

## Antonia Di Giulio ... dialogues

By merging references to the human body with the inventive visual vocabulary of abstraction, Antonia Di Giulio achieves a goal that has considerable appeal in contemporary art.

In her new series, the latest artworks of a long career, she creates engaging dialogues by combining a black, white, and gray-toned abstract painting with a similarly scaled black and white photographic portrait of herself selected from a series made several decades ago by the well-known New York photographer, Ralph Gibson. The new combinations sparkle from the visual energy generated by these pairings.

Di Giulio had created dramatic poses during the New York portrait session. For the recent paintings she has analyzed and translated bold, angular contours found in the photographs and used them as inspiration for crisp, abstract forms that float over the surface of most paintings. The new "Dialogues" center on these relationships, and they vibrate with the dynamics of recognition and discovery.

Viewers responding to these pairings sense echoes between the sharp-edged, dark abstract forms and the contours of shadows generated by many aspects of the portraits, especially by bent legs and arms.

These translate into especially dynamic forces. All the more so when the angles generate velocity in the paintings. Delicate gray gestural brush strokes (possibly inspired by soft tones defining flesh areas in the photographs) surround the dominant abstract forms, further activating the paintings and suggesting layers of depth.

The paintings seem current and alive, even as they honor the photography session from the past. One consistent feature within the photographs brings in the past in still another way: a carved antique capital from an ancient architectural column appears as a pedestal for the figure.

Perhaps this is a strong hint that the human pose invites extended interpretation. Certainly appreciation of performance as a significant form of art expression is an aspect to consider and admire in these richly complex dialogues.

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