by the rules when it came to realism, or representational art. When he was finally comfortable breaking the rules, he did so by adding more abstract elements to his paintings, by allowing his paint to twirl



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off the edges of his subjects and by breaking down the barriers between realism and its neighbors.

This multi-year journey continues in a new solo show at Arcadia Contemporary in New York, where Hicks will have new figurative works on view that show how he is blending the barriers between abstraction, realism and other styles of art. The show opens March 18.

Works in the show include *Sanctuary of Ripples*, an image of a figure in reflective sunglasses and a green shirt. The portrait-like piece has dabs of paint and different textures in various places on the panel, which creates a sense of immediacy with the paint—the figure and her expression reel you in, but the bits of color and abstracted forms make your eyes dance around the composition.

Other pieces include *Obscurity*, which has loose patches of paint on the bottom half of the painting, which adds a fascinating dynamic with the more realistic top portion that shows a female figure with her hands held together in front of her.

“Figures have always been in my work, but now I’m starting to think of them abstractly,” the artist says. “In some of these new pieces I could have gone in and rendered them completely, but I have new ideas that I’m still working through. They are in all aspects of my work: shape, value, color and tone. I want to look at everything differently.” ●

Arcadia Contemporary 421 W. Broadway • New York, NY 10012
(646) 861-3941 • www.arcadiacontemporary.com

1 *Obscurity*, oil on cradled panel, 48 x 25"

2 *Soliloquy of Solitude*, oil on cradled panel, 12 x 12"

3 *Epitome of Solace*, oil on cradled panel, 16 x 16"

4 *Sanctuary of Ripples*, oil on cradle panel, 16 x 16"