

Tatana Kellner Exhibit to Open at Garrison Art Center

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News

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Since early civilization visual artists have depicted man's struggle to survive. Tapping into intuitive creativity and their personal aesthetic, artists have shared their interpretation of humanity's historic moments of joy, sorrow, rapture and despair.

A visceral and compelling oeuvre on the current human condition is the work by internationally known artist Tatana Kellner in her upcoming exhibit "Sideway Glances" at the Garrison Art Center in Garrison.

Kellner's work embodies the frailty of global governance perpetrating individual persecution.

"My thoughts are focused on the current political events and the rise of totalitarianism around the world," Kellner said about her work. "Collapse may be a normal phenomenon for civilizations, regardless of size and stage, but I feel that we learn from history and struggle against forgetting."

Kellner immigrated from communist Czechoslovakia to the U.S. in 1969 with her parents who were Holocaust survivors. Her inner gaze on the world triggers her vision as she contemplates a stressed and troubling world.

The hypnotic energy in Kellner's work is fueled by a confluence of painting, drawing and collage where rough surfaces give way to velvety rich colors and expressive brush strokes painted with a delicate hand. The work is a raw, visual poetry of angst that deftly pulls us in.

A lime green arm rests on the hip of a proud, faceless female figure in "Waiting," an acrylic on paper work. Opposite her is a blackened skull hanging upside down whose open mouth sends a silent scream of torment. Between swaths of lush ochres, lavenders and blues are scratchy collaged fragments claiming an inexplicable psychic connection between the two figures.

A man is dragged horizontally across the canvas by another man in "Involuntary Exit." Both figures are expressionless as they glance at ghost-like humans, packaged within boxed forms, blank, nameless personas that leave the stamp of those taken against their will.

"As I paint, I question and struggle how to channel my feelings of helplessness into a meaningful statement that would feed the soul," Kellner noted. "I want to scream but I don't think that's what we need right now."

In "Down and Out," (acrylic and charcoal on paper) a figure wears a white sneaker on one foot and a black shoe on the other, one hand is gloved in blue, the other in white. The asymmetry sets off an edgy background assemblage of a disjointed landscape, a place once alive but now muted. The cubed head bears the word "Down," an inescapable mindset.

Kellner's work prompts a gut response of despair that offers a new understanding of entrapment as a way to think beyond it to a point of hope. Her goal has been to channel those feelings of helplessness into her work, art that becomes a vehicle toward a more positive and meaningful outcome.

"We need new pathways and visions to allow us to breathe and find a way to move forward in our troubled and beautiful world," Kellner remarked. "That's what I strive for in my work, melding the daily troubles both far and near, with the absolute joy of welcoming the new day so full of possibilities with open eyes and heart."

Kellner's work has been exhibited in numerous venues across the United States, Canada and Europe in more than 50 solo exhibitions. Recently, her work was selected for inclusion in the Hunterdon Museum (Clinton, N.J.), Art Alive (Delhi, India), Pen & Brush Gallery (New York City), KIPNZ Gallery (Walton, N.Y.), Ringling School of Art (Sarasota, Fla.) and the Everson Museum (Syracuse), among many others. She is the recipient of numerous grants and awards from the Pollock Krasner Foundation, the Puffin Foundation, The Creative Climate Award, Photographer's Fund Award and New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowships.

Kellner is also a co-founder and artistic director emeritus of the Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, N.Y., a 50-year-old arts center for women. Kellner has been awarded fellowship residencies at The MacDowell, Yaddo, Banff Centre for the Arts, Artpark and several others.

"Sideway Glances" is a concurrent solo show with "Painting Out Loud," an exhibit of paintings by Stanford Kay. It opens this Saturday, Feb. 17 with an opening reception from 5 to 7 p.m. The show continues through Mar. 10 and is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Sunday.

The Garrison Art Center is located at 23 Garrison's Landing in Garrison. For more information, call 845-424-3960 or visit www.garrisonartcenter.org.



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Abby Luby

Abby is a local journalist who has reported on breaking news for more than 20 years. She currently covers community issues in The Examiner as a full-time reporter and has written for the paper since its inception in 2007. [Read more from Abby's editor-author bio here.](#) Read Abby's archived work here: <https://www.theexaminernews.com/author/ab-lub2019/>