

Hinson's Blog: Seven Days: Monster Art! Belfast meets Branson

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LET'S GO BLOG WILD: It was hard to find anyone who wasn't walking about agog during the opening reception for the "More is More - Maximalist Tendencies in Recent American Paintings" on Friday night at Florida State's Museum of Fine Arts. "More is More" is this year's visual-art component for the Seven Days of Opening Nights arts festival. And it's a doozy.

You've heard of Monster Trucks, these are Monster Paintings.

You'd need very large walls in your house to hang to most of them.

We're talking canvases larger than the chunks of ice falling off the polar ice cap.

Yes, size matters in this case but the 22 painters included in "More is More" share a common obsession and approach. They want to fill up every square inch of the canvas with images, paint, words, shouts, cartoons, doodles, jokes, political rants and whispers. It's ambitious stuff.

Why else would someone created a single painting titled, modestly, "An Abridged History of the Civilized World"? Check it out. It's by James Barsness and may be my favorite piece in this outstanding show.

"More is More" also includes some knockout paintings by FSU faculty members Lilian Garcia-Roig (her paintings of forests are more like explosions of paint) and Mark Messersmith (probably one of the most underrated painters in America, no kiddin').