

## THE BARRICK'S 'PLURAL' TEAMS LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS FOR AN ENGAGING SHOW



"Breaking Armistice" by Gig Depio, Oil Painting, 2014.

Photo: Mikayla Whitmore / Courtesy

Dawn-Michelle Baude

Thu, Apr 19, 2018 (2 a.m.)



**PLURAL** Through May 12; Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (Thursday until 8 p.m.); Saturday, noon-5 p.m.; \$5 donation. Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art, 702-895-3381.

With Krystal Ramirez's ginormous Bible-paper banner "I Want to See" at one end of the gallery and Almond Zigmund's monumental plywood cantilever sculpture "Interruptions Repeated" at the other, *Plural* makes a big statement about "plurality." Over half of the 44 artists showing in UNLV's Barrick Museum of Art are women; many are artists-of-color and/or queer. Through rubber and bone powder, Alaskan blueberry residue and fleece—along with traditional media—*Plural* advocates for greater diversity in exhibition fare.

Curated by Interim Executive Director Alisha Kerlin and the Barrick team, with outreach assistance by Wendy Kveck, *Plural* draws from works recently donated to the Barrick's permanent collections. Most of the artists on exhibit are connected to Southern Nevada, either formally through UNLV or through interest in the state's history and landscape. Artistic styles range from Clarity Haynes' sensuous and haunting "Ria"—a medium-format pastel life drawing of breasts that have survived cancer—to Gig Depio's large oil painting "Breaking Armistice," with its intriguing allegorical mash-up of Las Vegas history; from Linda Alterwitz' mysterious "Untitled 11"—a monochromatic tapestry literally weaving brain-imagery with landscape—to Noelle Garcia's strange and captivating beaded replicas, "Cigarettes," "Cheerios" and "Doritos," which translate a traditional Native American craft into fine art.

nonetheless teeter on the verge of potential narrative.

Part of the “plurality” of the show is its refusal to privilege one mode of artistic expression over another. Some of the works—including Brent Holmes’ “Superbia Civilis,” Tom Pfannerstill’s “Pabst Blue Ribbon,” and China Adams’ “Winter Garbage Chunks”—critique endgame consumerism. Other artists lead with humor, such as Thomas Ray Willis’ ridiculous trio of impractical canvas objects, while minimalists Audrey Barcio and Jacqueline Ehlis promote a material aesthetic. JK Russ’ eye-opening sculpture, “Transplantation,” troubles feminist discourse with its lush, discombobulating showgirl beanbag cushion.

Ambitious curatorial undertakings like *Plural* risk devolving into an eclecticism that diminishes, rather than vivifies, individual artistic projects, but the show avoids this pitfall through an expert hanging that deflects uneven accomplishments among the 76 works. All in all, it’s a rich “plurality” immediately worth seeing.

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2