

Untitled #6 – 2010



"The scene is memory and is therefore nonrealistic. Memory takes a lot of poetic license.

It omits some details while others are exaggerated according to the emotional value of the articles it touches, for memory is seated predominantly in the heart.

The interior therefore is rather dim and poetic."

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

Artist Bio

Lari Pittman was born in Glendale, California, in 1952. The family moved to Colombia (his mother's homeland) at the age of 5. The family returned to southern California when he was 12.

Pittman attended UCLA for three years but left the program over creative differences.

He received both a BFA (1974) and an MFA (1976) from Cal-Arts. While there he met Roy Dowell who he has lived with ever since. He is currently a professor of painting at UCLA.

Untitled #6 is inspired by his background in interior design, commercial advertising, folk art, and decorative traditions, that he has carefully layered in his paintings to transform pattern and signage into luxurious scenes fraught with complexity, difference, and desire. This display is both visually gripping and psychologically strange. Pittman's hallucinatory works reference myriad aesthetic styles, from Victorian silhouettes to social realist murals to Mexican *retablos*.

In his paintings, Pittman uses anthropomorphic depictions of furniture, weapons, and animals, loaded with symbolism, to convey themes of romantic love, violence, and mortality.

His paintings and drawings are a personal rebellion against rigid, puritanical dichotomies, particularly legislative and governmental regulations.

They demonstrate the complementary nature of beauty and suffering, pain and pleasure, and direct the viewer's attention to bittersweet experiences and the value of sentimentality in art.

Despite subject matter that changes from series to series, Pittman's deployment of simultaneously occurring narratives and opulent imagery reflects the rich heterogeneity of American society, the artist's Colombian heritage, and the distorting effects of hyper-capitalism on everyday life.

Touring Tips:

For Children:

What object stands out the most? What time is it? Ask if you feel stress or pressure at school when you look at the clock? What shapes do you see? What time is it? What animals? Story of "Hymie" his pet chicken.

For Adults: PG Version

Untitled #6 is one of 10 paintings he did for an exhibition in West Hollywood in 2010. He goes from one painting to the next. He works spontaneously.

For Adults: NC-17 Version

"Everything is Art, Everything is Politics"

He left UCLA after his third year – one of his professors said his work was considered "faggy"

Untitled #6 is a social commentary on the Protestant work ethic (his father was Protestant). The painting illustrates the dominance of work in one's life and the limited amount of time for personal pleasure.

He is an atheist.

Spotlight presented by David Winton – April 6, 2015

