

GALLERI URBANE

Stack and Smoosh

February 18 - March 25, 2023

Public Reception: February 18 from 5-7:30pm

Galleri Urbane is pleased to announce *Stack and Smoosh*, a group exhibition of works by Dallas-based artist Claire Kennedy, Austin-based Niva Parjuli, and Los Angeles-based Megan Reed. The exhibition is curated by artist Benjamin Terry and follows his four solo exhibitions at the gallery.

From Curator Benjamin Terry:

As an artist, I'm someone who wants to deconstruct how other artists make the things they make. In a brushstroke I can see how clever, funny, direct, confident, obsessive, clumsy, absurd, or skilled someone is. In this way the work becomes anthropomorphized and the artists reveal their identities and values in each thing they make, what they make it with, and how they contextualize it. As a curator, I'm interested in gathering artists for a show as I gather with friends for a meal. Conversations are rich because each person is contributing their unique perspective and personality. One friend may be playful while one is quiet and thoughtful, and yet another is snarky and quick-witted. In the exchange, the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

In *Stack and Smoosh*, each artist has a rather fluid relationship with painting and sculpture. As such, even when they make objects with traditional painting materials, they are constructing and deconstructing their surfaces, poking at the boundaries between categorization. They forefront the 3-dimensional space of the work, calling attention to the *objectness*, rather than regulating attention exclusively to 2-dimensional, pictorial concerns. Each artist regularly re-visits the process of stacking and smooshing materials together, assembling surfaces with varied topographies.

Claire Kennedy uses a variety of traditional and non-traditional materials to build textured surfaces, including, oil and acrylic, egg cartons, pipe cleaners, and glitter. She often uses familiar shapes and patterns as means to create visual structure within the frenetic energy of her materials. Starbursts, polka dots, checkerboard, and crescents are stacked and bounce from canvas to panel, to slab, to paper, to wall, and floor. The materials and symbols often feel childlike and haphazard, but the combinations are compelling and complicated.

Niva Parajuli smooshes together bits of colorful plasticine, creating compositions of kaleidoscopic, pixelated, flowery landscapes. He then stacks them on painted plywood that implies lawns and garden beds or sunset skies. They feel methodical, geometric, and gridded, all while being organic and playful. Surfaces fluctuate from seemingly flat geometric arrangements to layers of implied spaces. They function as meditations on bits of fauna that speckle the concrete city – to which he recently relocated.

Megan Reed creates absurdist relics employing a process of drawing and collage. Her works fit more neatly into the realm of sculpture, although they often have an intimate relationship with the wall. They refer to stone circles, the colors of urban architecture, Cyclopean rock formations, cairns and the vernacular of ancient and modern monuments. Reed's background in theater, moreover, renders her works as characters of sorts who invite the viewer to participate in their performative presence.