



Leaders by **Howard Lamar**

Howard Lamar: *Receptivity, Selectivity, & Captivity*

By **ANDRIA WATSON** / CASA

PLAYFULLY WHIMSICAL AND EMOTIONALLY UPBEAT, the abstract mixed media exhibit, *Looking Without Limits*, by Howard Lamar is on view at CASA Magazine through December 31st.

"I design my paintings to be pleasing to the eye; the longer an individual views, the more deeply he or she is inclined to look, the more the story reveals itself," explained Lamar. "The power of beauty, historically, is undeniable: its allure irrefutable; its influence unparalleled."

The show contains new pieces from Lamar's *Infinite* series, including a 5' x 8' painting. He uses symbols throughout his work to reveal hidden stories within the paintings. For example, moons represent romance, flowers with faces equate to friends and family, the boat of life is the symbol for the journey through existence, and the bird of discernment represents wisdom. The newest addition to the symbols is an icon for "infinite," which is Lamar's way of relating his perceptions about human interaction with the world and universe.

"Interpreting and weaving together the themes, feelings, and impulses that connect all individuals is both an endless and a timeless pursuit," shared Lamar. "The influences in my paintings evidence times present, past, and future; the range of inspiration spans cultures and millennia. Infinite becomes accessible. The scope of expression and inquiry, the color, the whimsy - are specifically intended to evoke, to amuse, and to uplift."

For years, Lamar owned and operated a



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successful studio gallery in Carmel. Later he returned to Ojai, where he had began his career as an artist in the early 1970s. His work at the time consisted of impressionistic landscapes, which shifted in the late '70s to abstract figurative paintings.

"I don't desire a captive audience so much as a captivated one," emphasized Lamar. "What motivates

me to keep creating is a deep appreciation of and an immeasurable affection for humanity. I try to portray very intimate relationships."

The inspiration for many of the artist's figurative paintings stems from his family, including his twins and two sons. Even prior to the birth of the twins, Lamar had begun sketching images of them, something he deems prophetic. He also has a series of works devoted to his cat, Princess Gabrielle.

Many of Lamar's sketches and paintings are surreal and dream-like, exploring simplicity of the line and unusual, bright storybook color. An average piece can take him anywhere from a few hours to three years to complete.

"I never tire of hearing people's reactions to my work, both emotional and intellectual. As an artist, I encourage the participation of the viewer; the work is most satisfying to me when it has evoked a response that a viewer feels compelled to communicate, to share. That's when the work takes on its deepest meaning."

The exhibit also includes examples of Lamar's work in glass, bronze, and plaster.

CASA is located at 23 E. Canon Perdido St and is open Mo-Fr from 9-5pm. For information, call 965-6448, and visit www.howardlamar.com.