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Rhythms in nature

A trio of artists—David Grossmann, David Michael Slonim, and Jivan Lee—will examine the melodic undercurrent of the West and how it is represented in their varied and unique styles at a new show, *Rhythms of Nature*, at Altamira Fine Art in Scottsdale, Arizona, beginning November 30.

The works range from Grossmann’s peaceful desert scenes to Slonim’s masterful abstractions to Lee’s impressionist landscapes. For Grossmann, the new pieces—including the studies *Open Sky*, *Monument Valley* and *Stone and Cloud Patterns*, *Monument Valley*—were inspired by locations he’s recently visited.

“I am deeply thankful that my work as an artist allows me to explore such amazing landscapes. It was a gift to be able to paint the bright light and the stark openness of desert places,” he says. “For my larger paintings, I used plein air studies as references and ended up with a combination of reality, memory and imagination. It is an exciting balance for me to have both the spontaneous process of working on location and the more meditative pace of my studio work. I develop my studio paintings over the course of several weeks, sometimes several months, building transparent and opaque layers of paint that allow me to experiment with surface texture and with creating subtle transitions of color... Simplicity is an important concept to me, and I try to say just enough to evoke the emotions that I feel when I am wandering through these landscapes. When I design a painting, I like to leave space for people’s imagination to continue where I leave off.”

The abstract works of Slonim are unique for the gallery, which focuses mostly on Western subjects done in a representational style. “Duke Ellington said there are only two kinds of music: good and the other kind. I feel that way about painting. Altamira represents top-quality artists in multiple styles. I am



1
David Grossmann,
*Open Sky,
Monument Valley
study*, oil on linen,
7 x 12"

2
David Michael
Slonim, *Time to
Spare*, oil, 48 x 36"

3
Jivan Lee, *Afternoon
in Galisteo*, oil on
canvas, 30 x 40"

4
Jivan Lee, *Ancient
Monolith*, oil on
canvas, 33 x 53"





3

very happy to be part of the mix,” he says.

Slonim references jazz again when he describes the color and movement of his work, particularly a piece like *Time to Spare*. “I listen to a lot of jazz while painting—Brubeck, Evans, Marsalis...my process is a lot like the call and response of jazz musicians improvising over a basic structure, responding spontaneously to each move in the moment,” he says. “*Time to Spare* began as a small collage of torn colored paper and newspaper. The large painted version took on a life of its own over a few months as I worked to harmonize the relationships and rhythms.”

For Lee, his new works are exploring the textural and expressive side the landscape. “Like much of my work, they embrace paint’s materiality—colorful, moldable, textural, luscious, inherently nonobjective—as well as its image-making potential. They go for feeling: of a moment or place, of the satisfaction of paint as tangible substance, and of the excitement paint elicits when it moves between objective and nonobjective realms,” he says. “*Afternoon in Galisteo* is a good example of my process...As I set up it was blustery, raining and thundering, and dark in the midday. I was getting



4

battered around by the wind and pelted by sharp rain. But shortly after I got going, the storm passed and the sun appeared—leaving the land much as it appears in the painting. The storm continued developing as it moved beyond the ridge in the middle foreground and I was left, luckily, with this fantastic view and that special fresh-rain/post-storm feeling. Totally unpredictable, really lucky, and super inspiring. So I hustled to get as

much color and form down as I could and then brought it back to the studio to finish up. It’s a piece about the power and drama of weather; about movement and contrast. I left the rendering pretty loose—that day felt free and jubilant after the storm, so I wanted the brushwork to be convey this, too.”

Works by the three artists will be on view at the Scottsdale gallery through December 19. ●