GEORGE ADAMS GALLERY

Amer Kobaslija

In Passing

December 9 – January 29, 2022

We are pleased to announce "In Passing," Amer Kobaslija's eighth solo exhibition with the gallery since 2006. The exhibition, featuring paintings ranging in scale from three inches to seven feet, expands on his series first shown at the gallery in 2019, of intimate portraits set in the landscape of Central Florida. These new paintings, dating from the past year and a half, reflect a shift in Kobaslija's perspective stemming from his experience under lockdown. In many cases, the central figures have been replaced: by scarecrows, costumed trick-or-treaters, circus and street performers and even his daughter's toys.

Many of these images derive from Kobaslija's impression of scenes he witnessed while driving through his neighborhood in Jacksonville, or to and from Orlando. Rather than the allegorical intensity of the earlier portraits, these paintings have a level of ambiguity, a reflection of these fleeting encounters, or are an amalgamation of successive viewings. In one sense these are an anthology of character studies, cataloguing the street-scape and its inhabitants. His subjects range from concretely human to unexpectedly anthropomorphic, yet more often the two are conflated. Scarecrows in particular are a recurring theme: they appear on lawns and in empty lots as jolly seasonal decorations or more foreboding deterrents. In 'Pumpkin Heads' (2021), one could be forgiven for mistaking two young girls as scarecrows themselves, until realizing their arms and hands are flesh, not straw.

The isolation and upheavals of the past eighteen months have pushed Kobaslija to "[engage] in a conversation with the self and society." In the earliest works in the exhibition, his daughter's toys are posed on the windowsill of his studio, the glass behind them a transparent barrier to the distant city outside. Enlarged to human proportions, as in 'Still Life with Nails and Fly' (2021), they become both humorous and grotesque, their plastic features overwhelmed by the complexity of the paint. These 'Still Life' paintings, though in one sense academic in nature, in the context of the pandemic are transformed into commentary on our vulnerability. Similarly, while not inherently political, works such as 'Ventriloquist, Alafaya Road;' 'Dancing Elephant,' and 'Street Musicians' (all 2020) inevitably call to mind a circus-like atmosphere, though perhaps of the media sort.

Kobaslija's paintings have always been grounded in observation. He considers the act of painting an intense, visual exploration of the spaces and places he inhabits, noting that he tries "to memorize" the scene as much as he can. Indeed, one of the most striking features of these paintings is the imagined landscape, an endlessly receding vision of the Florida flatlands, which constitute much of the state. Through his use of a skewed perspective - the subject looms large while the background falls away - he creates an expansive yet sparsely populated environment. Scale is also a major aspect of how Kobaslija works, both in the foregrounding of his subjects and the physical scale of the paintings themselves. Considering the richness and energy in his brushwork, the size of the painting also dictates the volume of detail he can pack into every stroke. Beginning with the smallest studies, up to the large canvases, as he develops each image, their complexity grows, building out the verisimilitude of the scene.

G E O R G E A D A M S G A L L E R Y

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Amer Kobaslija Holiday Season, Kissimmee, 2021 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 63 x 55 inches

AKop 306

Amer Kobaslija Drying Line, 2020 Oil on aluminum 18 x 15 inches

AKop 294

Amer Kobaslija *Vinyl Doll*, 2020 Oil on aluminum 18 x 15 inches

AKop 316

Amer Kobaslija Scarecrow with Ducks, 2021 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 81 x 61 inches

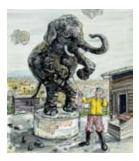












Amer Kobaslija *Trick or Treat*, 2020 Oil on aluminum 18 x 15 1/8 inches

АКор 302

Amer Kobaslija Yellow Dress, 2020 Oil on aluminum 15 x 17 inches

AKop 319

Amer Kobaslija Suburbia, Blue Skies, 2021 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 60 x 70 inches

AKop 311

Amer Kobaslija Pumpkin Heads, 2021 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 71 x 60 inches

AKop 307

Amer Kobaslija Juggler, Lake Eola, 2020 Oil on aluminum 21 x 15 inches

AKop 320

Amer Kobaslija Dancing Elephant, 2020 Oil on aluminum 17 x 15 inches













Amer Kobaslija *Ventriloquist, Alafaya Road,* 2020 Oil on aluminum 17 x 15 inches

AKop 315

Amer Kobaslija Bride, Lake Eustis, 2020 Oil on aluminum 15 x 18 inches

AKop 321

Amer Kobaslija Street Musicians, 2020 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 77 x 65 inches

AKop 303

Amer Kobaslija Man with Dog, 2020 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 80 x 66 inches

AKop 304

Amer Kobaslija Pinocchio, Yellow Skies, 2020 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 77 x 66 inches

AKop 305

Amer Kobaslija Suburban Landscape, Peeing Dog, 2021 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 56 x 65 inches













Amer Kobaslija Still Life with Nails and Fly, 2021 Oil on unstretched canvas with grommets 75 x 66 inches

AKop 309

Amer Kobaslija Window View, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/2 inches

AKop 323

Amer Kobaslija *Vinyl Doll*, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/4 inches

AKop 322

Amer Kobaslija Halloween Swing, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/4 inches

AKop 330

Amer Kobaslija Still Life with Nails and Fly, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/2 inches

AKop 333

Amer Kobaslija Still Life, Storm Passing, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/2 inches











Amer Kobaslija Pumpkin Heads, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/2 inches

АКор 326

Amer Kobaslija Training Grounds, Orlando, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 5/8 inches

AKop 331

Amer Kobaslija Scarecrow with Ducks, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 inches

AKop 325

Amer Kobaslija Suburban Landscape, Peeing Dog, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/2 inches

AKop 329

Amer Kobaslija Pinocchio, Yellow Skies, 2020 Oil on plexiglass 4 x 3 1/4 inches