

modern dallas



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ROGER WINTER UPPER WEST SIDE+

AUG 26-SEPT 30
KIRK HOPPER FINE ART
1426 N. RIVERFRONT BLVD
DALLAS



*Water Tower and Moon, 2022,
oil on museum board, 36" x 36"*

David Collins

Beyond These Days

Valley House Gallery

by Todd Camplin



// signalman's sleep 2019 60 1/8 x 60 1/8 inches



// new day rising 2023 46 1/8 x 70 1/8 inches

Much of the 20th and 21st-century abstract art has been layered with symbolism. Hilma af Klint and Wassily Kandinsky employed spirituality rooted in the Theosophical Society. Many of the Abstract Expressionists used Carl Jung's exploration of the unconscious. Anselm Kiefer said her grid lines represented innocence. In the 21st century, personal symbolism has become a dominant theme in artists' works. David Collins alludes to personal memories in this body of work titled Beyond These Days, which is on display at Valley House Gallery. The paintings are abstract,

with hints of recognizable objects. Collins's recorded experiences are not so unique to be alienating. His memories are relatable to our shared memories of our own encounters with flight and architecture. Although Collins's artworks are abstract, I believe each artwork holds clues to unlock the imagery.

These works are formalist paintings. Collins is interested in line, form, color, and space. His images oscillate between flat and dimensional shapes. He has kept his



// green night 2023 54 1/8 x 38 1/8 inches

attachment to cubist/futurist forms for the last ten years. Collins's cubist reference is only a nod. These paintings are more like deconstructed objects and don't play by the cubist rules. The viewer is left with shards of shapes that could never reform. I mention Futurism because the content of airplanes and satellites referenced in Collins' paintings relates to the subject matter of those Italian masters. The futurists created



// sometimes the moon 2023 60 1/8 x 60 1/8 inches



// sometimes the sun 2023 54 1/8 x 38 1/8 inches

wild optimism for the technology. Collins's work feels less about optimism and more about stream-of-consciousness thoughts.

I reviewed David Collins's show at Valley House Gallery about ten years ago. His work still uses sharp lines. An invention of more painterly shapes has been mixed into some of the new work. Clear distinct images are obscured by these painterly undefined shapes. Simi-



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// for nothing is fixed 2019 46 1/8 x 70 1/8 inches

lar to the mind where we remember some things clearly and other memories are vague recollections. This type of painting represents memory as an abstract idea. Memories are Collins's symbolic project.

Green Night, a 54 x 38-inch acrylic painting on canvas hits you with all its green glory. Brushed with layers of paint, each part of the work builds upon the other. Loose brushwork contrasts with hard edge flat shapes. Then to throw the viewer off, he adds a few uses of illusion-

ary three-dimensional forms. Collins even creates a drop shadow effect over a small area. All this playful visual wizardry makes for a charged composition. His use of yellow placed across the surface helps to draw your eye around to discover parts you might have missed.

Satellites, a 54 x 38-inch acrylic painting on canvas instantly reminded me of Sputnik 1. This was the Soviet Union's satellite that helped launch the space race. In the image, Collins has one object similar to the Sputnik satel-



// the village 2022 42 x 42 inches



// on the mark 2017 46 1/8 x 70 1/8 inches

lite. Much of the surface is lightly brushed on like a stained Color Field painting. Round shapes populate the canvas among the hazy, clouded objects. I question if this work is a faded memory or lost history.

New Day Rising, is a 46 x 70-inch canvas work using acrylic paint with ink and charcoal drawing. This painting has the strongest references to airplanes. One particular shape made me think of a paper airplane. Triangle shapes, some similar to airplane wings, populate the canvas with sharp edges. His use of soft color tones down an image

that would normally read as aggressive. The charcoal lines give the work a blurred shadow effect.

These three paintings and many more in the show will capture you with formalism but keep you guessing with symbolism. You will be lost in Collins's memories while making your own. David Collins's exhibition is up through September 23, 2023, at Valley House Gallery and Sculpture Garden.

// valleyhouse

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