

Artists to Watch



ELYSIAN LIGHT BY ROGER V THOMAS

Although Roger V Thomas works with fused glass, he also considers himself a painter. In *ELYSIAN LIGHT*, for example, he creates an intriguing illusion—the moody piece could easily deceive viewers into thinking the cypress trees and ethereal skies were created with watercolors. But peruse the work up close and in person, and it is clear that the painterly artwork is made of glass. Landscapes and scenes of beauty, often sprinkled with trees—birch, aspen, pine, and palm—are among Thomas' favorite subject matter. He theorizes that his deep love for the natural world stems from a reaction to growing up in the crowded metropolis of Los Angeles, CA. "My landscapes don't have people in them," he says pointedly of his kiln-formed glass works. In addition to landscapes, Thomas explores ►

Roger V Thomas

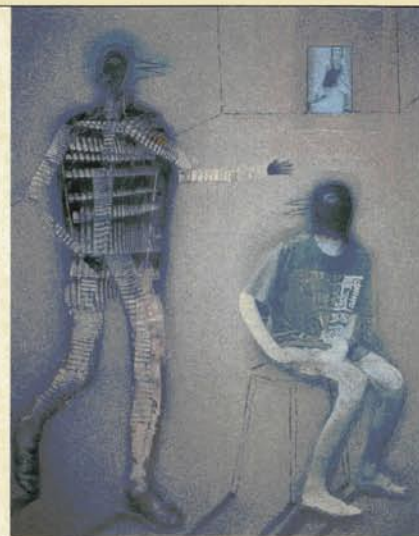
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Holly Roberts

New Mexico artist Holly Roberts' painted photographs are psychological dramas that explore relationships and the challenges of daily life. Most of the photographs feature her husband, daughters, friends, and animals, but often the figures are unrecognizable as Roberts cuts the images into collage elements and paints over them in oil to create thought-provoking scenes. For example, her *SINGING LESSON* depicts two children singing as a young girl observes the interaction from the background. What's interesting is that the singing children have bird heads, which the artist says felt natural as birds are born singers.

Roberts typically paints two days a week in her studio next to her house. "I'm not good in the morning," she says. "I get started around 2 p.m. and paint through to completion. I may finish in four hours, or I may finish in 12 hours." The important thing to know about her work, Roberts says, is that she has no idea what she will end up with when she starts each piece. "It's like ►



SINGING LESSON BY HOLLY ROBERTS



KAREN BY STACY PHILLIPS

Stacy Phillips

The ceramic and bronze figurative sculptures of Utah artist Stacy Phillips have a unique flare—they are adorned with colorful beaded skirts, handmade by the artist. She also creates other works based on the female form, such as her large-scale ceramic pots carved with floral patterns. "When you reference a pot, there's usually a belly, neck, and shoulders," she explains. "So there is a natural similarity to the human body."

Phillips always knew she wanted to be an artist, but her first job out of college was an advertising gig in Omaha, NE. "It's a scary thing to commit yourself to being an artist, and also I didn't know how," Phillips explains. She then moved to Park City, UT, and opened a gallery called The Flat Rabbit. After seven years of selling other artists' work, Phillips decided to focus solely on her own art. "I knew that I wanted to be a working artist," she says. "That was my goal."

Now Phillips exercises her creative talents full time and thrives on it. She ►

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Roger V Thomas *continued*
 subjects ranging from the man-made world of architecture to the underwater universe of Koi fish.

Thomas lives in Portland, OR, but travels frequently around the country and abroad to teach and show his work. In June, L'Attitude Gallery in Boston, MA, presents his recent fused-glass art in a one-man show. Thomas is also represented by Pismo Fine Art Glass, Aspen, CO; Brian Marki Fine Art, Portland, OR; Bella Vetri Gallery, Maui and Kapalua, HI; Vespermann Glass Studio, Atlanta, GA; and Kane Marie Fine Art Gallery, Virginia Beach, VA.

—Bonnie Gangelhoff

Holly Roberts *continued*

fishing," she explains. "Once you get your fish, then you can follow the line. For a long time I may not know what the painting's about, and then I'll *get* it, and it's just a matter of making the painting work." Roberts is represented by Parks Gallery, Taos, NM; Etherton Gallery, Tucson, AZ; LewAllen Contemporary, Santa Fe, NM; Catherine Edelman, Chicago, IL; and Photography Room, Grand Rapids, MI. —Julie Osterman

Stacy Phillips *continued*

finds inspiration for her work in nature, such as plant forms, as well as fashion and fabrics. "I think that there's humor and creativity in re-creating ways that we adorn our bodies," she says. A show of Phillips' new work opens October 16 at Coda Gallery in New York, NY. She is also represented by the gallery's Park City, UT, and Palm Desert, CA, locations. —Julie Osterman