



Remembered in Stone

By Tom Wachunas

“Collectively, Kiderman’s works are indeed imbued with a quiet magic of sorts. Some conjure serenity and ecstasy. Others speak of darker, more vexing things. Stone will do that. It’s nature’s perfect reliquary of time itself, the countenance of history. And the very act of sculpting it can reasonably be seen as a metaphor for revealing and facing the history of...us.”

Artwach, October 19, 2012

<http://artwach.blogspot.com/2012/10/when-stone-speaks.html>

The above link is to my 2012 review of the Alice Kiderman exhibit at Canton Museum of Art. She recently contacted me with an update on her latest work. While an exhibition time and location for these works is yet to be determined, the direction of her work has prompted me to think...

Memory is a fragile, at times corruptible thing. Without it, the present is a groundless theory, a fleeting idea, the stuff of blind wandering (and wondering) about who we are, where we came from, and where we want to go. Without it, there is nothing to praise or celebrate, nothing to mourn, nothing to love, hate, dream, hope or long for.

I know of no more potent a cultural memory preservative than art. We remember our most iconic artworks for their capacity to declare and connect us to each other across time. Art is our response to, and ongoing dialogue about our existence and all that it presents to us, be it joy or despair, mystery or discovery, mayhem or magic.

That said, the most impassioned appreciators of art history that I know have always been other artists. Our memory keepers. I think sculptor Alice Kiderman is such an appreciator as she has undertaken a series of marble works that are inspired by classic masterpieces, including works by da Vinci, Picasso, Modigliani, Dali and Grant Wood, among others. In the past, artists have often sourced works of a previous era or style. Picasso's versions of works by Manet, Velasquez and Delacroix come to mind, for example.

In a similar spirit, Kiderman's take-offs aren't meticulous facsimiles or exact duplications of the originals. Rather, she's found a way to let the stone suggest just enough visual kinship with the original so that we can recall and hopefully savor, or see in a new way, its conceptual or spiritual essence. A particularly intriguing aspect of these pieces is that they transform 2D originals into 3D objects. This in itself recalls how we memorialize ideas or events with stone monuments. For that matter, she even has plans to interpret musical works by Rachmaninoff and Ravel.

Whether we regard such manifestations as challenging "updates," personalized reinterpretations, or playful commentaries, I think it fair to see them in the larger sense as a relevant and poetic homage to (with apologies to Salvador Dali) the persistence of memory.

PHOTOS, from top (courtesy Alice Kiderman): *American Gothic Revisited*; *I-Scream* (after Eduard Munch); *Modigliani's Muse*; *Fluidity of Time* (after Salvador Dali)
