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BAU urges viewers to 'Go West'

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While Beacon's Go North Gallery has been but a pleasant memory since it shut its doors in 2009, the artists who ran the space, Greg Slick and Karlos Carcamo, will be exhibiting their work together at the BAU Gallery in the show "Go West," on display beginning Saturday, Jan. 14.



Go West will run through Feb. 5 at 161 Main Street in Beacon. An opening reception will be held Jan. 14 from 6 to 9 p.m. The gallery is open Saturday and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

Slick is a multimedia artist, but the upcoming gallery will focus on his abstract paintings.

"I've been working in abstraction for many years now," said Slick. "Basically what I do is use techniques that have been in use since probably the late '50s."

Slick says that he tapes off the edges of his paintings so that he gets "very crisp, clean lines."

"[My style] is very much based in other traditions as well, so it's making reference to street art, it's referencing Chinese painting, as well as north west pacific American painting," he said.

This abstract technique evolved, in part, from a study Slick did of Chinese painting and calligraphy several years ago.

“I’ve always been interested in the ideas behind Chinese painting aesthetics. Ideas of using balance, light and dark. I wanted to apply those principals to western painting. But I didn’t want to be a western artist imitating Chinese art; I wanted to make that into my own idiom,” Slick said.

While studying American art from the 1950s, Slick discovered a connection between that and the Chinese painting techniques he had studied. Finally, he had found the tools he needed to create the personal idiom he craved.

Slick says he feels a deep connection to nature and his unique style reflects that.

“I’m attracted to this kind of art because it looks at nature in a very honest way. It doesn’t hide behind any smokescreens. It is abstract, but nonetheless, it does represent an idea of nature,” he said. “But also I’m very sensitive to what I see on the street in New York City and what I’ve seen in LA and San Francisco. I notice the way that street artists construct their compositions and the kinds of colors they use, so I’m very aware of those textures as well.”

In many ways parallel to Slick’s style, Carcamo takes a multi-discipline approach to art that incorporates a broad spectrum of cultural references.

“The art that Karlos Carcamo makes is very interesting because he is also looking at street art and modernism,” said Slick. “He has similar influences to mine, but his approach is different. Our art happens to complement each other.”

Go West could be seen as the group show that never happened when Carcamo and Slick were at the helm of the Go North Gallery. Slick said he and Carcamo (and a third, less involved partner named Joe Millar) preferred to give other artists time in spotlight.

“We wanted to curate art and use the art of other artists to create a statement,” he said. “We never showed our own art at that gallery. But rather, we wanted to give other artists a chance to show new work and come up with interesting themes.

“We wanted to maintain objectivity and we felt that galleries that [displayed their owner's work] were... very well represented in the Hudson Valley already.”

Slick and Carcamo ended their Go North partnership because they felt it was interfering with their own studio time. However, the duo still curates together, including a show at the Dorsky Museum last year. Both men have exhibited extensively, including recent, separate shows in Manhattan, but this is the first time they will be displaying work in the same show.

“I think it’s a real honor to have a show at the BAU Gallery,” said Slick.

Joining the Go North artists is Beaconite Eleanor White, whose work will be on display in the BAU back gallery. White will be exhibiting works from her “Playing Card Drawings” series. The pieces in this series are made by either drawing on playing cards or scratching off areas of the cards to create a distinct effect.

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