

Joyce Kozloff at DC Moore and Solo Impression

Less is more couldn't be farther from the truth for Joyce Kozloff. The more detail and pattern she layers into her playfully free-associative work, the more engrossing it becomes. "Voyages," an installation at DC Moore of three related series—banners, tondos and masks—presented Kozloff's cross-cultural look at the themes of Carnival along with her ongoing exploration of the history of navigation and cartography.

For this viewer, the most engaging grouping was "Carnevale I-VIII" (2004-06), eight floor-to-ceiling canvas banners that hung across the gallery's longest wall. Each brightly colored, 10¼-foot-tall banner has five 22-by-30-inch collage-paintings on paper mounted to it. (They were glued and run through the lithography press at Solo Impression, where "Voyages: Time Travel," a show of Kozloff's prints, ran concurrently.) The rhythmic whole read vertically and horizontally, but the real fun was in a close encounter with the details, which include Day of the Dead tissue paper ornaments, kitschy cut-paper Halloween witches and smiling ghosts, paper dragon kites from Chinatown, Japanese kites from Hawaii and Islamic tile designs copied from Iranian postcards.

The banners were originally part of a large-scale installation (2006) in Venice's brick-walled Arsenale, where they were hung from the rafters. To set her work off from the busy surface, Kozloff painted each canvas backing a saturated hue: yellow, yellow-green, reddish purple, vermilion, emerald green, royal blue, turquoise and burnt orange. Inspired by houses she'd seen in Mexico, these colors, which frame each collaged image and peek through some of the cutout shapes, resonated powerfully against DC Moore's white walls. To adjust for ceiling height there, the canvas strips were folded up and pinned, which shortened the spaces between each collage and lent the work a tighter, almost quiltlike appearance.



Joyce Kozloff: "Carnevale I-VIII," 2004-06, acrylic, watercolor and collage on paper mounted on canvas, 129 by 33 inches each; at DC Moore.

The use of unified color fields to offset complex patterning relates to the artist's designs for public-art commissions, such as her mural for the International Terminal of San Francisco Airport [see *A.i.A.*, Feb.'87].

The tondos (collage and acrylic on canvas, all 2007) are based on celestial maps by the 17th-century cartographer Andreas Cellarius, and crisscrossed with Kozloff's renderings of satellite tracks in space taken from reproductions found on the Internet, linking past with present. Most appealing was *The Moments and Hours and Days of Our Lives* (5 feet in diameter), which features constellations imagined by the ancients limned in white pencil over a blue-gray ground and ornamented with tiny star stickers. Two related lithographs with glitter, *Now, Voyager I and II*, were shown at Solo Impression.

Handpainted cast-paper Venetian *carnevale* masks (2004-06, all roughly 8 or 9 inches high) echo the shapes of collaged tissue-paper skulls used for the banners. In her studio, Kozloff had originally pinned the masks onto the collage-paintings but later separated them—a wise decision. Each mask is painted with far-flung islands; some have their own narratives, such

as Venetian warships on their way to Constantinople. Underlying imagery includes maps of Venice or pictures of familiar Venetian sights; some masks are decorated with stickers and ornaments (G.I. Joes, rockets, airplanes, stars and flowers). At the Arsenale, the masks were hung at eye level in front of the windows so that sunlight poured through their eyes. In gallery literature, Kozloff notes that she "wanted the visitor traversing that vast 160-foot space to feel as if he/she were on a voyage around planet earth." It must have been

a very different experience from the one at DC Moore, where 23 masks were lined up on a side wall, and 30 more, in three horizontal rows, faced the banners.

Isolated in shallow, white-painted wooden boxes that abutted one another, the brilliantly colored masks stared blankly, hinting at the loneliness of building empire.

—Elisa Decker