

review

Sameness flaws exhibit

By DAN ACOSTA

Born in Lebanon, artist Khegham Tazian now is at home in Michigan with water-colors, oils, collage and with sculptures of wood, ceramic, fiberglass or bronze. He is a cosmopolitan, fluent in all of those mediums.

G/B/M Gallerie is presenting a large Tazian show equally divided between sculpture and paintings. All of the works have Tazian's distinct vocabulary. He draws from his homeland to instill his art with a sense of crumbling archeology.

"I've always been interested in Armenian sculpture. Like the reconstruction of an Armenian cathedral from the fifth and sixth century, my art is a lament of what were once heroic and monumental places but places that no longer exist. I use figures and sculptural elements with bright colors to try and make it a reality again," Tazian said.

Nearly all of his figure paintings incorporate decorative elements from the Middle East, perhaps a headress or costume. Many of the figures are framed or even trapped by highly textured planks or beams from some ancient edifice.

TAZIAN IS MOST adept at the creation of rich textures and it's texture that is common to his sculptures and canvases. He is able to suggest a texture with thin layers of paint which have the same feel as a woman's dress in one of his terra cotta figures. His three-dimensional surfaces and his flat painted

surfaces are remarkably alike.

Unfortunately, some of Tazian's paintings also are alike. Kindred subject matter with similar treatment do not have been the case had there been a more careful selection of pieces for this already too-large exhibit.

Tazian's sculpture is more varied and at times simply beautiful. Most breathtaking is a wooden figure called "The Clown." Tazian found a graceful, dynamic model with a piece of driftwood. He reduced his found object to as little as possible, just enough to accentuate what was already there. He used the same process for "Reclining Nude," then added a ceramic face. The results are again beautiful.

All of Tazian's work is handsome and well executed, but he seems at his best when conceiving a piece of art from weathered or beach-battered blank of wood.

Not all of Tazian's sculpture is so innovative. He has some bronze and ceramic heads which beckon to rest on the nearest coffee table. The heads are vaguely reminiscent of something dug up from the rugged lands east of the Mediterranean. The headress reminds of once mighty civilizations but the features on the face are of a Hollywood starlet instead of an olive-skinned beauty. These heads are not unattractive, but they seem to be more a corruption of beauty than beauty itself.

The art of Khegham Tazian may be seen through Nov. 15 at the G/B/M Gallerie, 2610 Woodward, Royal Oak.

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