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11/09/2017 02:33 pm ET Updated Nov 09, 2017

A Closer Look at two Galleries from the 2017 Seattle Art Fair, Galerie Youn from Montreal and 55Bellechasse from Paris and Miami

The 2017 Seattle Art Fair was once again a pleasure to explore, and it offered a seemingly endless amount of what could be viewed, in the form of artwork, installations, and people watching. For three days in August, every art lover in Seattle can be among like-minded collectors, patrons, curators, and of course, fellow artists.

Having attended all 3 years of the annual Seattle Art Fair, I'm especially attuned to galleries exhibiting in the art fair for the first time. Two galleries and their curators I met showing cutting edge work and were enjoyable to talk with were Juno Youn, curator and founder of Galerie Youn located in Montreal, and Bertrand Scholler, curator and founding partner of 55 Bellechasse, with spaces in Paris and Miami. I found Juno Youn and Bertrand Scholler lively, engaging, and enjoying their first time exhibiting works from their galleries at the Seattle Art Fair.

Galerie Youn exhibits local, national, and international emerging and mid-career contemporary artists, based in Montreal and across the globe.

One of the artist I spoke with Juno Youn about at the Seattle Art Fair was Kit King, an internationally known Bahamian Canadian contemporary artist, was one of the artists featured by Galerie Youn from Montreal at the third annual Seattle Art Fair in August, 2017. Her large scale paintings explore the fertile cultural subject matter of identity, sex, gender, objectification, and the layers of self around all of these.



PASCAL VOCHÉLET, 2017

The two works on view used the cut-up method, of taking completed painted portraits (oil on paper, cut up and reassembled)—in the first one, a large scale monochromatic painting, (made of cut cubes fit in plastic ID holders attached on board). when viewed turn into a black and white portrait staring back from a pair of eyes that demand the viewer interact and form a point of view. The painting "Cori with an I" cuts a completed canvas in strips, and puts them together in lines of expression and strips of flesh, making one figure out and connect the portrait anew.

Another one of the artists on view from Galerie Youn was Hugo Alonso, a painter from outside of Madrid. His monochromatic black and white rooms, scenes, and portraits have an eerie soft focus effect, and pull the viewer in by presenting what could be enlarged movie still images, and feel like a found frame from a film noir movie, and blown up to both hide and highlight details of the scene.

Bertrand Scholler co-founded 55Bellechasse in 2013, in Paris, and opened a second gallery location in Miami, in 2016. 55Bellechasse works with emerging artists around the world, and is attuned to the "temperature" of the art world on a local and global scale. Bertrand also holds monthly dinners he organizes that allows artists and collectors to meet and discuss current exhibitions on display, and the state of the art world through a global perspective. This open and creative approach that Bertrand takes to exhibiting art and connecting with every type of patron, collector, and art love was on full display in Seattle. At the Seattle Art Fair, 55Bellechasse exhibited surreal figurative works, as well as playful human/animal hybrid portraits by Pascal Vochelet, from Marseille. The large-scale paintings were at once playful and mysterious, subversive and surreal, depicting shadowy people holding instruments, or half gone figures in bathrooms full of foreboding.



PASCAL VOCHELET, Punk, 2017

The other artist on view at the Seattle Art Fair was Niloufar Banisadr, who used photographs of herself in a headscarf and a bare stomach, making a strong artistic statement by the act of combining the two elements in photographs which were sometime stark black and white portraits, and other times composed with architectural and natural elements in color overlaid to the black and white photos. Every viewer will interpret these photos through their own lens of experience, and if they have an open mind, they'll perceive them with the lens of wonder and beauty.



NILOUFAR BANISADR, SPIRITUS SANCTUS,
PRINT ON PLEXIGLAS, 100 X 70 CM, 2015

These two galleries showed thought provoking works of painting and photography, and asked only that the viewer be engaged and wonder how the artwork made them feel.



NILOUFAR BANISADR, IRANIAN SPRING,
PRINT ON PLEXIGLAS, 100 X 70 CM , 2017