

NY ARTS

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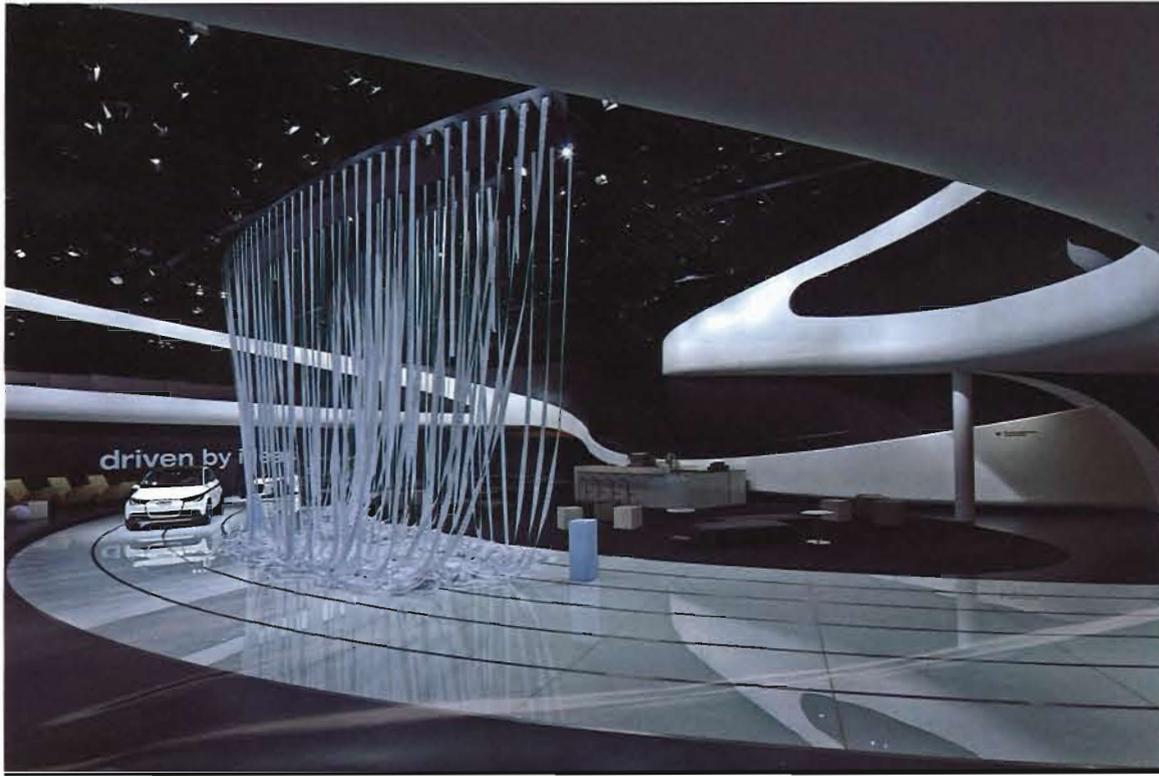
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30 Artists to Watch

By Jason Stopa, Kate Meng Brassel & Leah Schlackman

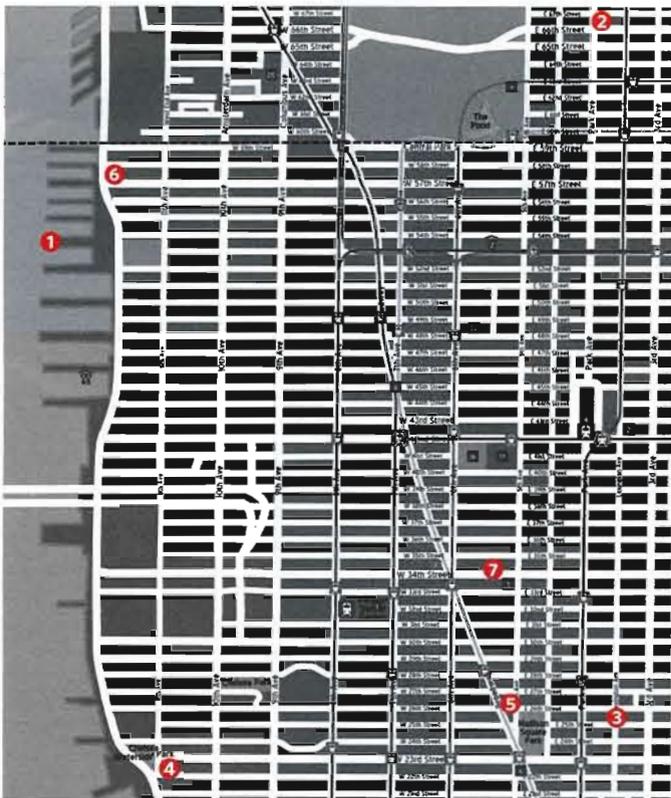


Chris Baker, *Murmur Study*. A real-time installation that prints Twitter messages containing onomatopoeic emotional non-words like hmmmph, grrr, and argh. 2011. Photo Credit: KMS Team

The artists presented in our "30 Artists to Watch" list are a group of disparate, working in mediums that stretch the entirety of the artist's spectrum from soundscapes to installations, acrylics to bed sheets. The thirty artists featured, however, all play within the realms of vast space and our contemporary time. Combating notions of exclusive or restrictive dimensionality, these artists' work all push past what has ever before been considered an impenetrable boundary. There is a noticeable shift in artistic manifestations of sexuality; the women amidst our "30 to Watch" list, such as artists DeVille and Schenkelberg delve into realms of perversion, repulsion, and chaos, pitting their works in a

metaphorical purgatory between terror and enchantment. One notices a bend in feminism; even when incorporating "feminine" craft into their work, these artists twist and distort such practices to create beast-like sculptures and eerie landscapes. Meanwhile, male artists such as Malbaurn and Karsten display an engagement with order and pristine aestheticism. Even when seemingly confined to a canvas, each artist makes the most of the space they have and construct visuals that stretch far beyond the confines of four edges. It takes little effort to see why these creators have made our list of 30 Artists to Watch.

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- 1) The Armory Show
Piers 92 & 94
12th Ave at W 55th St.
March 8-11
- 2) The Art Show
Park Ave. Armory
Park Ave. at 67th St.
March 7-11
- 3) Fountain New York
Pier 66 Maritime,
Hudson River Park
26th Street & 12th Ave.
March 9-11
- 4) Independent
548 West 22nd St.
March 8-11
- 5) Pool Art Fair
9 West 26th St.
March 9-11
- 6) Scope New York
57th St & 12th Ave.
March 7-11
- 7) Volta NY
7 West 34th St.
March 8-11



Fountain: From the Ground Up



From March 9th to 11th, the 69th Regiment Armory will open its doors to art enthusiasts and patrons alike to present the 2012 Fountain Art Fair. The weekend-long fair, sheltered at 68 Lexington Avenue, the site of the original 1913 Armory Show, promises to be one of spectacular proportions. Broadway Gallery has partnered with Fountain and is excited to support the art fair's pleasantly different attitude - the founders more laid back, the events unexpected, the exhibits surprising. And on the whole, it's a respite from the stuffed shirt art shows in New York. We are looking forward to seeing YES Gallery, Uprise Arts, Big Deal Arts, Munch Gallery, Kesting/Ray, Cheap & Plastique, Broadway Gallery NYC, Leslie Lyons and [CONTINUES ON PAGE 17]

VOLTA's Solo Projects

VOLTA NY is an invitational showcase of exclusively solo artist projects from notable and emerging international talent. This follows VOLTA's original mandate for a tightly-focused program that fosters a dynamic gaze into the current art climate and salient contemporary positions, regardless of the artist or gallery's age.

A rigorously curated selection of exceptional artists from 80 galleries, representing 25 countries and 45 cit-



ies, form VOLTA NY's fifth consecutive fair. It complements the exciting program of art presented by its sister fair, The Armory Show, with shared VIP access and the Open Forum Talks Program. □

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DAVOR VUKOVIC'S CAPTIVATING COLOR

BY ABRAHAM LUBELSKI

Davor Vukovic's paintings, like his personality are provocative, full of vigor and a zest for life. Most noticeable is his use of vibrant colors, freely dashed about the canvas. Yet, his paintings are far less abstract upon analyzation. They are at first, intense and uninhibited, full of playful innocence. Yet, they are also hallucinatory and psychedelic. Behind swaths of paint resembling a rich atmosphere, there is a sense of mystery. He is a master of formal innovation and his work sets off sparks like fireworks.

Davor Vukovic's work is incredibly connected to his sense of environment and home, close to the sea. He describes his paintings as a recurrent image of islands and coasts. In a way, this description of his surroundings goes deeper than representation. They are not objective, but emotional. They are reflections, memories and dreams combined with his reality. Like in his poems, he is seeking for the essence of life. Over time, one notices that his paintings are existential: he finds the essence in life itself. And his varied experiences become elaborate motifs.

Stylistically, Vukovic finds his way between abstraction and action painting. His use of color is parallel to the way that French impressionists such as Monet tried to evidence the shades, the hues in the air and water. And in some of his paintings he even dabbles in a neo-cubism.

As far as influences are concerned, one can also notice similarities with the work of the Serbian painter and Vukovic's friend, Milan Konjovic. And once the artist de Kooning was quoted as saying that "I don't paint to live, I live to paint." It is a sentiment that seems aptly suited to Vukovic's personality. But influences aside, Vukovic has remained loyal to original approach, a self-educated technique. And few artists compare to his signature style. He is an extraordinary modern artist.

I recently had the chance to interview him to learn more about his work and life.

Abraham Lubelski: Tell us a little bit about how you became an artist. Did you always know you would be one?

Davor Vukovic: My art and my life are the same. I live my poetry and painting. That is my life style. Thus I adore Nature for its free gifts. My gratitude for life and creativity is unspeakable. With my paintings and poetry I celebrate Nature. Nature is a major artist. And it is so beautifully natural that the painter in me is compelled into an ancient game of representing it again and again. So I've come to realize that art and life is nothing but an amazing game. Hence I try to share my joy with everybody in my exhibits. So, thank you for receiving my overflow. Giving and receiving are the way to breath.

At one time, I had to run to painting as much as I could, and I was lucky to catch up with it. In fact, I never wanted to become a painter, I wanted to play football. From eleven to eighteen years of age I was the junior star in the football club from Split. I always knew I was a talented painter, but I feared the fate of painting, as I have already experienced some tragic.

AL: Your colors are incredibly vivid. Are they rooted in nature or in imagination?

DV: My colors have their roots in nature, but I don't mimic the colors of nature.

My color is a reflection of my appreciation for the splendor and glory I see in nature of which I am an indispensable and vital part. My colors reflect the state of joy of my being.

AL: Do you see your works as abstracted landscapes or as pure abstractions? Does it matter how the viewer interprets them?

DV: My recent paintings are a combination of classical, modern painting and action painting. They are vivid as I am and I totally do not care whether people will perceive them as a landscapes or abstractions. If they recognize the splendor and joy of life in my artworks, the deeper message is conveyed.

AL: Where do you find inspiration for your work? Do you have particular influences that you go back to, artists or writers or musicians? Are you planning any major exhibits this year that we should look out for?

DV: My inspiration is inexhaustible, because I am completely open to nature and life that current of life flows effortlessly through me. And I am always surprised by the final outcome. I can only paint one image once, because it is unique, so I can never make two identical paintings.

Right now, all of my efforts are in the planning of my future exhibition in October at Broadway Gallery, NYC. I also have an offer for a solo exhibition at a London gallery and plan to exhibit there in September of 2013. I have achieved



my domestic and international success thanks to my talent, hard work, and the continued support of my community.

Particularly important is the support of Zapresic, Zagreb County, the Croatian Ministry of Culture, Zagreb and many other sponsors.

As we anticipate Vukovic's future works, readers can glimpse some of his most significant works to date as a preview, right here.

A moving work, *Archipelago in the Night*, translates as a deep blue sea, ferociously waving during the night. A touch of deep blue induces that required ray of hope. But behind the untamed waves, there is more agitation: explosions of color under a surface that is almost impermeable. This work captures the romantic impulse with stunning results. Its nature is that of appearance and concealment. It helps us identify our place in the universe as well. This work ultimately has a transforming agent in it, as we come to understand ourselves viewing this piece, and realize that nature is a dynamic presence. From an artistic point of view Romanticism dominated the last decade of the 18th century and moved well into the first decades of the 20th century. Originating first in Europe with the "Sturm und Drang" Movement of the 1770's to its vibrant first flowering in England in the 1790's to its importation to American soil from the 1820's onward, Romanticism has exerted a powerful hold on Western thought and culture. And it makes perfect sense that an artist as cosmopolitan, well traveled, and talented as Vukovic has picked up on its resurgence. As Western culture has entered into a post-industrial and increasingly virtual channels of communication, Romanticism posits a return to basics. Those basics being pre-occupied with articulating the personal experience that becomes, in turn, a representative one. With all abstract art, the interpretation of the audience becomes a part of the artwork. And in Vukovic's painting, the spectator really gets sucked into the vortex of color and emotion. Especially, the pristine white, green, orange, yellow, maroon and turquoise contrasted by the subtle pink, which brings balance to this piece. This work is intense, brooding and sweetly melancholic like a Whistler or Van Gogh.

In *Wind*, we notice a more abrupt division in the landscape. There is an assertive, transcendental power, an ethereal field that is conjured up by this piece.



[Top] Davor Vukovic, *Gentle Archipelago*, 2011 acrylic on canvas 80x100 cm. Courtesy of the artist. [Bottom] Davor Vukovic, *Archipelago in the Night*, 2011 acrylic on canvas 50x70 cm. Courtesy of the artist. [Opposite page] Davor Vukovic, *Africa*, 2011 acrylic on canvas 50x70 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

This comes thought via the colors. Therein, a consoling blue haze brings peace to the canvas. The lower part of the canvas is akin to a reflection of evening light on a pond. Deep blues and bright oranges are remarkably present. Underneath the light blue brush strokes, purple and olive green dominate. But, most striking about this work, is that the whole piece seems like it is soaring. Composed of gestural hatch marks that resemble birds, it creates an effervescent, rich atmosphere that conjures up the majesty of flight.

Most unique is his work, *Gentle Archipelago*. It is spontaneous, more freely painted and the color palette, mature. This works captures the sensation of early morning dew or the first frost. Its cooler palette mixed with darker forms creates incredibly marked divisions.

But it is his work entitled *Africa*, which is full of wonderful experimentation and endless imagination. Albert Einstein once wrote that "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowl-

edge is limited. Imagination encircles the world." This work encircles the viewer in a refulgent, gleaming sensation that highlights the immense creative capacity within Vukovic. This work is all about play. It is obvious that this landscape wasn't based on the artist's surroundings, at least not entirely. There are no signs of islands or the Croatian coastline. The artist is less familiar with this environment. There are fewer details. The heavy layer of white paint has different nuances. The *mélange* is still white, but less banal. It feels like part of the earth is falling, collapsing onto the sediment below. This powerful tension is present in all of Vukovic's paintings.

Vukovic's work is visceral, challenging and full of endless wonder. The tangled webbed lines and spatters ruthlessly slice through thick ones in a show of bravado and excitement. His work captures the human drama with his masterful use of light and dark, chaos and anxiety. And his story continues to inspire. □

