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At Dallas' Cris Worley Fine Arts, dreamlike landscapes share space with femme fatale works

Celia Eberle's eerie vistas and William Cannings' pop-tinged steel sculptures enrich one another in a quietly resonant curatorial match.



"Encounter" by Dan Jian

Imagining a world in which reality and imagination flow together, Dan Jian's show at Cris Worley Fine Arts presents eighteen captivating works of liquid graphite, watercolor, cut-outs and metal leaf, all drawn on soft, absorbent Xuan paper.

Jian, who was born in the city of Lichuan, in the mountainous Hubei province of China, and is now based in Fort Worth, created the works during a recent residency in Tuscany, Italy. Combining observations of the outer world with visions from the inner world of the mind, the landscape views are peppered with architecture, regional flora, mythical fauna and classical statuary, among other things. The artist has described the creative process as a "Frankenstein-like" effort to bring a creature of disparate parts to life.

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In the adjacent room, Garland-born, Houston-based Kelli Vance shows nine oil paintings that revisit the archetypical femme fatale. To set up her compositions, Vance carefully constructs intricate arrangements of costumes, props and sets, sourcing vintage clothing, opera gloves, jewelry and wigs to create a lavish theatrical spectacle. Then, acting as her own director and model, Cindy Sherman-style, she uses a remote shutter release to create dozens of photographic exposures from which to build a painting. The paintings are carefully cropped and framed to exclude their subjects' faces and eyes, leaving viewers to infer their meaning from the pointed positioning of their hands and bodies. The result is a sense of suspense worthy of David Lynch.



"The Giver" by Kelli Vance

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— BENJAMIN LIMA