

Critic's View: Art Southampton July 28, 2013

The contemporary art world tends toward ostentation and hubris, the actual art getting lost in an event-driven scene, becoming a pawn in a game of ego-driven, self-promoting buying and selling that has no written rules.

Art fairs in particular have become loci for this activity. The press releases and coverage of these shows seem more a frivolous who's who of the supposed social and cultural elite than true recognition of the talent, dedication, and work (inspiration/perspiration) poured into creating art and presenting it in a manner that will get it seen and sold well.

Art Southampton closes the nascent Hamptons art fair season with a show that is double the size of its first edition and poised to become 'the' fair, one that balances established modern masters and 'blue chip' artworks with recognized contemporary artists and emergent, cutting edge talents. It has all the pomp and circumstance to be expected these days, but manages also to present an overall visually consistent (with a few exceptions) show.

At **Abmeyer+Wood Fine Art** (Seattle) I found five works by New York City-based artist **Ford Crull**. He is under-recognized, the dealer opined, even if he has work in prominent public collections like the Metropolitan Museum and the National Gallery. *New Multiculturalism* (2012) is among three large paintings exhibited, while two small works, one on paper and an earlier canvas, are of equal interest for the mark-making and symbolist content, including text, that the artist is known for, and which he leaves up to the viewer to decipher and interpret. Not unlike Borges, Crull delves into an ambiguously figurative world of dream and memory.

by Esperanza Leon



"New Multiculturalism" by Ford Crull. Oil, enamel, and oil stick on canvas, 60 x 48 inches.
Courtesy of Abmeyer+Wood Fine Art.