

Alexander Kroll's "At Home in Outer Space" at Fredric Snitzer Gallery Strikes a Balance of Contradictions



Alexander Kroll, *Granite and Lavender* (2016)

Courtesy of Fredric Snitzer Gallery

Painting is thought of as a highly personal enterprise. The masses think artists create in solitude, making work that is as much therapeutic as it is beautiful. For Los Angeles-based painter Alexander Kroll, that popular stereotype couldn't be further from the truth.

A native New Yorker, Kroll delved into the world of the unconscious by psychoanalysis, free association, and dream analysis to source the material for his figurative paintings. When he overcame his own self-analysis, he created the massive abstract pieces found in "At Home in Outer Space," his solo show on view at Fredric Snitzer Gallery.

"One of the things about abstract painting is, What in the hell can you do next?" the gallery's owner, Fred Snitzer, jokes over the phone to *New Times*. "Alex takes some

of the ideas of abstract painting and moves them forward in a way that's barely within the confines of traditional abstraction."



EXPAND

"At Home in Outer Space," at Fredric Snitzer Gallery through May 9

Courtesy of Fredric Snitzer Gallery

Although they come from a long line of abstract expressionist paintings, the canvasses on display also borrow from some unexpected sources. Kroll used Day-Glo paint and graffiti works as jumping-off points for both the palettes and the shapes he constructed.

Bright shades of fuchsia leap off the surface, countered by cool, dark blues and greens; the colors are strikingly reminiscent of Miami's penchant for coral and sea-foam hues. A certain rhythm is also at play in each of the pieces. The dense brushstrokes recall the same repetitive beats in electronic dance music. For an East Coast-born painter who has firmly settled on the West Coast, Kroll's latest exhibition seems plucked from the local scene.

The new work amounts to a de-individuation of the artist's psyche. By placing himself out of the way of his subject matter, Kroll is able to create vast swatches of color that, while delicate, are an affront to the viewer. Both touching and harsh, they strike a balance of contradictions and form a central theme that runs throughout the show.

"At Home in Outer Space"

On view at Fredric Snitzer Gallery through May 9. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

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