

**Thinkspace (Los Angeles)** - is pleased to present *New Works*, featuring artists Tran Nguyen and Erik Jones. Both artists approach their respective imagery with a unique synthesis of elements, including figuration, pattern and an intuitive approach to stylized composition. Nguyen and Jones respectively harness a variety of illustrative influences to convey their distinct visions and aesthetic identities.

Tran Nguyen is a Georgia based, Vietnamese born, artist. Working with acrylics and color pencil, her process oriented works are built through a painstaking application of acrylic glazing, and a detailed mastery of figurative illustration. Nguyen's interest resides in the potential of associative imagery to speak to universal psychological experiences, and to the latent recesses of the subconscious. The artist's belief in the power of the image to fulfill a therapeutic role is at the heart of her practice.

Nguyen creates narrative works that are intended to appeal to a shared consciousness, and to the anxieties and challenges faced by the human psyche. She invokes the affective valence of these shared hardships in her work, and draws from them with a deeply empathetic and symbolic approach to representation. With an emotional generosity, her work strives to speak to the viewer on a personal level, and this engagement dominates her choice of psychological themes. Nguyen's interest in the psycho-therapeutic potential of art results in deeply moving, and at times unsettling, surreal vignettes that extend beyond the self into a shared realm of experience.

Erik Jones is a New York based artist who deftly combines a hyperrealistic approach to figuration with an expressionistic, and idiosyncratic, incorporation of color and pattern. Jones clothes his figurative subjects in brilliantly patterned areas of color and geometry. Superimposing the graphic precision of these expanses against beautifully rendered portraits, the artist offers surrealistic images through the collusion of unexpected relationships.

Jones achieves these phenomenal combinations of abstraction and representation with a mixed approach to media: incorporating watercolor, colored pencil, acrylic, water-soluble wax pastel and water-soluble oil on paper. The resulting imagery is luminous - the abstract elements are incorporated seamlessly to suggest geometric non-representational "fashions", effectively "worn" by his encompassed subjects. The intuitive spontaneity of his mark-making dynamically activates the realistic rendition of his human portraits, posing an aesthetic tension between the hyperreal and the surreal through the exciting amalgam of graphic contexts. The works are beautifully executed, and reverberate undeniably with excessive life.

Concurrently on view in the Thinkspace project room is *Better than Yesterday*, featuring new works by Alex Yanes. Based out of Miami, Yanes creates three-dimensional mixed media works that explode with whimsy and creativity. Looking to his city, and to its rich patchwork of urban counterculture for inspiration, Yanes combines color, imagery and content in fresh and relatable ways, appealing to both the consummate collector and the recent initiate alike.

His works display an interest in the character and caricature of urban life. Seeking material in hyperbole and exaggeration, the artist's work is also revelatory and touches on understated truths about contemporary culture. This combination of bombast and revelation make Yanes' beautiful works all the more seductive and enthralling. His carefully executed sculptural installations are made from a variety of media including wood, acrylic, resin and enamel. They seem to take on autonomous lives of their own, as each emanates with an identity that is equal parts absurdity, beauty and sheer unadulterated enjoyment.