

Alien Nations 2020 Exhibition

The Coral Gables Museum is a landmark in Coral Gables. It appears smaller than the adjacent buildings but once you step into the exhibit of Alien Nation, the extremely high ceiling and open span, reflects a much larger space. The architectural distinction of native keystone on the exterior sets it apart from the concrete block construction of the surrounding structures. The keystone is weathered and exhibits texture and dimension. With the neutral color of the building, the large dark double doors with an arched entryway and elongated windows with rounded tops stand out displaying a cross between Streamline Modern and Mediterranean Revival architecture.

The appearance of the building is clean and attractive, bringing curiosity to enter to view what artistic pieces are too be seen. The interior atmosphere is cool and spacious, displaying a calm, and clean sense. The high snowy white walls with tray ceilings, and bright lighting throughout the room, accentuates each portrait on the wall and the Ancestral Thread Legacy hanging sculpture. The art pieces on each wall seem to be grouped in similar tones and colors, ranging in different sizes but displayed evenly across. This may be displayed this way to attract the attention of the viewer's eyes to the artist's work and then able to reconfigure to the next piece of art.

One of my favorite pieces of art was *Curtains* by Adrien Broom. The piece of art is displayed in nine photographs on eight by eleven metal prints which are evenly positioned to each other on the wall, set three photos across in three rows. The nine metal prints caught my attention due to the simplicity of the black and white photography, easy lines to follow, the clarity, the calm, as well as the movement expressed from photograph to photograph.

The photo walk begins with a young woman relaxing back reading a book in spacious room that is vibrant with elegant furniture, each piece placed symmetrically in the room. While the woman is reading, a breeze blows through the open window catching the women's attention as the lustrous sheer flows up to the ceiling falling upon the young women exhibiting weightlessness. The rhythm and line of the sheer in the photos create the illusion of depth while implying direction and movement of the air. The emphasis of the sheer begins to depict the meaning of the photo leaving the items in the room as negative objects. The drape begins to seem life-like as it dances inward with the air. The feather light sheer begins to lengthen at each burst of air and begins to encapsulate the room. With the drape extending further and further, swathing everything in its path, it remains to leave a sense of a cool with caution since the women disappears from the picture. Although there remains a sense of peace and relaxation in the room, at the same time it has become overpowered, covered with drapery on every surface like how snow drifts over inanimate objects and blankets without a care. As the room is now layered with the drapes, the women and another figure appear sitting in the chairs covered with the sheers.

According to the artist, Adrian Broom (Connecticut), the mood of the photos are elegiac, as ill winds blow a gauzy curtain that suggests a shroud that wraps and inters the artist who sits in a room near a window. This is all in relation to the COVID pandemic that took over the city where she and her partner lived. The timeline this was created and meant to be revealed is in the present. After coming down with the virus, they fled New York city to quarantine in Cape Cod.

The collection of photos with the curtains overtaking the room could be representative of the virus encapsulating everything around them including their home and themselves, leaving no escape.