

Miami – Critics' Picks

Shinique Smith

DAVID CASTILLO GALLERY
2234 NW 2nd Avenue
May 17-July 6

The title of New York-based Shinique Smith's exhibition "Kaleidoscopic" aptly describes her paintings, in which colorful acrylic flourishes often burst forth dramatically from a smaller swirl of fabrics, found objects, and paper. In the canvas-over-wood panel *Tiny Dancer* (all works cited 2013), for instance, pastel curvilinear lines seem to emerge from a cluster of boldly colored, patterned textiles and even a Middle Eastern slipper, which has the face of a blue-skinned deity silk-screened on fabric tucked inside. Particularly striking is the manner in which Smith employs various collage elements in her work—such as a flattened coffee-cup lid in *Seven Moons*, a nylon wing from a child's costume in *Fields of Joy*, and crushed aluminum cans in both the latter and *By the Light*. These materials, battered and compressed, simultaneously function as two-dimensional, trompe-l'oeil representations of the objects they once were, and dematerialize into abstractions—forms, shapes, and colors.



Shinique Smith, *Fields of Joy*, 2013, acrylic, fabric, and paper collage on canvas over panel, 84 x 84".

Smith's sculptural assemblages are also on view. *Moon Blossom*, constructed of fiberfill and tightly wrapped in purple fabric embellished with bands of sequins, hangs from the ceiling by a piece of rope so that it is out of arm's reach. Stuffed clothing peeks out from several openings of the assemblage, which appears ready to burst at any moment. *Mosaic*, a bulging, black-and-white zigzag-patterned knit fabric sack, also precariously hangs from the ceiling by a rope. A ribbon dangling down from the assemblage to the floor seems to tempt the viewer to pull on it and reveal the bag's contents. Overall, order and chaos are held in check in both the paintings and sculptures. Moreover, in the same way that the tension between the material and immaterial is held taut in the paintings, potential and kinetic energy are carefully balanced in the sculptures.

-Alpesh Kantilal Patel