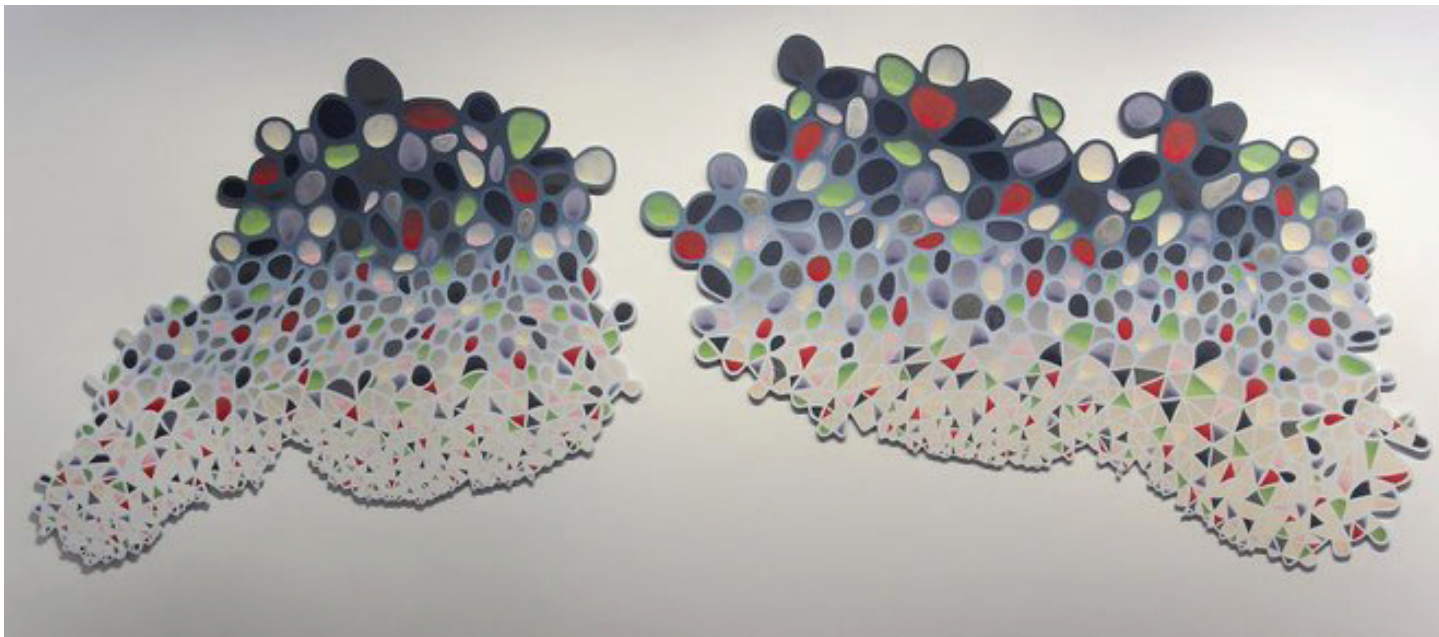


Lynn Tomaszewski exhibit explores human interaction, social conditions

By Rafael Francisco Salas | March 18, 2016



When you are very far away, the world resembles itself close up. Or something like that. The paintings of Lynn Tomaszewski seem to require a consideration of such juxtapositions.

The abstract paintings consist of thousands of ovoids. Hand-wrought perimeters are filled with an array of sophisticated color. Cellular structures, galaxies and fractals come to mind. Her exhibit, "Whole, Sum, Parts," richly displayed at the recently renovated Thelma Sadoff Center for the Arts in Fond du Lac, resembles many things that we think we know, but the paintings remain aloof nonetheless.

Tomaszewski is in fact visualizing a system of human interaction and tribalism. In other words she is painting cities, and all of us within them. The exhibit contains some of her preliminary drawings, which vaguely echo maps of cities like New York or Chicago. In black ink, she creates shapes inspired by population density, diversity or segregation and our habitual nesting instincts. At the edges, these drawings open up, describing something like the suburbs' advance into the country.



Ultimately the artworks explore the social conditions of our time. The paintings take on large themes in the form of minimalist abstraction. The systemic drawings of Sol Lewitt balanced with the charged elegiac titles of Robert Motherwell appear to weave into Tomaszewski's practice.

There are a range of approaches in the show. Many canvases are modest and square, the patterns and shifting color reminiscent of specimens under a microscope. Other work is quite large with irregular edges. "Complex 18a" and "Complex 18b" are cloud-like and fluffy.

The familiar ovals in the paintings transition into triangular facets. If I were thinking scientifically I would imagine ice crystals forming. Humanity in general, walled communities and high fences also come to mind. In either case, Tomaszewski's analyses in paint elicit big ideas and their complexity, bringing visions of our world into micro (or macro) focus.

"Lynn Tomaszewski: Whole, Sum, Parts," is on view at the Thelma Sadoff Center for the Arts, 51 Sheboygan St., Fond du Lac, through April 16. For more information, visit thelmaarts.org.

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