

ADELA ANDEA'S "ON THE LEFT SIDE OF MERCURY" IS OTHERWORLDLY, OF COURSE

BY SUSIE TOMMANEY

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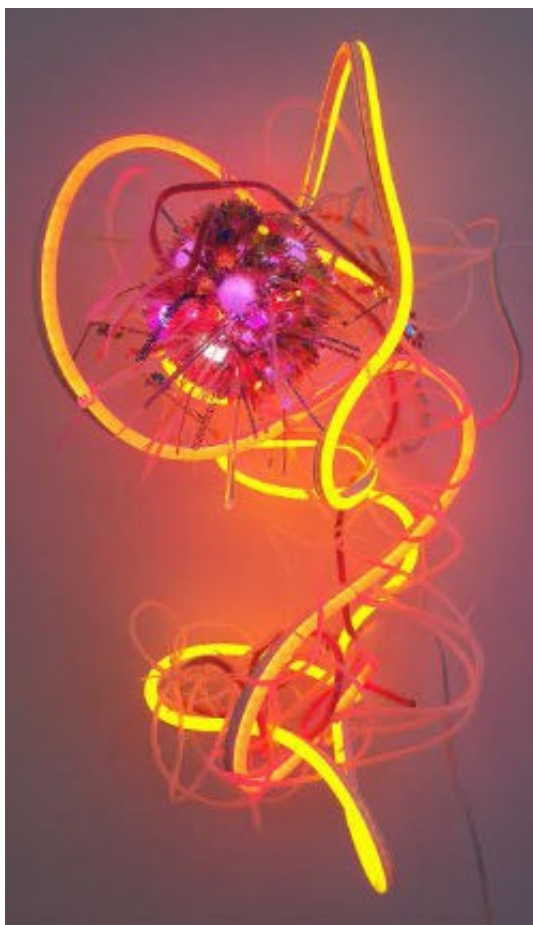
White Dwarf, 2014

Photo courtesy of Anya Tish Gallery

A person doesn't need to book a flight on Virgin Galactic to travel to outer space; just stop by Anya Tish Gallery to see Adela Andea's imaginary naturescapes brought to life through neon, LED lights, Plexiglass, mirrors and spec-fabricated consumer electronics. The pieces in the series, "On the Left Side of Mercury," are both otherworldly, such as the cataclysm of an exploding planet, and also terrestrial, though straight from the depths of the Mariana Trench.

I wanted to use the word bioluminescence to describe her pieces, but she's used that title in previous exhibits; though there's no denying that her creations could be used to warn or evade predators, to lure or detect prey, or as inter-species communications.

First to catch the eye is *Solar Wind*, an intricate arrangement of rings, coils, tubing and clusters with magenta flashing lights, planets being birthed and ending with an arrow leading to the great beyond. This piece is so detailed that even the shadows cast upon the wall are fascinating.



Magma Storm, 2014

Photo courtesy of Anya Tish Gallery

One of my favorites was *Transient Light II*, reminiscent of a pulsating glowing crystal geode heart, and kept alive with three major arteries in green, blue and violet. At 38" x 29" x 18", it was larger and more conspicuous than its sibling, *Transient Light I*.

Even more compelling was *White Giant*, a headless space/sea creature of milky translucent amorphous shapes, white spikes, beautiful pale blue crystals and finished off with delicate wisps of monofilament tendrils. Equally attractive was *White Dwarf*, with its cobalt blue

tubes, ice crystals and colorless emanations accented by pops of blue violet.

Tread carefully near *Magma Storm*, a giant, tangled cluster of orange, tangerine and coral emanating with energy and light; plastic tubing feeds the organism like a giant galactic gastrointestinal glob of Lucite and hex shapes -- I think I only imagined its heat.

There was a slight disappointment with *Belenos*, as the plugs and power cords were evident, and I felt as if I had seen behind the green curtain. All was forgiven, however, as the piece remains appealing in its simplicity, with his silver-pronged oblate spheroids of red, blue and violet, interwoven with white-hot tubing.

The largest piece, or rather collection of pieces, is *Nebula (Pillars of Creation)*, both floating from the ceiling and floor-based. This slow-pulsing color-changing series of convex and concave magnifying glasses casts off prisms of light; the cones and rods of my eyes could only see purple, rose, green, blue and orange, but I'm confident Nebula was broadcasting a higher number of distinguishable chromaticities. Visitors can walk around, underneath and inside the piece for changing effect and perception; it looks magnificent from all angles.

Don't stand too close to *Surface Fusion I* or *Surface Fusion II*; both suffer from proximity. From a distance one can better see how the mirrors and magnifying plastics project prisms upon the wall, echoing the hues and colors of spectral neighbors.

My only regret upon seeing this exhibit is that the gallery lights weren't turned off periodically. I can only imagine how fantastic these pieces must appear in the darkness.

On the Left Side of Mercury continues through February 14, at Anya Tish Gallery, 4411 Montrose Boulevard, open Tuesday to Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., 713-524-2299, anyatishgallery.com.

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