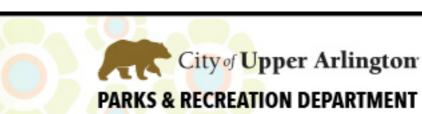
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Jeff Regensburger is a painter,

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University in 1997. Jeff blogs sporadically

(@jeffrey_r), and paints as time allows.

Master's Degree in Library Science from Kent State

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Jeff Regensburger

Photo via The Pizzuti Collection.

Before we get too far into 2015, I've got some unfinished business from 2014 that I need to attend to; namely a review of NOW-ISM: Abstraction Today currently on view at the Pizzuti Collection. The exhibition opened in mid-2014 and remains up through June 20th of 2015. So while I might be a little tardy in my review, you, Dear Viewer, still have plenty of time to see this terrific show.

First though, in the interest of making sure we're all on the same page, let's recap the hows and whens and whys of the Pizzuti Collection. Ron Pizzuti (of Pizzuti construction) began collecting art over thirty years ago. His passion for art has resulted in a highly-regarded collection of contemporary art that includes not only some of the art world's biggest names, but also many up-and-coming artists. In an effort to make the work in his collection accessible (and promote the sort of cultural dialogue that art

"White carpet treatment" by Alejandro Almanza Pereda. inspires), Mr. Pizzuti established the Pizzuti Collection. The gallery space/museum/kunsthalle opened in September of 2013 and has succeeded in adding yet another dimension to an already robust Central Ohio art's scene.

As for NOW-ISM: Abstraction Today, the title promises both non-representational art and currency. It

delivers on both fronts. NOW-ISM is an exhibition that features over 100 works of abstract art by over 50 different artists. The currency comes from the fact that all the works on display were created in the 21st century. This is no small feat, and points again to the Pizzuti Collection's determination to present viewers with the new, the fresh, and the unexpected. That's not to say there aren't big names here. Local

star Ann Hamilton, MacArthur Genius Teresita Fernández, and up-and-comer Sarah Cain are just a few of the luminaries present in this celebrated and multinational group of artists. Not surprisingly, the works are just as diverse as the artists who created them. They run the gamut of abstraction as well; from the geometric to the gestural, from the angular to the amorphous. If there's a unifying sense, it's this: neither founder Ron Pizzuti nor Director/Curator Rebecca Ibel are inclined to shy away from bold strokes. This is a show that is nothing if not flamboyant; an absolute kaleidoscope of colors, textures and shapes.



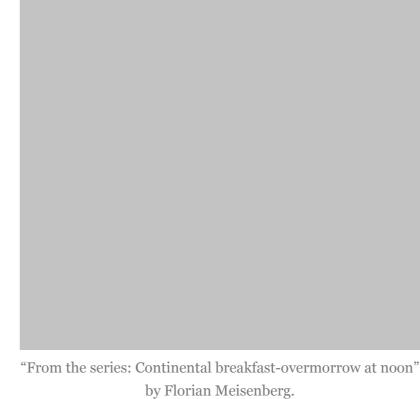
To put it another way, this is not Mark Rothko's brand of abstraction. If you want to sit quietly in the presence of shimmering fields of complementary colors, you might look elsewhere. Oh, there are nods to the Color Field masters, Post-Painterly abstraction, and some of their more sedate precursors, but those restive moments come few and far between. They're also strategically placed in the context of some of the most unapologetically brash and ambitious works you'll likely see assembled anywhere. There is, as they say, a riot going on. Don't take that the wrong way though. NOW-ISM isn't all splash and eye candy. There's serious work here; work that is both reverent and referential. Alejandro Almanza Pereda's White Carpet Treatment

and *Untilted* are frail and unsettling. Florian Meisenberg's paintings from the *Continental* breakfast-ovrmorrow at noon series offer sophisticated clues that challenge their slapdash execution (Is this what they mean when they talk about the New Casualists?). In Meisenberg's work we see hints of the stained canvases of Frankenthaler, the African masks of the early modernists, the fragile compositions of Klee, and even the theatrical sense of Charles Wilson Peale (This might be stretching it, but I can't be the only one who see's Duchamp's Fountain in their too can I?).

Taken in total, the works in *NOW-ISM* serve to push

the boundaries of abstraction itself. They offer light

as abstraction, words as abstraction, shapes as



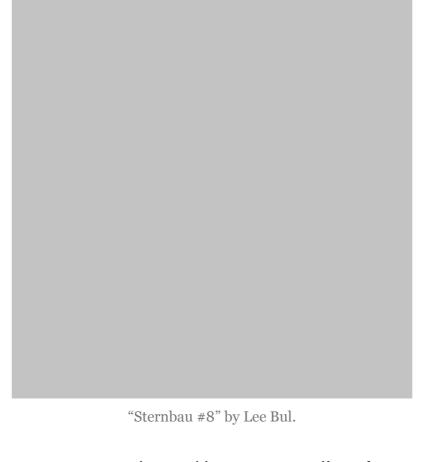
something that painters do that we forget there's a whole other dimension (literally) to the form. The light reflected off of Lee Bul's transcendent Sternbau #8 and the delicate shadows cast by Teresita Fernández' Vertigo (Sotto in su) are as much a part of the language of abstraction as the gestural paint marks in Tomory Dodge's The Future. See, abstraction is unwieldy like that. In the end it

abstraction, and shadows as abstraction. The truth is we've become so acclimated to abstract art being

can be just about anything we see. And even after one-hundred plus years of bearing witness to nonrepresentational art, our sense-making brains still struggle with it. We still want it to tell a story. We want it to create a narrative; to inform us, rarely considering that it's perfectly ok for things to be enigmatic, to be ambiguous, to be unknowable. We don't insist a melody offer "meaning" so why do we ask it of abstract art?

I suspect it's because the point at which a work becomes abstract is the point at which it becomes an object unto itself. At that point it takes on a life of its own. It exists in its own right and no longer has to conform to our existing reality. That's a confounding

thing and a demanding thing. It's also a good thing.



Abstraction pushes our brains just a little harder. We have more to resolve and less to go on. I've often contended that one of the hallmarks of art is that it gives us the chance to think about (and see) the world in new ways. NOW-ISM does that and it does it very well. Take advantage of the opportunity and go see

NOW-ISM is on view through June 20, 2015 at Pizzuti Collection. For more information, visit www.pizzuticollection.org. Lee Bul

2008 Crystal, glass and acrylic beads on nickel-chrome wire, stainless steel and aluminum armature 60 x 29 x 31 in.

Sternbau #8

Ann Hamilton The People's Republic

2013 Paperback book slices, wood, bookbinder's glue 9 3/4 x 12 x 4 3/4 in.

Florian Meisenberg From the series: Continental breakfast-overmorrow at noon

2012 Oil on canvas

96 1/8 x 78 1/4 in

Alejandro Almanza Pereda White carpet treatment 2009

Light bulbs, burnt light bulb, porcelain sockets, electric wire; unique series 20 x 36 in.

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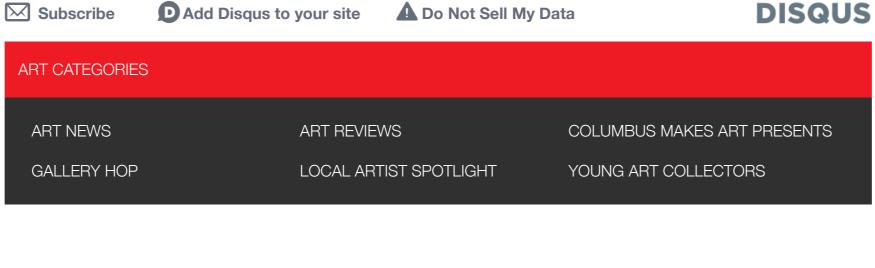


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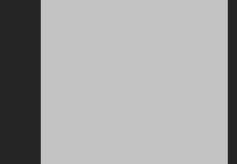
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