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Trials and Transformations: Sergio Gomez finds calmness in the face of life's chaos

Written by: Candice Ralph

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image courtesy of Sergio Gomez

Tranquility vs. tribulation: If you asked anyone which force was more present in their lives, most people would say the latter. It isn't easy for people to deal with the pains and strains life may sporadically throw at them, but no matter how dire the circumstance, calmness will come in due time. Sergio Gomez knows this from personal experience, and it is the crux of his new exhibition, entitled "Calmness."

Earlier last year, Gomez was dealing with a great deal of emotional and personal pain after his parents moved back to Mexico, where he was born, and his mother fell ill. Gomez is very close to his family, and seeing his mother in pain was very difficult for him.

"Calmness" attempts to illustrate the aura of peace and sense of unity Gomez felt as his mother began to recover. His pieces are not meant to define the word "calmness" but rather to define Gomez and his spiritual life journey. His work goes beyond the flesh and the familiar: it looks deep into the soul—his soul.

Gomez uses ambiguity to create emotions that allow viewers to connect with his pieces. Instead of adding facial features and skin tones—qualities that would zone in on a certain group or class of people—he gives no clear physical identity to the humans he portrays. In his work, people are defined by their emotions and experiences, not by their physical characteristics, and it is Gomez's experiences that allow him to artistically represent his transformation from trial to tranquility.

His use of certain colors, his style, and his technique create a sense of unity, expressing what he does not verbally say. Gomez speaks through his art using a limited color palette, choosing various shades from only a few pigments like yellow, red, green, and black. He uses these earthy colors, these tones of life, to create depth and complexity because in life, not everything is clear and simple, but when calmness finally comes, life once again becomes smooth and evenly toned. Gomez demonstrates the spontaneity of life's ups and downs through his sporadic brushstrokes. He also uses rough surfaces and drawing techniques to show chaos and hardship, while his smooth surfaces and strokes reflect the tranquil periods of life.

One recurring theme in Gomez's work is transformation. He evokes this idea by using different human forms such as children, men, and women, and by incorporating butterflies in many of his works. Just as a butterfly emerges from a chrysalis, his works hint transformation and rebirth will always come. To Gomez, the butterfly is a symbol of harmony, fragility, and life—delicate and malleable.

“Calmness” seeks to verbalize our spirits without words, and Gomez continually speaks about his life journey through his art. According to his website, “Gomez expresses that it is not the anguish that defines who people are, where they have come from, or what they have to come, but rather it is what has been learned that helps define a person.” His paintings illustrate the journey toward peace and the sincere joy and understanding one feels when finally one reaches this destination. He claims that the exhibition “captures a sense of existence...It reveals a spiritual and emotional awareness.” In essence, “Calmness” is about humanity itself.

33 Collective Gallery, 1029 W. 35th St. Through February 13. Monday-Thursday, 10am-1pm; Friday, 10am-1pm and 3-7pm.
33collective.com

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