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A&E VISUAL ART: Smooth juxtaposition

By Kelsey Dayton on June 9, 2015

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Contemporary photos, paintings combine in Daly Projects new show

Jackson Hole, Wyoming – It takes a second look to really understand what you are seeing when you take in a photograph by Ed Lavino or a painting by Camille Davis.

While the two artists' work is drastically different — his black and white photography, hers impressionistic oil paintings — they share a love and talent for taking a classic medium and adding an unexpected and contemporary edge, explained Meg Daly of Daly Projects. Their art hangs in the gallery through June 27.

The exhibition "Figures," is perhaps the most contemporary show the new gallery has presented, Daly said.

"It just doesn't feel about Jackson Hole or all about the West," she said. "There is nothing traditional or Western in this body of work."

Both artists, while creating portraits in classic media, bring a fresh approach.

A series of 23 small paintings — the largest only 5 by 7 inches — by Davis called "Fire in the Sky," draws inspiration from aliens and rock and roll. Davis' artist statement uses lyrics from a Black Sabbath song, Daly said. There's something classical in her composition, but with a 90s influence that gives it an edge.

Davis is an impressionist painter inspired by the classic greats of the style. But instead of lily pads and picnics in the park, she paints emaciated faces, veiled or obscured eyes and pale skin.

"They are intentionally kind of creepy and a little ghostly feeling," Daly said.

The work is like Davis, Daly said. It has an underlying romantic beauty complemented by a hard rock aspect.

In addition to the "Fire in the Sky" collection, Daly is displaying six large paintings by Davis. These portraits are of people she knows and one is of her cat. Again, Davis uses beautiful and classic brush strokes, but then adds a modern component, highlighting certain colors like red in a woman's eye, making it unclear if she is hungover, sun burnt or injured, or using persimmon pink on the



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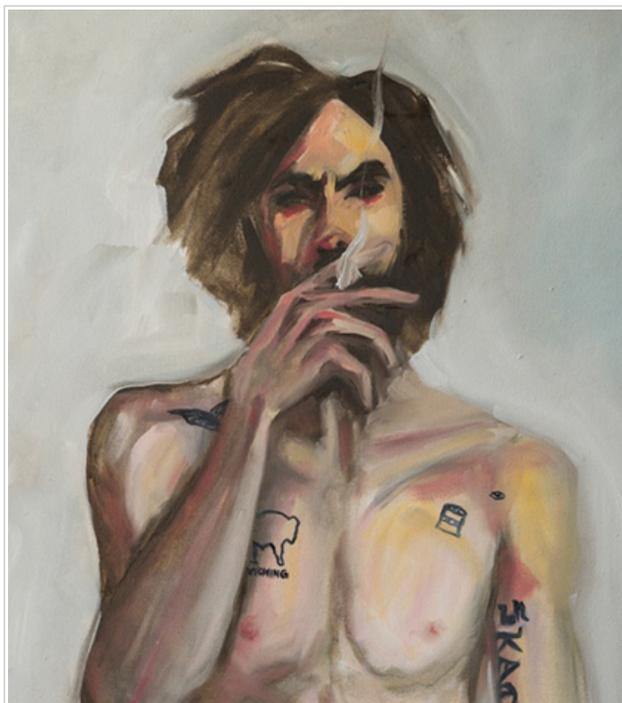
cheek bones or under the eyes of another subject.

“There’s like a hotness and an edge to these very beautifully-rendered impressionistic paintings,” Daly said.

While Davis’ work is “intentionally jangle-y,” according to Daly, Lavino’s work is more harmonious and composed.

Lavino works in a totally different medium: black and white photography.

A long-time black and white photographer, Lavino also takes a classic art form and adds a surprising contemporary twist. His portraits feature people immersed in the landscape so that they are almost hard to discern. He uses line, shape, tone and shadow to create surprising images, such as a nude woman in a leafless aspen tree, Daly said.



‘Andy,’ by Camille Davis (above), and ‘Darwin, Rustic Pine Tavern, Dubois, Wyoming,’ by Ed Lavino.

His work is clean, striking and pleasing to look at, but quirky enough to make the viewer pause and wonder what exactly they are taking in, Daly said. One image is of a nude woman from behind and she’s holding a large piece of driftwood. There is always a little contemporary or quirky twist.

Lavino photographed portraits for years, but his most recent work combines his love with art history and Renaissance style. About six years ago he started creating portraits in the landscape, attempting to blend figures into settings so they became almost indistinguishable.

He also will show a series of “traveling portraits,” images he created after chance encounters with interesting people he met on the road.

The exhibit, featuring such different takes on the human form from the two artists, is thought provoking and cohesive in an unexpected way, Daly said.

“Somehow together they become this kind of interesting dialogue back and forth,” she said.

Daly Projects hosts a reception 5 to 9 p.m., Thursday, during the Contour Music Festival ArtWalk. The show also coincides with the recent release of Lavino’s book, “Prevailing Westerlies.” “Figures” hangs through June 27.

Daly Projects is located at 125 East Pearl St. The gallery is open 1 to 5 p.m., Wednesday through Saturday.



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