Showoffs

HUNGERING FOR DINNER THEATER? CAFE NORDO AND TEATRO ZINZANNI DISH OUT NEW PRODUCTIONS>3

STAND-UP COMEDIAN
NORM MACDONALD
THURS | NOVEMBER 17 | 7:30 PM

TICKETS - SNOCASINO.COM AND THE SNOQUALMIE CASINO BOX OFFICE

SNOQUALMIE CASINO
SEATTLE'S CLOSEST CASINO
Artist’s ‘hybrid photography’ reveals in essences, enigmas

By MICHAEL UPCHURCH Special to The Seattle Times

Buildings that don’t behave like buildings. Water that doesn’t behave like water. Trees that don’t behave like trees. . . .

The self-described "hybrid photography" of Amir Zaki nails the essence of the subjects he captures on camera while also making them cryptic or confounding. Rules of perspective and spatial logic are frequently and ingeniously tossed aside. It's easy to say, "That’s a house" or "That's the ocean." But getting a handle on where the horizon is or which way is up or down is often impossible.

James Harris Gallery has represented the Southern California photographer since the gallery first opened in 1999, and this Zaki retrospective is a potent reminder of how unusual an artist he is.

Zaki likes to group his works into series, 10 of which are sampled in the show. Most recent is "Seeking Clarity," represented by two large-scale ultrachrome archival photographs.

While it's obvious that the spectacles they depict have something to do with the ocean, their dynamism defies the laws of probability. "Sliver 03" shows crashing breakers exploding upward to preposterous heights and leaves you uncertain whether you're viewing them from a cliff-top perch or at beach level. "Sliver 04"—all rolling surface—provides even fewer points of reference. The longer you look at it, the less certain you are whether it's even water that you're seeing. It could be vertiginous scrubland. It could even be lint viewed through a microscope.

Zaki's sense of the ocean's seemingly infinite expanse and changeability is never in doubt, even if the specifics of what you're seeing remain elusive.

Two other series, "Relics" and "Spring Through Winter," show Zaki at his best. "Untitled (Tower 46X)" and "Untitled (Tower 51),"

See > ZAKI, 24

Amir Zaki's photography, now at James Harris Gallery, includes "Sliver 03."

One of the photos in the series "Spring Through Winter," by Amir Zaki.
< Zaki
FROM 23

from “Relics,” capture sights that at first glance seem as though they ought to make sense. They’re tilted structures mounted on posts, seen against vast swaths of sky. Maybe a birdhouse or a mailbox? Maybe a lifeguard perch? The longer you look at them, though, the less they add up—not just in terms of what they are, but in the logic of their construction. Their odd angles and recesses suggest Escheresque possibilities.

“Spring Through Winter” includes two large-scale images of houses cantilevered out over hillsides. Zaki’s digital manipulations remove the support beams from the structures, but there’s something else going on, too. He some-how makes precipitous hillsides read like flat terrain, so the houses seem to reappear from the ground. At the angle of sinking ships just moments before they go under. The monumental buildings’ vulnerability in this seismically active landscape is driven home.

A few non-photographic works are part of the show. His series “A Question Marks the Spot” includes two wall-hung sculptures, “Symbol Combo (Yellow)” and “Symbol Combo (Dark Olive),” made of polyurethane resin and Dutch enamel. Both lean toward the figurative while keeping their toes in abstract territory. They may suggest the script of an exotic alphabet or the silhouettes and cutouts of some specific object (a sailing ship? a bicycle wheel?), but they guard their secrets.

In a compilation of videos accompanying the show, Zaki brings inanimate objects to acrobatic life (“Eleven Minus One”) or digitally squeezes and expands cloud shapes with protein abandon while a narrator on the soundtrack fumbles to identify what he’s seeing (“Uncertainty”). Wherever he turns his attention, Zaki’s eye-befuddling wizardry takes you deep below the surface.

Michael Uphich
www.michaelupchurchauthor.com

< Nightlife
FROM 22

Jazz
CHERRY POPPIN’ DADDIES 7:30 p.m. Dimittiou’s Jazz Alley; $31.50.
ERIN MCKEOWN, THE CABIN PROJECT 7 p.m. The Royal Room; $15-$17.
FRED HOLDMAN’S SONANDO 8 p.m. Tula’s Restaurant and Jazz Club; $10.
R. VOS AND THE BIG BOSS BAND, CASEY MACGILL 5:30 p.m. 9 p.m. Vito’s.

Rock/Pop
ADEMA, GALAXY, JOHN MAHAFEEY 7 p.m. Studio Seven; $13-$15.
ALAN DOYLE 8 p.m. The Tractor; $25.
BACK BAR: LIZZY ROSE, ARLO INDIgo, EASTERN SOUVENIRS 6:30 p.m. The Crocodile; $7.

< Visual-art picks
Four exhibitions with a nature theme

‘Anthropomorphic Portraits’
Painter Patrick Locicero’s works feature images of birds in the tradition of Audubon paintings, with a twist. He paints an Arctic goose with a mansion perched on its head. Another bird sports a tail that depicts the history of the earth through portraiture of figures from music, science, art and literature.
“The Anthropomorphic Traits” is now showing through Nov. 27 at Patricia Rovzar Gallery, Seattle (rovzargallery.com).

‘Digital Canvas’
Richard Morhous uses color and form to create digital images of nature in his current exhibit, “Digital Canvas.” Created with an iPad, Morhous’s archival pigment prints feature bold colors of natural scenes born from a digital brush. “Digital Canvases” is on display now through Nov. 26 at Harris Harvey Gallery, Seattle (harrisharveygallery.com).

‘Tide Pools and Other Paintings’
Drawing on influences from Montana, Wyoming and Hawaii, artist Mike Moran paints and sculpts the colors of earth, rock and water using oil on canvas and clay and concrete. “Tide Pools and Other Paintings” is on display now through Nov. 26 at Gallery IMA, 123 S. Jackson St., Seattle (galleryima.com).

Visual-arts picks
Four exhibitions with a nature theme

‘Anthropomorphic Portraits’
Painter Patrick Locicero’s works feature images of birds in the tradition of Audubon paintings, with a twist. He paints an Arctic goose with a mansion perched on its head. Another bird sports a tail that depicts the history of the earth through portraiture of figures from music, science, art and literature.
“The Anthropomorphic Traits” is now showing through Nov. 27 at Patricia Rovzar Gallery, Seattle (rovzargallery.com).

‘Digital Canvas’
Richard Morhous uses color and form to create digital images of nature in his current exhibit, “Digital Canvas.” Created with an iPad, Morhous’s archival pigment prints feature bold colors of natural scenes born from a digital brush. “Digital Canvases” is on display now through Nov. 26 at Harris Harvey Gallery, Seattle (harrisharveygallery.com).

‘Tide Pools and Other Paintings’
Drawing on influences from Montana, Wyoming and Hawaii, artist Mike Moran paints and sculpts the colors of earth, rock and water using oil on canvas and clay and concrete. “Tide Pools and Other Paintings” is on display now through Nov. 26 at Gallery IMA, 123 S. Jackson St., Seattle (galleryima.com).

Land- and seascape paintings
Painter Fred Holcomb’s large-scale land- and seascape paintings depict scenes of the wide-open West. Some are blurry—as if you’re seeing them through the window of a moving vehicle—others show the calm, cool water of a serene lakeside setting. Holcomb’s work is on display now through Nov. 26 at Linda Hodges Gallery, Seattle (lindahodgesgallery.com).

Purchase Tickets Now:
BenaroyaHall.org
206.215.4747

See > NIGHTLIFE, 25