

+ Las Vegas Diaspora

The Emergence of Contemporary Art from the Neon Homeland

MARCH 9 — JUNE 1, 2008



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WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

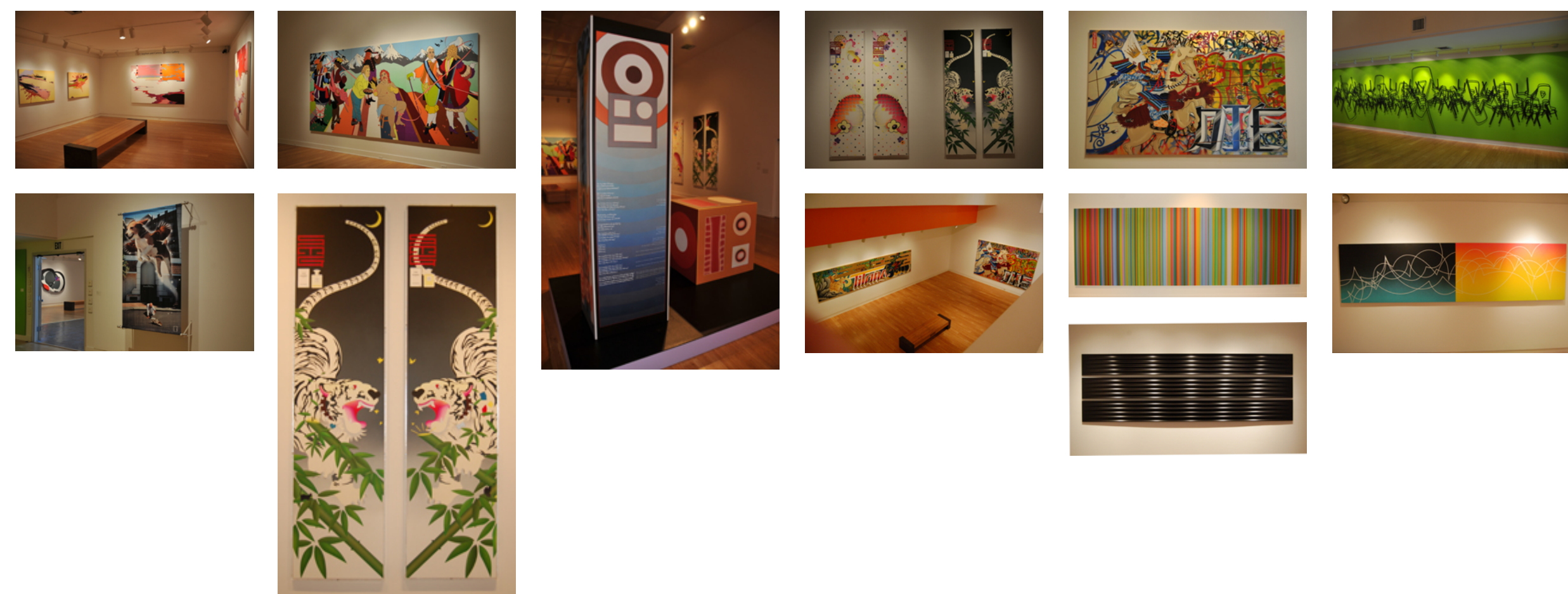
Exhibit Overview

Las Vegas Diaspora: The Emergence of Contemporary Art from the Neon Homeland traveled to Laguna Art Museum from its premiere at the Las Vegas Art Museum. Organized by the well-respected art critic and curator Dave Hickey, this exhibition celebrated the work of twenty-six artists who received their degrees from the University of Las Vegas, Nevada (UNLV). All of the featured artists studied with Hickey between 1990 and 2001, when Hickey taught art theory and criticism in the Department of Art at UNLV.

When I joined the Department of Art at UNLV in 1990, I knew that students who chose Las Vegas to study art would have to be a special breed, says Hickey, and they were. At that time, the city of Las Vegas could hardly have been considered the art destination that it is today. But it was then, as it is now, an extremely self-selecting venue. It attracts a certain kind of person, so I wasn't surprised that the kids who came here were adventuresome, cosmopolitan, self-sufficient, and indifferent to parental oversight. As a result of their industry and courage, some things that happen in Vegas don't stay in Vegas. They go out and change the world.

Since their graduation from the University, the featured artists have gone on to establish successful careers, most having been launched by Los Angeles galleries such as the Shoshana Wayne Gallery, Western Project, Suzanne Vielmetter, L.A. Louver, Mark Moore Gallery, and the Richard Heller Gallery.

Bolton Colburn, Director of Laguna Art Museum comments, Hickey, who frequently curates shows and writes essays for museums and galleries in southern California, has had a significant effect on the arts here and, as shown in *Las Vegas Diaspora*, he has been instrumental in building a new outpost for contemporary art on the eastern parameter of the West Coast in the unlikeliest of all places, Las Vegas.



We look forward to having you

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