

[Gallery] **Mayol Makes Solo Debut with "Contemporary Visions"** by PHILIP LEDERER



All her life as an artist, Victoria Mayol has resisted being forced into a box, her creativity contained. As a student, teachers would try to corral her spirit, telling her when to use oils and when to use acrylics, when to use graphite and when to use pastel—and, so many times, when not to. “I hated that,” she says today, as she hated attempts to force her work into one particular genre. So Mayol painted her own path, and it took her from the cities and jungles of Argentina to the shores of Sarasota and Palm Avenue’s Dabbert Gallery, where she will enjoy her first solo exhibition this coming Friday, December 7.

Entitled *Contemporary Visions*, the exhibition features a whole new collection of works created within the past half year, giving the audience a brief glimpse into a particular moment in the artist’s creative life. And this particular moment happens to be a coming together of sorts, as the different streams of Mayol’s life and creative process converge.

A veteran of both figurative and abstract work, *Contemporary Visions* sees a merging of the two, with figures—often women in some state of contemplation or inner conversation—sharing the canvas with sweeping abstractions that frame and sometimes even threaten to overtake the subjects, like memories fading at the edges. But a vivid palette, perhaps a holdover from Mayol’s extensive time painting the varicolored wilds of Argentina, lifts the enterprise to a place of joy rather than melancholy.

Still refusing to be pigeonholed, Mayol’s work pulls in myriad media, from paint to pastel and from ink to fabric, depending on how the artist feels at the moment. “Each day, I have a different emotion, I have a different feeling,” she says, and the canvas captures it all, leaving the artist “a little exposed.” Her studio becomes a reflection of this freewheeling creation. Brushes get mixed up, pastels crunch underfoot and happy accidents abound. “But every time I have an accident,” Mayol says, “I love it.” And each becomes an important part of the final painting, an oasis born of chaos. “All I care about is the order in the painting,” she says.

Contemporary Visions opens at Dabbert Gallery on December 7, with an opening reception from 6pm to 8:30pm. The artist will be in attendance, and giving a live painting demonstration.