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Haiku Reviews: Not-Quite Minimalism, Hallucinatory Hyper-Realism and 'The Glass Menagerie'

By Peter Frank

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HuffPost Arts' Haiku Reviews is a biweekly feature where invited critics review exhibitions and performances in short form. Some will be in the traditional Haiku form of 5x7x5 syllables, others might be a sonnet or a string of words together. This week Peter Frank and George Heymont give quick takes on visual arts, theatre and classical music from Tennessee Williams' revamped classic to California's Christmastime exhibitions that are not to be missed. Is there a show or performance that you think people should know about? Write a Haiku with a link and shine a light on something you think is noteworthy too.

Eugene Brodsky has always been preoccupied with the visual babble of our image-ridden environment and with the sensuous properties of this cacophony. His overt employment of silkscreened imagery in these latest paintings, large and small – combining oil on panel with silkscreen ink on plastic – clarifies and heightens that preoccupation, and that sensuousness. The method provides Brodsky's paintings with a new slipperiness – not a physical (much less subjective) superficiality, but a visual elusiveness that confounds our efforts to grasp these images as pictures of anything, even when they clearly are pictures of something. Their graphic quality is a matter not of text, even when displaying clearly notational qualities, but of texture. Brodsky thus stands athwart our tendency to literalize what we see, a tendency locked into place by our reliance on the computer. He warns, indeed struggles, against the tyranny of mere knowledge with his fugitive pictures and uneasy sense of pictoriality. Optical pleasure, Brodsky argues, is a perfectly legitimate form of information.