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Michael Mogavero

PRISMS

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PRISMS is a collection of new oil paintings by Michael Mogavero.

Michael Mogavero began his painting career alongside the Pattern and Decoration and New Image artists in 1970s-80s New York. He landed in Austin to teach at the University of Texas, and recently retired. PRISMS culminates his last two years of dedicated studio work.

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Organized by Phillip Niemeyer
Thank you Scott Kesler, Juno Aldana, and Ivana Dilparic



Moonlight Bay, 2023
oil on canvas
75 x 60 inches



Eye Beam, 2024
oil on birch panel
30 x 24 inches



Full Moon, 2024
oil on panel
26 x 26 inches



Requiem for a Featherweight, 2023
oil on canvas
60 x 54 inches



Solstice Moon, 2025
oil on canvas
18 x 12 inches



Folly in Sienna, 2023
oil on canvas
60 x 54 inches



Cove, 2025
oil on canvas
46 x 38 inches



Parrallel Dreams, 2024
oil on canvas
60 x 48 inches



First Star I See Tonight, 2023
oil on canvas
60 x 54 inches



Swamp Moon, 2025
oil on canvas
24 x 18 inches



Passage, 2025
oil on canvas
24 x 30 inches

Q & A

w/ Michael Mogavero

Q: What prompted this group of paintings?

This body of work was made between 2023-2025. Coming out of the COVID period the paintings seemed like they wanted to “break out” just as we all felt that way, I think, as COVID subsided. The painted surfaces and spaces seemed to explode with spontaneity and abandon, finding “connection” between polar opposite methods and images.

The work itself lent itself to a constant conversation between chaos and order, where neither won the day. Our recent Pandemic taught us many things about each of them. Often, a body of work begins to form and I must do my best to remain both conductor, as well as observer.

Q: What can you reveal about the meanings of the forms you repeat: the sea scapes, moons, wings, signets, and the walls?

I would certainly reveal it all, if I truly “knew it all!” Sometimes the simplest inference of a moment, a painted wing seen in a museum while traveling, the light and shadow in a film, walking in Sienna amongst 14th century architecture, or even a simple romantic walk on the beach conjures countless possibilities of space, image and metaphors. I think as metaphors go, most are rather effortless in this group of recent paintings. Moons, horizons, wings and architecture have been utilized throughout many centuries to evoke timeless odes to hope, resilience and homage. I hope I can grab some of that “essence” to invent a world that can sustain what I call, “linger power” for the viewer.

Q: How do you work? What is your studio time like?

I keep a rather tidy studio. I was once told, “keep your tools orderly, so your brain can wander.” Over the years it has been sound advice. I try to work steady, and still live life.

I like to think of “building” a painting the way a band might write a song. Usually start with the “bottom,” the bass & drums becomes the surface of the canvas, the (underpinnings) where a “groove and rhythm” is set. Then the melody, or the “space” in the painting, producing structural chord changes and illusion. Then the more specific images that become the lyrics, allow the articulation and the phrasing to “perform” for the final mix. My work is finished when the painting does not “need” me anymore. Each element has found its unique voice, its final sound, and can harmonize without me.

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PRISMS

Northern–Southern

Austin, Texas

September 6–30

2025

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