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AMERICAN  
*art*  
COLLECTOR



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Glass, Ceramics & Wood*



ERIN CONE

# Ineffable

The title of Erin Cone's upcoming exhibition at Nüart Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico, is *ineffable*, a fitting title since even the artist has difficulty explaining her pieces in words, instead aiming to inject a sense of mystery in each piece that leaves the work open to viewer interpretation. While Cone says she always tries to capture a universal emotion in her work, she infuses surreal qualities in her pieces, which are filled with gestural poses conveying narrative. Dreamlike touches include the collage-like dresses in *Embrace* and *Enfold*, and the flowing veils wrapped around the subjects in *Spill 1*, *Spill 2*, and *Surrender*.

"I like to incorporate little visual glitches," says Cone, based in Santa Fe. "Sometimes they just happen, and sometimes I orchestrate them in." The artist says she uses geometric shapes as symbols for things that have no definition, and they act to balance the composition while standing in for something representational. In *Impulse*, the figure turns away from the two stacked boxes in a vertical line, one overlapping her arm, while in *Entice*, the boxes seem to ground the model, often played by Cone herself.

While her paintings have abstract qualities, a passionate response to them is common in collectors.

"Erin's style is arresting," says collector Ben Clare, who owns several of Cone's works. "She has an ability to distill an emotion in portrait, and by choice of a contemporary backdrop, drive the focus to that emotion. She has progressively advanced this style over her career with the

newer vintages evoking even more purely the emotions she has bottled, masterfully layering her proven trademark with fresh techniques."

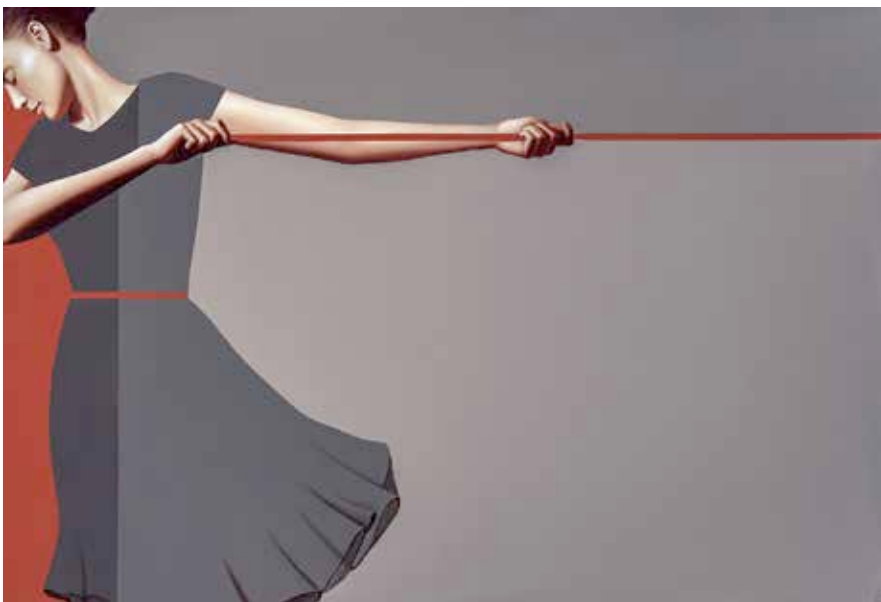
Negative space is prevalent in Cone's pieces, most of which are large-scale, some spanning around 7 feet high. Like sculpture is reliant on both positive and negative space, Cone says her works include negative space to evoke visceral responses. "The figure in isolation has a lot of potential," the artist, bringing 17 works to her exhibition at Nüart Gallery, says. "It's a vehicle for expression."

To get more in touch with the expression of the figure, Cone holds the photograph that inspires her work as she's painting. She says her artwork allows her to explore a variety of avenues, from acting as a performance artist when she's modeling for the portrait, to playing digital artist as she manipulates photographs she's taken before she paints them.

Manipulating fabrics and garments



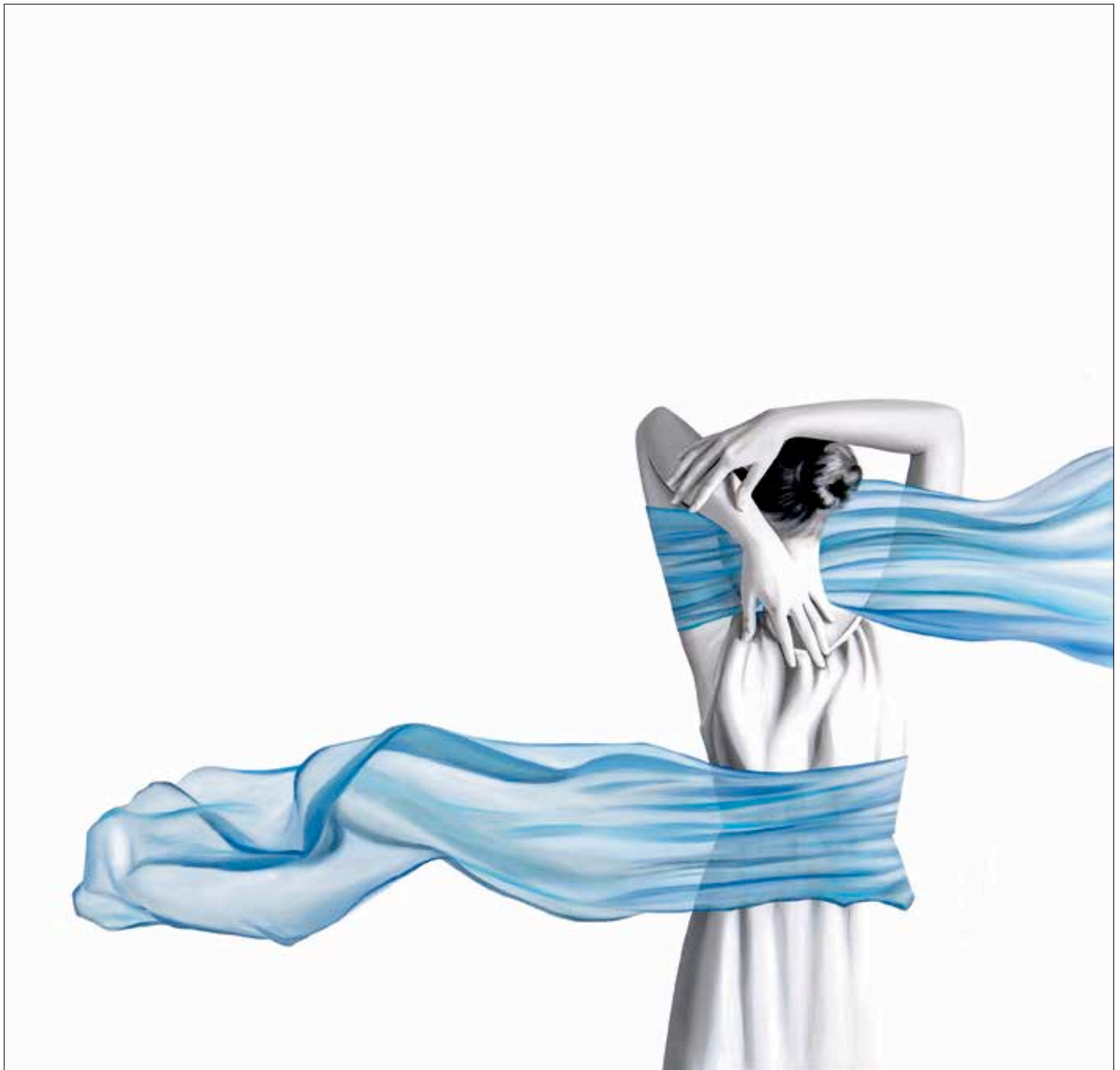
1



2



3



4

1  
*Impulse*, acrylic  
on canvas, 36 x 40"

2  
*Traverse 1*, acrylic  
on canvas, 38 x 56"

3  
*Enfold*, acrylic on  
canvas, 80 x 44"

4  
*Spill 2*, acrylic on  
canvas, 52 x 54"



Scan for  
VIDEO

in her pieces is what Cone calls a “breakthrough” she experienced last year, as the artist who has always focused on the figure realized clothing can be an abstract element for her to explore. She says she endeavors to create works of beauty using a multi-genre approach that draws on everything from fashion to design to dance.

“It’s my personal feeling there’s enough chaos in the world, and the job of the artist is to convey something a little bit uplifting and beautiful and cut through the chaos,” Cone says, adding she applies color intuitively, ensuring chosen hues enhance the harmony of the whole, orchestrating realism rather than simply copying it. That point of view is evident to Nüart Gallery, which has represented the artist since 2006.

“In Erin Cone’s latest series, *ineffable*, she explores the idea that the painter does not convey images through words, but must instead use gesture and pose, line and form, figure and space,” a gallery representative says.

“Her paintings are careful reconstructions of reality, with a vision that is unfiltered through narrative and an emotional content that remains present but undefined. Erin Cone is known for her arresting paintings that balance stasis with movement and blend realism with abstraction. She wants her paintings to be experienced, by both the artist and the viewer, without words, as pure form, pure feeling.”

Another element eliciting a powerful reaction from viewers is Cone’s reverence for her subjects. While they’re sometimes obscured by material or have their backs facing the viewers, her forms make a compelling impact.

“I’ve gotten the feedback from collectors that I paint ‘strong women,’ and I’m happy to know that’s how they are perceived,” Cone says, “but it’s such an interesting comment to me because it would never have occurred to me to paint women any other way.” ●