

Bigger than Life: William Cannings at Cris Worley Fine Art

Arts writer June Mattingly scouts the area's most invigorating shows not to be missed.

William Cannings casts delightful, seemingly floating, sensuous sculptures cast out of aluminum, steel, and paint, uplifting and voluptuous without a soul-searching message. The key attraction is figuring out how these free-standing and wall-attached pieces are technically constructed. They are not blow-up inflatables as it first appears rather they are fabricated from scratch by literally heating, inflating, and welding pieces of sheet metal together.

Quite distinct is the allure of their purely decorative sensitivity. Cannings' previous sleek inflatable-looking chairs and blown-up beach balls also appeared made from malleable plastic and were coated in shiny hot colors of glossy automotive paint. Due to his continued secret process his provocative new steel sculptures still look weightless despite the medium he uses; however this go around they are coated with cooler non-descriptive, but still glowing, colors.

In Contemporary Art, both conceptually and visually, from installation, participatory to video the artist plans on the visitor's presence and interaction. In order to be fully appreciated art of all kinds requires a lot more than reading a review and/or looking at a picture of it. In Cannings' case, like many other artists, he wants the experience with his art to include touch- it makes a tremendous difference to all participants.

English-born in 1970, Cannings is a professor of sculpture, of course, at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. His MFA is from Syracuse University in New York State. The Anya Tish Gallery represents him in Houston as does Cris Worley in Dallas.

William Cannings' *Soft Cell*, his first solo exhibition in North Texas since 2008, continues at Cris Worley Fine Arts through January 5, 2013.