

art exhibit | albuquerque

# URBAN EVOLUTION

Artist's New York-themed paintings take on a 'bolder, more refined look'



Albuquerque artist Christian Michael Gallegos will present his "Taxi" exhibition at the Harwood Art Center.

BY ADRIAN GOMEZ  
JOURNAL ARTS EDITOR

Christian Michael Gallegos grew up in New York City while spending summers in New Mexico.

He moved to Albuquerque in 2004 to focus on his art career.

Despite living in the Duke City, Gallegos has kept a piece of the Big Apple with him.

In his latest exhibit, opening at the Harwood Art Center today, Gallegos reflects on his person experience growing up at the intersection of the street life and the art scene of New York City.

The iconic yellow cab is a recurrent motif in these paintings, along with the urban landscape, especially the graffiti/street art that has become an important part the international art world.

"(The exhibit) is based on the taxi paintings that I did a few

years back and sold out," he says. "I quickly put together a new taxi show. I mixed in some New York paintings, and it's all brought together with a bolder, more refined look."

Gallegos says he has 29 pieces completed, though he doesn't know how many will make the exhibit.

Within his bolder, more refined look, Gallegos took inspiration from the evolution of New York City.

"My view is taken of the city over the course of decades," he says. "The way the city was in the '70s is different know. The city is cleaned up now. I was inspired to clean up my process a little. I'm using a lot less black on the new pieces. I'm using gray as a background now, and it's calmer. The rest of my color palette is inspired by the many colors of New Mexico."

In fact, Gallegos can often be found purchasing the colors that are often returned to stores.

"The color palette has to do with the New Mexicans who didn't like certain colors that they purchased at the stores," he says. "I use that exclusively. It's really crossing other people's ideas with my graffiti-esque energy."

With the exhibit rapidly approaching, Gallegos is anticipating how the new work will be received.

"I'm curious to see what the response to the cleaner, brighter look will be," he says. "I've been stuck in the market, and this might pull me out of it."

Joining him in her own exhibit will be Joanna Keane Lopez who is presenting "Plantcraft," an inquiry into the natural environment of the Southwest.

'TAXI!' BY  
CHRISTIAN  
MICHAEL  
GALLEGOS  
AND  
'PLANTCRAFT'  
BY JOANNA  
KEANE LOPEZ

**WHEN:** 8 tonight  
and Saturday, May 6;  
Runs through May 25

**WHERE:** Harwood  
Art Center, 1114  
Seventh NW

**HOW MUCH:** Free

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