

ARTS



Artist Mark Vinci used a highway striping truck to lay down ribbons of color in his paintings.

Artist's works hit the road

Striping gear used in new art

By Ernest McIntyre
Special for The Republic

"You've got to see this," gallery director Kathleen Thomas said as she pointed to a new Mark Vinci work.

Vinci has long been known for his brightly painted constructions that represent the energy and motion of the urban environment. He's still heading down that same highway, but he's picked up speed and changed lanes.

Even from across the room, you can tell that there is something different in Vinci's new work. It is eye-catching, but a Vinci piece typically is. No, it's something else. A flash of reflected light and color is repeated again and again as you move toward the painting. There's definitely something shiny embedded in the thick multicolored lines that run through the work, but what?

"Beads of glass," Thomas replies to the unspoken question. As soon as she says "beads," your eye follows them along the off-white line. It makes you think of highway pavement markings. The conversation gets cryptic at that

If you go

WHAT: "Local Motion." New works by Mark Vinci.

WHERE: Studio LoDo, 15 E. Jackson St., No. 111, Phoenix. (602) 200-8790.

WHEN: The artist's reception is 6 to 10 p.m. Friday. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and by appointment. The exhibit runs through Nov. 25.

ADMISSION: Free.

point.

You look at her and say, "No."

She smiles and says, "Yes."

Mark Vinci has not only changed lanes, he's incorporated them into his work. In a phone conversation, Vinci explained that he'd contacted the state highway department and been referred to a local highway striping subcontractor. One can only imagine the eyebrow raising and sideways glances that went on in the United Rental equipment yard as Vinci explained he wanted their help in creating art. Once they realized he was serious, they rapidly went from intrigued to involved.

"The process involved my

bringing panels to their yard and working with a crew to lay down various widths and colors of thermoplastic paints heated to 440 degrees," Vinci says.

The glass beads used to reflect light at night on dark highways went on top of the hot mix. The painted panels were reworked in Vinci's studio until they were ready to be shown.

"The first painting of this series is now hanging in the office of United Rentals on East Broadway in Phoenix and they love it," Vinci said.

Vinci's series of highway pieces may be a subconscious indicator that he's not only going in a new direction but going places in the art world. Vinci studied at New York's School of Visual Arts and spent 20 years in the television graphics industry, working at CBS in New York, CNN in Atlanta, and ABC in Phoenix. In 1998 he became a full-time artist and in 2001 he received a Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant to support his work in the arts.

You can see Vinci's work for yourself at his exhibition at downtown Phoenix's Studio LoDo. Expect gallery director Kathleen Thomas to greet you with a smile before she says, "You've got to see this."

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