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RÆVELIN

ART

Sadie Laska's Figures In The Clouds

"I, Clouded" is Sadie Laska's solo show currently hanging at Canada Gallery. The show is split into paintings and giant painted figures. It's tempting to think of the "I" as the figures and the "Clouded" as my cloud-like paintings.



ART
Images Courtesy Of CANADA
Text By Alec Coiro

The show as a whole has an impressively mature unity of form and the giant two-dimensional figures are some of the most confounding and amazing pieces I've seen in some time. I think the reason they are so striking is because they pose a formal question as to whether they are two-dimensional sculptures or paintings that have taken on a sculptural shape. I asked Sadie about this, and she says they are a "most simple form of sculpture. I think of them as two-dimensional sculptures that lean against the wall. But I did paint them with oil paint. It is a painted object against a wall." We agreed to call them P.O.A.W.s (Painted Objects Against a Wall.)

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Sadie describes her humanoids as "Brute, stupid man figures." A man in the most generally sense: "They are totally genderless and neutral in that way. Just like a shape that signifies a human." They are our avatars and icons emerging from the stupid brutality our computers to confront us in a gigantic way.

As for the paintings that form the bulk of the show, Sadie notes that "As soon as you create a human form somewhere, you're inclined to build a narrative around it. I started to make a connection where my clouds became like marks the human form made in a very vague sense. They really are about painting in a very formal way." Interestingly, this formal narrative stretches all the way back to the beginning of Sadie's process for this show: the figures and my clouds originally existed within the same paintings before Sadie decided to separate the two. "It's like they stepped out of the painting, which gave the paintings a lot more space. I had reached a point where I realized I was trying to do too much in one painting, and the paintings were actually a lot more successful if I focused in on one idea. My desire to make this human form seemed to work a lot better if I just made it an object." The figures literally became objects in a prop design studio, where the carpenters worked with full-size cardboard cutouts that Sadie created in her studio. "I folded the cardboard up and took it over to his studio in a car service." After the figures were cut out of plywood, Sadie painted them in the woodshop where they were born because they were too humongous to take back to her studio.

Sadie has previously done solo shows in New York featuring smaller work and solo shows in Europe, but this show at Canada seems to serve as — if not her debut — her arrival. With her work on the show at Canada complete, Sadie is now focused her piece for a show next door at Marlborough Gallery, called "Marlborough Lights." This time Sadie's human figures will be adorned with lights: "There's a lot of room for exploration." For Sadie this is true not just of the figures but of her career as a whole. "I always played music. I make paintings. Now I'm trying to move and make sculpture. I think that as I evolve more as an artist, I'll probably stretch out into a lot of different realms because I'm finding that I'm more curious than just being a painter."