



MUSONIUM GALLERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tampa, FL, January 6, 2023 – Musonium Gallery to open inaugural group exhibition, *Initiation*, showcasing over forty original artworks by twenty-one artists at their permanent location.



*What could be better than expressing
so many things through art,
symbolizing the echo of human
nature, distortion and motivation
through time.*

- Darwin Leon

Darwin Leon, *The Rubenesque Paradox*
36"x36" Oil on Canvas ©Darwin Leon Fine Art

Musonium Gallery is proud to present *Initiation*, an inaugural group exhibition featuring a sensational selection of national and international contemporary artists. It is with honor to unveil the gallery's four exhibition spaces in a former original *Bank of Tampa* branch building constructed in the 90's. The stunning mid-century modern architecture of the premise was explicitly preserved, but given a new identity through added textures and color. The central atrium in the heart of the building, once a glowing white portal with views of the sun, now looms as a perpetual nights sky to create a pleasantly inviting ambiance that enhances the art viewing experience. With luxurious custom natural granite flooring throughout, along with exceptional lighting systems in all four exhibition spaces, a sense of grandeur is sure to ensue all who visit. The 5,100 sq. ft. establishment truly highlights the full artistic ventures of all involved with its classic museum qualities and prodigious presentation.

Works showcased in this exhibition hail from all across the world including: Spain, Italy, Japan, China, Phillipines, Cuba, France, England and the United States. With a plethora of diverse styles, varying techniques and mediums, *Initiation* brings together nuances of cultural influences, personal revelations, and fantastical surreal images in the form of 2D and 3D artworks. Being the first of its kind in the Tampa Bay Area, Musonium Gallery is honored to be presenting and introducing such talent in an increasingly vibrant and growing art scene on the Gulf Coast of Florida. Viewers and art enthusiasts visiting the exhibition can expect to be propelled into alternative realities, visions of unparalleled imagination, and curious juxtapositions of radical exploration and intimate investigations into the minds behind the artworks. Join us for a relentlessly original inception full of eccentricity and elegant materializations that are sure to transport all to an alluring new world of artistic opportunities.

Participating Artists

Carrie Ann Baade, Jasmine Becket-Griffith, Froilan Calayag, Catharses, Yoko d'Holbachie, Salvatore Dangelo, Sheri DeBow, Bob Doucette, Michael Banks (Sugar Fueled), Mark Garro, Encarni Diaz (Ginger), Arturo Garcia de las Heras, Franc Kaiser, Darwin Leon, Alexandra Manukyan, Mark Mitchell, Enrique Alfonso Rodríguez, Tim Roosen, Liba Waring Stambolion, Deirdre Sullivan-Beeman, David van Gough



Tim Roosen, *Leonore* (Left), 92x43x27 cm & *Cleo* (Right) 82x33x25 cm Steel, Copper & Wrought Iron
©Tim Roosen



Franc Kaiser, *Sepia*, 120x85 cm
Acrylic on Board
©Franc Kaiser

The artists featured in *Initiation* prioritize traditional means like welding metal, sculpting with clay, painting with acrylics and oils, as well as egg tempera to create their artworks. With each artist specializing in a unique medium, this exhibition vows to display how classic techniques used over the course of many centuries continue to be adopted by artists to create contemporary art within the modern world. The elegant, yet mysterious sculptures *Cleo* and *Leonore* by Tim Roosen, feature copper eyes with elaborate forged metal hair as well as welded elements creating a satisfyingly streamline appearance. Darwin Leon's *The Rubenesque Paradox* (inspired by Peter Paul Rubens' *The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus*) and Bob Doucette's *Musette Takes The Swing* (inspired by Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *The Swing*) channel the old masters while still bringing uniquely contemporary flair to the forefront. Alexandra Manukyan's *Through the Heart of Grace* depicts “a living embodiment of elegance and fortitude” in a magical scene filled with graceful movement, where “the very thing that takes our breath away is the air that we breathe”.

Mark Mitchell's *The Daily Grind* and Arturo Garcia de las Heras' *People At Night* explore notions of every day life, where the habitual and mundane characteristics of human behavior are playfully interpreted. In Franc Kaiser's surreal painting *Pelagica*, a majestic hybridized feminine sphinx drifts throughout the dark vastness of the open sea while encountering curious lifeforms. Deirdre Sullivan-Beeman's *The Cat* and Ginger's *Don't grow up, It's a trap* also explore the surreal, where feline and feminine energies align to create metaphorical depictions of women's empowerment. As the title suggests, *Initiation* celebrates the inception of Musonium, the gallery's ambitious endeavors ahead, and the induction of numerous first time Tampa exhibitors as well as challenging local art enthusiasts' perceptions of contemporary art.

About Musonium Gallery

Established in 2022, Musonium Gallery is the Florida Gulf Coast's premier art gallery situated within the booming Tampa Bay Area with a clear focus on exhibiting and promoting compelling artworks from exceptional contemporary artists. Musonium exists as an institution within the art world's traditional art sectors, where innovation and new rising talent constantly influence the ever evolving art scene. With an ambitious exhibition program, the gallery welcomes both established and emerging artists, each of whom present opportunities for seasoned as well as aspiring collectors to engage with and immerse themselves in the illustrious world of highly collectible contemporary art.

Musonium Gallery's expansive group exhibitions and solo showcases – which are unveiled approximately every six weeks – revolve around thought-provoking, aesthetically diverse artistic expression. The Musonium curators aim to present polarizing art influenced by captivating topics such as: philosophy, science, history, culture, and conceptual notions of prominent individuality. The gallery is dedicated to managing and building private collections, placing artwork in public institutions, and enhancing exhibiting artists' careers.

#MusoniumGallery

INITIATION

Inaugural Group Exhibition
January 6, 2023 – February 11, 2023

Vernissage (Invite Only): Friday, January 6, 6-9 pm
Public Reception: Saturday, January 7, 6-9 pm

PRESS

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