

Shows to keep in mind while touring the galleries and soaking up the scenery

Alysia Duckler Gallery: The idea of Julia Stoops' art has often been more enjoyable than the reality. The Portland artist's paintings always exude intelligence and are fine examples of the time-honored tradition of craftsmanship embraced by so many Northwest artists.

But at times they've also seemed passionless endeavors. Stoops' new work suggests greater complexity and ambition than ever before — they're both abstract and realistic, figurative and text-based, and they're largely inspired by a novel the artist is working on. Let's see if her new paintings are like overstuffed story lines or visual poetry that effortlessly weaves its many-layered plots. (1236 N.W. Hoyt St.)

Blackfish Gallery: C.E. Minchin usually molds and transforms materials into sculptural artworks. But with her new interactive performance, "That Word Which Is Time," Minchin actually becomes the sculpted material while giving a big bearhug to Father Time. The middle-aged Minchin will metamorphose to more than 100 years old in an hour with the help of a crew of makeup and hair stylists. Minchin will begin the performance with smooth skin and straight posture but after a barrage of latex and makeup will end the evening bent over a cane and sporting a maze of wrinkles and crow's feet.

For those who miss this strange happening, photos of the performance taken by photographer Jeff Bizzell, along with the show's preparatory materials, will be on view at the gallery the remainder of the month. (420 N.W. Ninth Ave.)

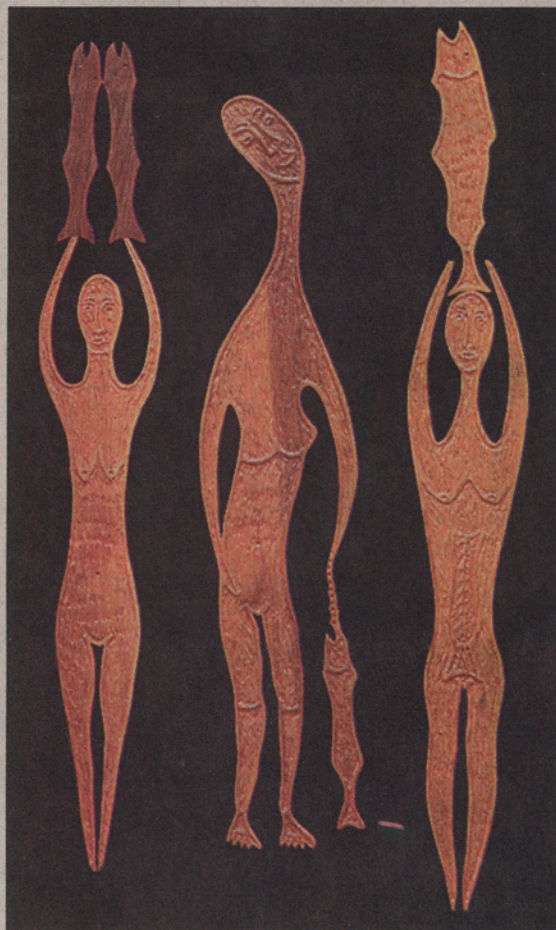
Butters Gallery: The art world is no different from the high-tech world. It's a business. Take a look at the recent closing of the tony Savage (which is planned to reopen in a new space in Southeast

Portland in early September) as an example of the art world's economic Darwinism.

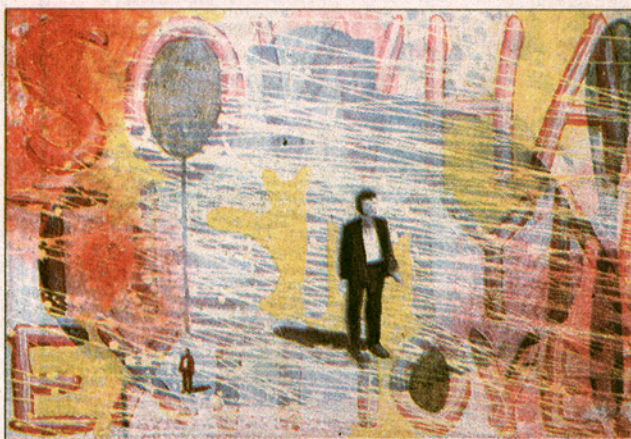
The Butters Gallery has survived for 15 years, thanks in part to a business formula that relies equally on marketable regional and East Coast artists. The family-owned art dealership celebrates its 15th anniversary with a show by Michael Hoskins, whose paintings are influenced by both the Abstract Expressionism of Robert Motherwell and the Neo-Plasticism of Piet Mondrian. Hoskins is a fitting choice for the occasion: He was the first artist given a solo exhibit by the gallery. (520 N.W. Fifth Ave.)

Froelick Gallery: Utah-based Brian Kershnik's tasteful paintings are like warm, glossy feelings more from the heart than the mind. But to dismiss his popular, tenderly observed tales of domesticity and human relationships as mere saccharine postcards would be rash criticism. Kershnik also paints with economy and efficiency, if not dynamism, and infuses his simple figures and warm colors with enough humor and whimsy to dilute the artist's penchant for high-calorie sentimentalizing. (817 S.W. Second Ave.)

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ABOVE: The acclaimed artist John Hoover makes sculptures inspired by his Native-American heritage.



LEFT: The heady Julia Stoops offers literary paintings at the Alysia Duckler Gallery this month.