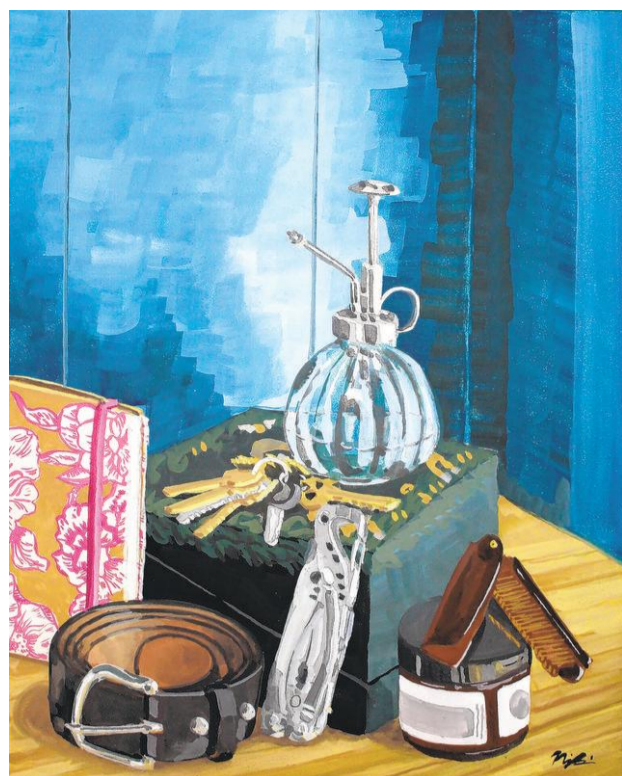
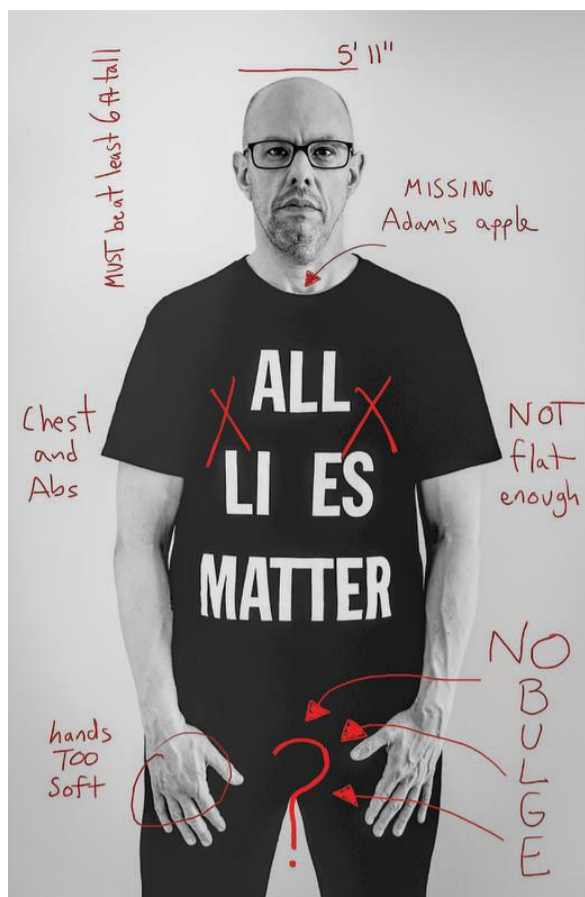


ARTS



“Objects of Queerness #1: Myself” by Nathaniel Bice (gouache on panel, Berkeley).



BEST IN SHOW: Above, “Ambassadors” by Yvette Deas (oil, San Diego); left, “Self Portrait: How Many Fifts of a Man Am I?” by Jacob Clayton (photography mixed media, Rockport, Maine).

ART OF THE CITY An occasional series about San Diego’s diverse artistic community

OUT AND PROUD

New exhibit at The Studio Door gallery in Hillcrest celebrates all aspects of queerness

BY MICHAEL JAMES ROCHA

For Patric Stillman, owner of The Studio Door gallery in Hillcrest, there are a lot of reasons to celebrate. Top of the list? The opening of the fifth installment of “Proud+,” an exhibition that celebrates work by local and national LGBTQ artists.

“After the disruptions of the COVID pandemic,” Stillman says, “this year’s exhibition feels like an emotional celebration. I’m so excited to open the doors to share this inspired collection of art with the community. This year feels like a family reunion.”

For the first time, the “Proud+” exhibit will be on display for two months, he said, adding that “we got such a strong level of participation from national and local artists.”

This year’s exhibit — which features more than 70 artworks from artists working in 13 states — was juried by Alyssa Nitchun, executive director of the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art in New York City.

The Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art is the “only dedicated LGBTQ+ art museum in the world with a mission to exhibit and preserve LGBTQ+ art and foster the artists who create it,” Stillman says. “I’m really pleased to have finally made this connection.”

Stillman says he’s especially proud of this year’s collection, which includes works by local artist Stefan Talian, this year’s featured artist.

“The ‘Proud’ show was one of the first group exhibitions that I wanted to be part of,” Talian says. “Growing up in a small town in Eastern Europe, I couldn’t explore or express my sexuality. Being a gay man had to be buried deep inside, covered with a thick surface that only served the expectations of those around me. Being able to finally express my true self was very liberating.”

For Stillman, “Proud+” means a lot of things, but most of all, “this exhibition stands on its diversity,” he says. “Moving beyond a collection of pretty pictures, these art pieces reveal a spectrum of emotions and experiences that get to the root of who we are.”

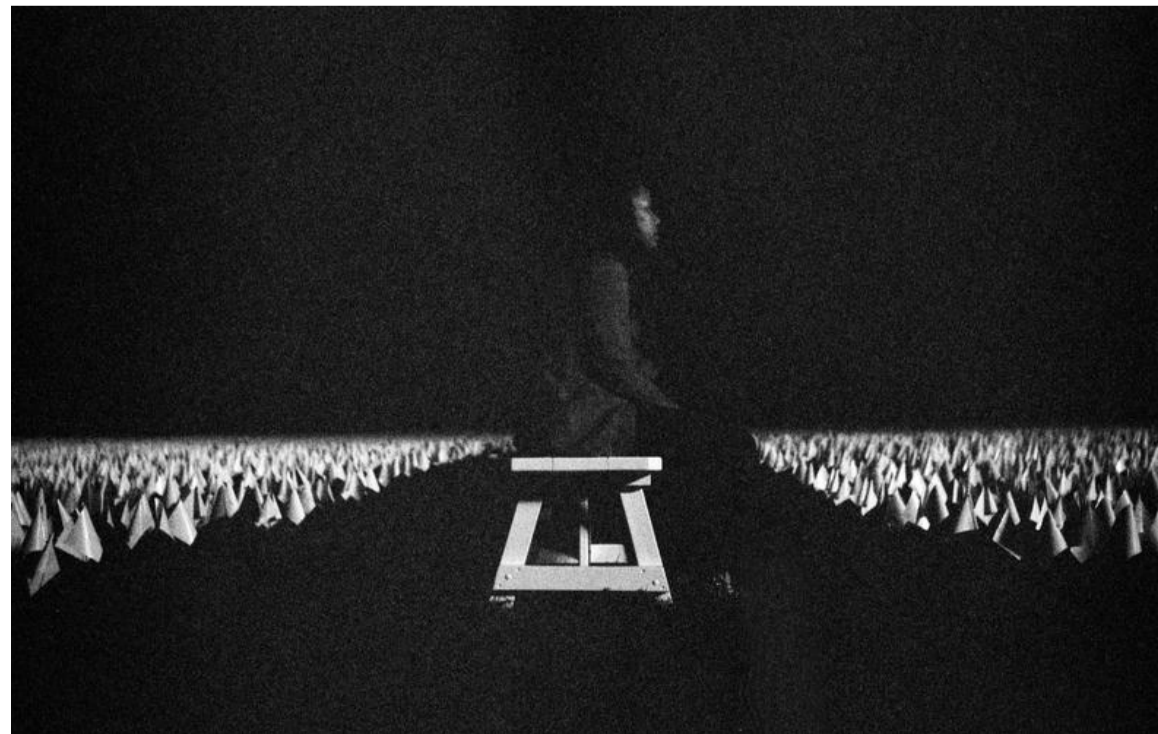
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THE STUDIO DOOR

“The pieces chosen for this exhibition are part of my latest collection called ‘Captured Emotions.’ The series focuses on moments of vulnerability and private emotional states. Men are culturally conditioned to hide these emotions. I wanted to unveil them and celebrate their beauty.”

Featured artist **Stefan Talian**, whose painting “Transformation,” above, is in the show



BEST IN SHOW: “Dating in COVID” by Alisa White (film photograph, Greenbelt, Md.)



“Laws of Attraction” by Richard Poulin (collage, Palm Springs)

‘Proud+’

When: June 4-July 30. Hours: noon to 7 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Preview night: 6 to 9 p.m. June 2, as part of Hillcrest’s First Thursday Walk in ART in Mural Alley. Artist reception: 6 to 9 p.m. July 2.

Where: The Studio Door, 3867 Fourth Ave., San Diego **Admission:** Free **Online:** thestudidoor.com/proud-2022