

JOHN BROSIONO

Simultaneous Experiences

Some might say John Brosio has an overactive imagination. This might imply something negative, but that couldn't be further from the truth. In reality, Brosio takes, well, reality, and transforms its myriad parts into thrilling works of art.

"I am interested in so many different things, and they will sometimes 'meet' in an idea or concept, often spontaneously," says the artist. "I have learned too—a ways back—that I have something called synesthesia. Sounds like a disease, right?" Synesthesia is a phenomenon in which

"your brain routes sensory information through multiple unrelated senses, causing you to experience more than one sense simultaneously," according to the Cleveland Clinic. "So I may hear a particular bridge of music and have a solution to a painting, or even an entire painting, present itself as if spontaneously," Brosio continues. "I have lots of ideas, but I think that [only] a small percentage of painting is ideas. It's about trying to realize those ideas and make them work, and there is a lot of failure."

Brosio has an upcoming solo exhibition at Arcadia Contemporary opening Saturday, February 24. The show gives way to a multitude of ideas swirling through Brosio's head.

"In this particular body of work I feel a lot of things beginning to 'meet,' for lack of a better word," he says. "Different influences that used to inhabit separate paintings are now coming together within single images. It's not overt, but there are some of my older themes combined with new directions and different brushwork





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at the corners. It makes me excited about what will happen next.”

His paintings feature iconic imagery from pop culture, including the quintessential UFO saucer shape as well as the little pixelated aliens from the Space Invaders video game.

The Space Invaders piece is called *Jazz*, and it features those digital conquerors hovering ominously above an abandoned building in the desert with coyotes prowling around. A skeleton sits in a rocking chair in front of the office building, suggesting this

area has been desolate for quite some time. “*Jazz* feels very personal in a way,” says Brosio. “In the end we are all going to die alone, unfortunately. Yes, I hope everyone is surrounded by loved ones at that moment but, when the time comes, regardless of circumstance, we are going to jump off the diving board by ourselves. And while *Jazz* is very intuitive and barely planned, it feels to me like a kind of a self-portrait of my head, where I live each day, and what my last moment might taste like. And even that is a guess. All I know is that this painting stopped when I felt that I had gotten

1
Edge of Town No. 18,
oil on canvas, 60 x 72”

2
Jazz, oil on canvas,
36 x 36”



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something 'right.'"

Another piece Brosio calls attention to is *Devil Making a Sandwich*. "I have been very much looking at the work of Elmer Bischoff and, more pointedly, the work of his protégé Joan Brown. I'm sure you might feel stumped at first in seeing the connection, but the way Brown could take the most ridiculous subjects, at a glance, and fight her way into nevertheless compelling imagery with the use of paint and color just dazzles me. This piece has a surface that I think you will see literally more and more of as I go forward, and it very much includes disaster. The whole piece had at one point a very described background of rocks and fire and all such predictable noise before I obliterated the entire boring thing with dashes of yellow. It was essentially destroyed until I just happened to look at it again where it sat upside down on a shelf, and the idea of all that blue seemed suddenly obvious."

Brosio's paintings will be on view at Arcadia Contemporary in New York City through March 10. ●

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



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- 3
2021, oil on canvas,
36 x 38"
- 4
Bride on a Merry-Go-Round, oil on canvas,
17 x 30"
- 5
Prima Nocta, oil on
canvas, 18 x 32"
- 6
Devil Making a Sandwich,
oil on canvas, 24 x 16"