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INSIDETODAY

HCN'S GISH PICKS



Sarah's best for you and your kids.

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TOM TYNAN



Surviving home ownership.

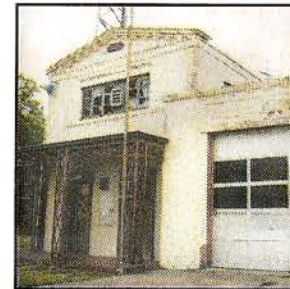
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Numero Cinco

The Bering and James Gallery hosts its "CINCO" event where artists create 5 new pieces.

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Station 27

The Denver Harbor fire station will be turned into a center for community use.

3AA



Classical Chinese

Portland's Chinese Garden an oasis of beauty and tranquility in the middle of a busy city.

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A big, hot, summer art exhibition – CINCO at Bering & James Gallery

By Virginia Billeaud Anderson
Contributing writer

Like holy days in a liturgical calendar, some Houston art exhibitions are seasonally fixed annual events. Take for example Lawndale's "Big Show" which occurs every summer. "Big Show's" booze-fueled opening night historically served as "the" riotous summer bash for the artsy crowd. Then Bering & James Gallery jacked with tradition.

A few years ago Bering & James owner Austin James decided Houston needed one more August exhibition. A "big, hot, summer art party," he called it. So he and partner Blakely Bering established CINCO, an annual show that opens a few days after "Big Show" closes. CINCO's opening reception quickly came to rival the raucous "Big Show."

"Three years ago," James said, "over 500 attended, Masraff's catered, we went through 200 bottles of wine, and the Fire Department almost shut us down."

B&J's 2008 CINCO opened last week with a Bacardi sponsored wingding and you shouldn't miss this exhibition. Why the title "CINCO?" The gallery asked 30 artists to each create five new works in order to present 150 paintings, photographs, and mixed media pieces, which can be viewed through Sept. 3.

John Jenkins uses acrylics in his mysterious "Sky Council," a loosely painted image of Sitting Bull surrounded by very cool abstract passages and cryptic markings that speak metaphorically about the history of the American West. Across the top is a frieze quoting Native American beading patterns, this continent's first cultural and artistic utterances. Jenkins created each colored "bead" with a brush handle.

Several deliciously weird motifs fill the composition. Stacked vertically are otherworldly hieroglyphs, the shape of which replicate architectural plan views of western American airport terminals. Equally perplexing are Nazca Plain like lines radiating from

"CINCO"

The art exhibit "Cinco" is on display at the Bering and James Gallery through Sept. 3. See www.beringandjames.com for more information.

Sitting Bull, which are actually jetliner wing designs. These symbols allude to gateways, human interaction, and historical continuity.

One senses regret here. It's as if something has been lost in the progression from indigenous peoples' dreams of flying with the gods to modern day construction of "gods" in which to fly.

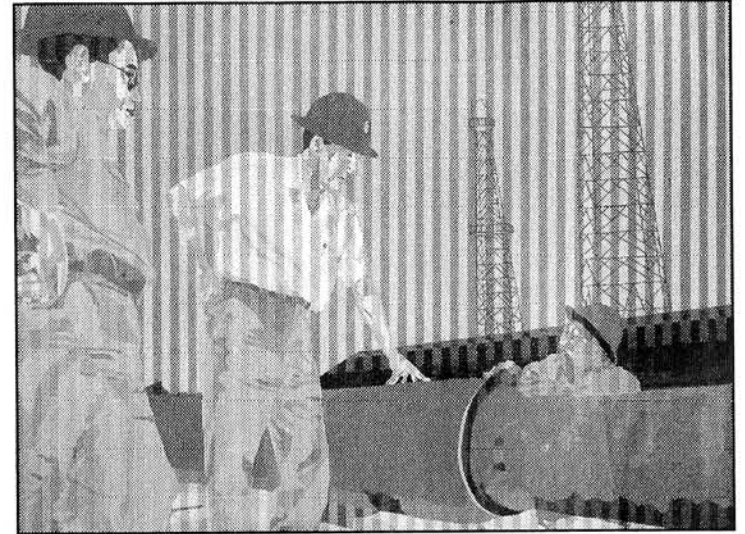
"Elusive and transient," Jenkins calls history. "Where does one history end and another begin?" he said. "Which culture dominates? How different are our dreams today than they were a thousand years ago?"

Pompeian red is dazzling. It's a shade that is not too orangey and not too bluish-purple. Encounter it on

Pompeian villa walls and it's difficult to forget. Peggy Port dominates her composition "Pompeii X," a Rothko inspired colorfield abstraction, with Pompeian red. Above engulfing red are elegant clouds of yellow, green and blue.

Though heavily applied, the painting's horizontal tiers seem to float. This is due to a palette knife technique that pulls paint horizontally across the canvas to expose color beneath. Where sand and other materials are mixed in, there is a sensuous irregularity to the impasto. You see in Port's work a hedonistic approach to color but with exquisite nuance.

An unmitigated figurative contrast to Port's disembodied horizontal language is Stanley Bermudez Moros' "Oil Pipe Inspection." Using pop art colors, Moros takes a biographical excursion. His father, represented in the painting, worked in the oil field for 50 years. The family left Venezuela before Chavez "liberated" the oil industry from imperialist corporate owners. Moros' rela-



Courtesy photo

"Oil Pipe Inspection" by Stanley Bermudez Moros. The image represents his father who worked in the oil and gas industry for 50 years.

tives and friends who remained lost their jobs when their President nationalized oil and gas.

While bowing to Warhol and Lichtenstein, Moros borrows vertical fracturing from Venezuelan kinetic artists Carlos Cruz-Diaz and Jesus Soto. (You can see their art at Sicardi Gallery.) He is also heavily influenced by Venezuelan folk art. Moros' graduate school research into

Venezuela's religious and folk art must have unearthed a treasure with which to inform his art.

It is delightful to find traditional painting among contemporary expression. Kevin Richert's "Roma Tomatoes" is a deftly articulated Old Master style still life. He is also exhibiting traditional landscapes. You will find something for everyone at Bering & James's CINCO.