

Leo Kesting Gallery

Brian Leo



Brian Leo is an artist who exhibits clusters of small paintings which address culture, politics and American identity. The cavalcade of tiny images exhibited en masse, show events of deep cultural significance flanked by bizarre meditations on moments of Leo's personal experience.

Each tiny piece, in turn, contradicts itself; episodes rank with chaos and suffering explode off the canvas in bubblegum garage-pop tones. His use of bright colors and whimsical humor provide a flashlight and sense of hope, which makes this often dark content seem less so.

Brian Leo has exhibited in Tokyo, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and galleries throughout N.Y.C. and Brooklyn.

Brian has been written about and received critical acclaim from the July 29th 2007 issue of The New York Times, the Brooklyn Rail Armory Review from April 2006, and in the South Korean National Times August 2008.

Brian holds a B.F.A. from Rutgers/ Mason Gross School of Arts

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April 2006

BROOKLYN RAIL

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ARTS, POLITICS AND CULTURE

All's Fair

by James Kalm

An abbreviated commentary on the Armory Show, SCOPE, the LA Art Fair, PULSE, DIVA and Fountain

Walking the three blocks from the Armory Show to SCOPE, many visitors paused for a gander at the "Fountain" show. Highlights included Tom Broadbent's wacky travel cases, Sean Hemmerle's photos of war-torn Iraq, and Kate Vance's miniature waterways at Front Room. Next door at Capla Kesting, small funky paintings by Brian Leo and a large hanging piece by Anthony Zito caught my eye, as did the collages by Greg Lamarche and the "Goldmine Shit House" boys at McCaig-Welles.



Brian Leo Installation

The New York Times

Summer's Seven-Day Week



Robert Caplin for The New York Times

By [SETH KUGEL](#)

Published: July 29, 2007

The back wall is covered with bright, fancifully wacky paintings by Brian Leo, who calls himself a garage pop surrealist. (If you open the nearly hidden door to the left, you'll find a tiny room filled with even more of his work).



Get 'em Cheap at Fountain Art Fair

Thu Dec 04, 2008 at 11:01:25 AM

Brian Leo said his installation of canvases engulfing an entire wall and choking with a barrage of pop cultural references was "working within the paradigm of contradiction" and inspired by "9/11, cloning, Bird Flu, Hurricane Katrina and distractions of masturbation."

Leo's 350 canvases on display were drenched in toxic neon colors and ranged from \$150 to \$5,000 in price.

-- Carlos Saurez De Jesus
Category: **Art Basel**

Art Comments

Tuesday, December 09, 2008

Fountain Art Fair - Miami Art Basel 2008

Fountain Art Fair
by Don Porcella

Brian Leo, an artist in the Fountain Art Fair originally from New Jersey blew me away!!!! I love the way that color unifies his art so that he has more variety and flexibility with what he decides to paint. What I like most about Brian's art is the creativity he shows in every piece. No two paintings are exactly alike but collectively they represent only the tip of Brian's creative genius. I love a lot of the individual paintings and the majority of them seem to be on canvas. He had a buzz about his installation. The artist, Brian Leo, in front of skeletor transformer? (I think that's what he called it). He has great reasons for making each painting and each idea is creative, different and fresh





Fountain Art Fair

Thursday February 22 2007

Marcel Duchamp's upturned urinal [Fountain](#) serves as the namesake for this alternative art fair set up across the Westside Highway and just south of the [Armory Show](#). A majority of the galleries hail from Brooklyn and share a preference for an informal style that thumbs its nose at the moneyed Chelsea scene. The Yum Yum Factory, a secretive group organized by [Greg Haberny](#), presents an ironic, slapdash installation incorporating a collage of pop-culture objects; [Steven Gagnon](#), a self-representing artist, presents a new video of his conversations with cabbies, inside an actual taxi; and [Capla Kesting](#)'s Brian Leo shows a small, deliberately messy painting of Kim Jong-il kissing what appear to be Angelina Jolie's lips. (HGM)

ARTslant

Leo Kesting Gallery Presents:
Brian Leo - Truck Bomb -
Dam Stuhltrager - Mark Andreas
April 10 - 27, 2008
Opening Reception: Thur April 10, 7-10 pm
812 Washington St (at Gansevoort) NY, NY 10014

After Party at Level V : hosted by Adele Balderston

In this latest collection of works titled Truck Bomb, Brian Leo completes his series of paintings revolving around the morbid, yet feasible prediction of President Bush declaring Martial Law to postpone the elections of 2008 with a pseudo-terrorist attack.

Truck Bomb, a formation of canvases stretching over 12 feet tall to create the recognizable icon of Optimus Prime a nostalgic child hold toy from the Transformers, which symbolizes innocence for those of the artist's generation. "The selection of Optimus Prime, a character designed in Japan and manufactured in China, speaks of the art world's current bandwagon perspective of Art from Asia. It parallels strong international criticism of China with its exports of toxic materials discovered in food, toys, electronics and its political thought towards Tibet and religious persecution," explains the artist Brian Leo.

Often working within a dialog of contradiction, Brian Leo, a 31 year old artist and first generation American of Korean and Italian descent says, "Optimus has a strong sense of justice and righteousness, and has dedicated himself to the protection of all life, particularly the inhabitants of the U.S.A.; he will battle his foes with unyielding resolve to uphold this belief. However the irony of this character comes from the slave shops he is manufactured in and the direct opposition his morals entail towards the oppressive government in which he was born."

Along with this centerpiece, the artist will also exhibit clusters of small paintings which address culture, politics and American identity. The cavalcade of tiny images exhibited en masse, show events of deep cultural significance flanked by bizarre meditations on moments of Leo's personal experience. Each tiny piece, in turn, contradicts itself; episodes rank with chaos and suffering explode off the canvas in bubblegum garage-pop tones. His use of bright colors and whimsical humor provide a flashlight and sense of hope, which makes this often dark content seem less so.

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