

JOHANNA HARMON | ROMUALDO LOCATELLI | MARIA KREYN | BRITISH COUNTRY HOUSES

FINE ART CONNOISSEUR

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ARTISTS & GALLERIES



Alyssa Monks (b. 1978), *Watch the Only Way Out Disappear*, 2021, oil on linen, 54 x 54 in.

New York City
forumgallery.com
 through January 8

On view at Forum Gallery are 16 figurative paintings made during the pandemic by the Brooklyn-based artist Alyssa Monks. They sustain her renowned interest in expressively painted, psychologically charged portrayals of women posed behind transparent surfaces such as glass and plastic, but now Monks has turned from models to herself as the central subject. The works range widely in size, from 12 x 18 inches to 62 x 90 inches, most conveying a mood of anxiety that belies the exhibition's ironic title, *It's All Under Control*.

Monks writes, "At times, the recent global and national devastation, division, and so many disappointments felt like a surreal projection of my own mental states in the isolation of the last 18 months. I began to explore the human reliance on control and predictability, and how our deepest suffering comes from our attachment to security, virtue, identity, and the logic of cause and effect. The glass barrier in these paintings between subject and viewer is clouded with vapor that obscures and abstracts the subject. This barrier underlines the personal and community-wide preoccupation with virus-laden respiratory droplets and the isolation it creates. Some works are more ambiguous than others, amplifying the state of disorientation in the face of terrifying unfamiliarity."

As expected, remarkable works are now emerging from artists' studios after almost two years of relative confinement. Monks's are surely among the most compelling.

San Diego
sparksgallery.com
 through January 9

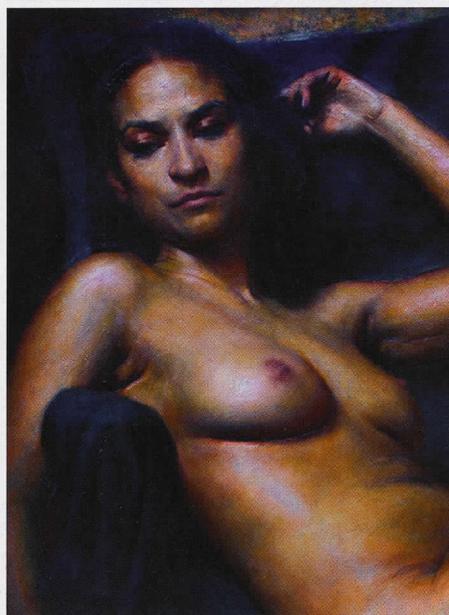
Sparks Gallery is presenting *Oasis*, an exhibition of recent works by the Southern California artist Perry Vásquez (b. 1959). At its heart is a powerful series of paintings of palm trees, which are ubiquitous in his region and normally symbolize nourishment, shelter, and bounty. Instead, the artist has framed their regal forms in peculiar or dire scenarios,



Perry Vásquez (b. 1959), *Landscape 3/3*, 2021, oil on canvas, 96 1/2 x 28 1/2 in.

swaying violently, often ablaze, or perhaps morphed into cell towers that only look like trees.

Vásquez explains, "I recall being shaken the first time I saw a burning palm tree. My response was to investigate the meaning of this phenomenon through painting and to work through my feelings of awe and dread.... Our species can choose to protect and nurture life on our planet or we can waste it. The choice is ours."



Brandon Soloff (b. 1973), *Cassandra*, 2016, oil on canvas, 31 x 25 in.

New York City
salmagundi.org
 January 10-28

The Salmagundi Club is opening 2022 with *The New York Figurative Show*, highlighting the human form in all its permutations. Presenting an array of works in various media, including drawings, paintings, photographs, and sculpture, this display explores the range of figurative practices thriving in artists' studios today.

The competition was open to both Salmagundi members and non-members working worldwide, be they established or emerging. The selections were made by members of the club's art committee in collaboration with guest adviser Patricia Watwood. The awards jurors will be artists Max Ginsburg and Colleen Barry, who will present a \$4,000 first prize, a \$1,500 second prize, a \$750 third prize, and a \$500 award from Vanessa Rothe Fine Art (Laguna Beach). A ticketed panel discussion involving Colleen Barry, Vanessa Rothe, Patricia Watwood, and others will occur on January 14.

MUSEUMS



Samuel L. Margolies (1897-1974), *Man's Canyons*, 1936, etching and aquatint on paper, 11 7/8 x 8 13/16 in., The Wolfsonian-Florida International University, Mitchell Wolfson, Jr. Collection, 83.4.32

Miami Beach
wolfsonian.org
 through April 24

On view at the Wolfsonian, part of Florida International University, is the intriguing exhibition *Aerial Vision*. It features more than 100 paintings, prints, drawings, design objects, magazine covers, and other items — drawn primarily from the museum's rich collection — that reveal how airplanes, skyscrapers, elevators, and other early 20th-century inventions allowed mankind to gaze up, look down, and move with speed to new heights. These technological advances forever changed the way we humans see the world around us.

The resulting imagery ranges from the mundane (e.g., window washing scenes) to the reverent ("the cult of the airplane pilot"), and from the breathtaking (bird's-eye views of cities) to the fantastical (skyscraper airports). These themes interested people all over the world, from the Italian Futurists to the designers of Japanese aviation-themed board games. Their reactions varied, too, from a sense of awe, power, or privilege to anxiety and fear — perhaps of aerial bombardment, or maybe of the long shadows cast on city streets by skyscrapers towering above them.

Today we take many of these ideas for granted, but a century ago, it was all new and being worked out in art and design. Miami is an ideal city to consider these themes, given its history as an aviation center connecting the U.S. and Latin America.

Worcester, Massachusetts
worcesterart.org
 through March 13

The Worcester Art Museum is the first museum to present a new exhibition of masterworks, *Love Stories from the National Portrait Gallery, London*, which will then visit other U.S. cities. Home to the world's most extensive