Internal Light

painter Cody Hooper celebrates the artistic drive and spirit

by Emily Van Cleve

CODY HOOPER'S NEW solo show at Pippin Contemporary, *Internal Light*, focuses on the inner spirit of the artist. "The work touches on the contrast of the struggles and triumphs in life that makes us the dynamic creatures we are," says Hooper, who's known for his sculptural paintings. "I [highlight] illusions of light, contrast, complex layering, bold colors, and surfaces to tell these stories through my paintings."

Lavendar Dream, acrylic on panel, 40 x 60"

One of the show's 20 featured works is *Ocean Moon*—the largest piece Hooper's created to date, measuring 48 x 70". It's also the first painting Hooper has ever framed. "Something in the back of my head said to frame it, so I did," he says.

Hooper's paintings are very textural: Using acrylics with metallic pigments, his works can be up to two inches deep. Swirling strokes, he says, reflect his life-long interest in calligraphy. Since moving to New Mexico from Austin, Texas, three years ago, Hooper's colors have become more intense. *Ocean Moon*'s color palette, which is in the blue family, reminds Hooper of turquoise stones and the ocean, which he says he both loves and misses. "I used more subtle earth tones in Texas, but this area has inspired me to paint more colorfully," he says. "I think people here want to see color."

Fall Into You, acrylic on panel, 48 x 48"

> "The work in *Internal Light* touches on the contrast of the struggles and triumphs in life that make us the dynamic creatures we are," says Cody Hooper.

Most of the works in *Internal Light* are from Hooper's acrylic- and oil-on-panel series of works. In these paintings, the focus is on combining natural elements with architectural influence; metallic gold washes and gold dust are often incorporated to help give the works a 3-D effect.

"I'm very picky about the paintings I put in a show," Hooper says. "They have to give me goose bumps or I'll take them back to the studio and redo them." ■

Cody Hooper, Internal Light, *August 7–August 26, reception August 22, 5–7 PM, Pippin Contemporary, 200 Canyon, pippincontemporary.com*