

Murielle White + Anna Elise Johnson at Cris Worley Fine Arts

By Todd Camplin

On January 7th 2017, Murielle White's much anticipated painting show opens at Cris Worley Fine Arts. I had the privilege of attending grad school with her at UNT. We were two of the three Painting and Drawing majors in the class of 2010. She has a strong Texas presence as an artist, but she is also very transnational as well. All four of her grandparents are from different countries and she has traveled all over the globe soaking in the world culture and reflecting her experiences on canvas. You might think that she would have an international style, but White's paintings are extremely personal which reflects in her work.



LEFT: Murielle White, Paris, Summer 2016, 2016, oil & mixed media on canvas, 43 x 62 inches | RIGHT: Murielle White, Top of the World, 2016, oil & mixed media on canvas, 48 x 60 inches

Murielle White uses each part of the canvas as an experiment of paint, drawing, and collage to build a personal story that reflects her feelings and personal narrative, but from a viewer's perspective it feels relatable in content and form. Colors and images feel much like a collage, but not one that has been contrived in order to create arbitrary juxtapositions. But rather, they are akin to a community wall where people from centuries have added, covered up, and added more. White has mentioned that there are elements of line and shape that represent lines on a map, but her work also breaks down the borders where there is a free exchange of visual information between each part of the painting. The mix between graphic element,

thick paint, and thin expanses of color make for a highly charged work of art. I can't wait to see this show.

Right now, up until this weekend are the works of Anna Elise Johnson. Power, the unseen hand, the movers and shakers; these are some of the stories behind the layered collage styled images embedded in resin and acrylic blocks. The narratives of consequential meetings between power brokers harkens back to the feeling of the 1980's. Deals for money and ideology between business and state seemed to be in forefront of the headlines and culture, but now they seem to have re emerged with a product of the 80's taking the Presidential reins. Although Johnson's images are colorful, in contrast the figures feel mysterious and ominously anonymous. I think the layering of the images between the clear material adds to the content of the subject by implying a "layered and complex" story that is transparent visually, but opaque in what might have been discussed in her meeting narratives. I think someone can get lost in conspiracy ideas or just enjoy the moment's possibilities Johnson's works seem to create.



LEFT: Anna Elise Johnson, Inner Workings, 2016, acrylic, resin, archival digital prints, graphite, enamel paint, 23 x 36 x 2 inches | RIGHT: Mise-en-scène, 2016, acrylic, resin, archival digital prints, spray paint, 13 x 20 x 4 inches

Murielle White's exhibition titled Mutation will start on the 7th of January and Anna Elise Johnson's show titled Inner Workings will come down December the 31st. Looks like Cris Worley Fine Arts is a great place to visit as we end this year and begin the next.