

6 San Antonio exhibits to broaden your artistic horizons in March

By Kristen O'Brien

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The "Arturo Herrera: Constructed Collage" exhibition is on display at Ruby City through next January. *Photo courtesy of Ruby City*

Set your sights on the robust arts and culture scene in San Antonio this month, with a diversity of riches unfolding at these local museums and galleries. March is Contemporary Art Month in the city, time to discover the dynamic offerings of local artist and musician Phillip Luna at Arthouse and the colorful constructed collages of international artist Arturo Herrera at Ruby City, as well as shows exploring mystical forces in this era of disconnection, vibrant color on aluminum and wood, and a dash of humor, metaphors, and Mexican symbols in the art of Israel Medina.

Artpace

“Mystic Toolkit”

Now through May 1

Bringing together the pieces of seven artists working across a variety of mediums ranging from sculpture, painting, photography, and performance, “Mystic Toolkit” is a quiet invitation to celebrate daily rituals of coping, healing, and grieving that have become indispensable in recent times. The artists included in this exhibition all share the recognition for the mystical forces that affect our daily lives and pay tribute to the daily rituals and repeated gestures that keep us wholesome. The exhibition conceptualizes the home as a sanctuary, a place of recollection and refuge. Home is at once a haven of comfort and self-care, but during lockdown it has also held us captive. The artists, who hail from Texas to New York and Berlin to Canada, attempt to navigate through what is unquestionably one of the most disruptive crises in modern history via a genuine recognition of the mysterious forces that orchestrate the world.

Ruby City

“Arturo Herrera: Constructed Collage”

March 3-January 29, 2023

The “Arturo Herrera: Constructed Collage” exhibition features more than 20 artworks from Ruby City’s permanent collection, including several recent acquisitions on view for the first time. Arturo Herrera’s expansive practice of colorful abstract works ranges in date from 1998 to 2019, and includes collage, a cut felt wall hanging, drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and an off-site wall painting. Herrera became well known in the 1990s for his abstract collages that feature intricately cut forms taken from popular-culture source material, with portions of recognizable elements that only hint at potential meanings. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, and now based in Berlin, the internationally exhibited artist is familiar to San Antonio residents through the large site-specific painting *Adam*, which is seen in the heart of downtown San Antonio adjacent to San Fernando Cathedral.

Arthouse at Blue Star

“Phillip Luna: Color Studies in Sunday Morning Jazz”

March 4-27

In conjunction with Contemporary Art Month, San Antonio artist and musician Phillip Luna is debuting his new series based on the dynamism and emotive quality of color and composition. He deconstructs artistic elements into their simplest forms to highlight their inherent power. Luna once played jazz on Sunday mornings at the Cove, and this current show is a free-flowing, expressive reflection of a lifetime of study. Luna is a multimedia artist and speaks openly about the struggles and mercy of his mental health and explores themes of love and grace in his art and music. Currently, Luna performs with The Please Help.

Brick at Blue Star

“Israel Medina: The Really Good Stuff”

March 4-30

The first 2022 artist residency at Brick explores the seemingly essential involvement of alcohol in any given event, especially a celebratory one. Israel Medina uses humor, metaphors, and Mexican symbols of celebration to paint a nuanced picture that mimics the subliminal. “Alcohol has a distinct utility that allows you to lower your defenses, making you more susceptible to revealing an almost ‘truer’ version of oneself,” Medina says. “It’s challenging to express concern for somebody. ... Doing so means confronting the unpalatable, uncomfortable truth that the role of alcohol isn’t consistent for everyone.”

AnArte Gallery

“Eric Breish: Constructs”

March 10-April 10

Texas artist Eric Breish was drawn to the world of art after a distinguished career in the Marine Corps when he first saw the work of internationally known artist Andreas Nottebohm. He became intrigued with metal art and in 2008, began studying with his mentor. Breish says he has always been drawn to graffiti. Traditionally viewed as an act of rebellion, graffiti has now become a legitimate art form. “From simple tags to masterful murals on the side of

skyscrapers, it spoke to me in the same way as museum walls,” he says. “I’m known for my works on metal and liked the idea of combining the two mediums to create something fresh and unique.” With “Constructs,” Breish combines the essence of street art and pairs it with a thick holographic aluminum panel that’s been heavily distressed to mimic a decaying wall. “The result,” he says, “is part painting, part street art, and part sculpture.”

The Briscoe Western Art Museum

“Night of Artists”

March 27-May 8

This annual event allows the public to view (and purchase) nearly 300 new works of painting, sculpture, and mixed media by 78 of the country’s leading contemporary Western artists. The wide range of artwork reflects the vastness of the great American West. From scenic landscapes and inspired Native Americans, classic cowboys, and dazzling vaqueros to stunning wildlife and detailed portraiture, “Night of Artists” has something for everyone enthralled with the Wild West. Some of the featured artists include Mary Ross Buchholz, C. Michael Dudash, Teresa Elliott, Martin Grelle, George Hallmark, Z.S. Liang, Kenny McKenna, Jan Mapes, Don Oelze, Paul Rhymer, Stefan Savides, Billy Schenck, Michael Ome Untiedt, Kim Wiggins, and Xiang Zhang.