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• by A.D. Amorosi

Divide and Consider

Dana Hargrove

Scottish painter/multi-media artist Dana Hargrove speaks in shape, symbol, and ornament. Not in a bad or trite way. Hargrove, who spent 2007 and 2008 in South Africa and Tanzania provokes details, tone, and pattern from recent works like “The Empire’s New Clothes,” “Broekie,” and “Spikes,” efforts all that, in the words of Anna Brzyski (Associate Professor, University of Kentucky, Lexington), “evoke the specter of the colonial and apartheid past that haunts South Africa’s present. The lushness of color and marks are a defense mechanism and a strategy for resistance, survival, and commentary that are highly personal yet address the collective experience.”

Hargrove’s works can be playful within this framework — specks,

honeycombs, geodesic shapes that seem detached. But instead, they’re hot and close to their subject and their intended precious seriousness. That she uses bits of airline magazines, video games, fabric samples, and maps as resources that refer to the globalization of empire, could fool you.

“These contrasting cues further support my overarching investigation into the tenuous relationships between nature and culture,” says Hargrove.

Even her “To be Titled” Installation made of LED light systems and wooden houses creates a iconic structuralism whose colors — white and gold — seem to float from below the surface.

“How we construct our lives, our environments, our social personas, and our relationship to the home may lend itself to further investigation and wonder and a even more complex meaning of the term ‘home sweet home,’” notes Hargrove in her mission statement.

Home never seemed so crucial, though, as in this globally orderly exhibition.

Dana Hargrove’s *Divide and Consider*, Friday November 4 - November 29, 2008; Opening Reception on First Friday, November 7 from 6:00- 8:30 p.m. Bridgette Mayer Gallery, 709 Walnut Street, First Floor; 215-413-8893; www.mayerartconsultants.com.