

## Galleries

### The many facets of artist Toni Scott

NoHo Gallery showcases multi-medium work

BY AMY LYONS

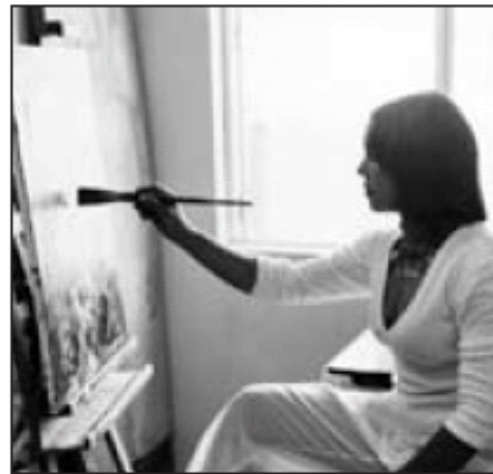
Toni Scott sinks a chainsaw into the bulky trunk of a Douglas fir, tearing into it with a lumberjack's strength. She transforms it with an act of intensive, brawny labor, carving out a nine-foot-tall slender totem whose curves and proud stance pay homage to the female form. During another day in the life of the versatile artist, Scott totes a camera, employing her precise, discerning eye to snap photos of red-clad seductive divas, spiraling staircases and celebrity movie stills for LL Cool J, Renee Zellweger and more.

See her in yet another light, sitting before a sturdy slab of deep grey alabaster stone with chisel and hammer in hand, meticulously mining for the queenly visage that she knows resides at the core of the mighty rock. Drink in her oil paintings and imagine their creation: Scott applying layer upon layer of burgundy, orange and yellow hues to give birth to pieces she calls "Red Woman I, II and III."

If you are sufficiently intrigued with the various tools and tricks of Toni Scott's laborious trade, visit NoHo Gallery LA at the Lankershim Arts Center to see the work of this photographer, graphic artist, sculptor and painter. A sampling of Scott's work is displayed at the gallery as part of their Art Bazaar group show, running through December 10. Upon entry to the space, head toward the back wall and turn right to be greeted by Scott's renderings of the human form, a collection of sculptures

and paintings that she dubbed 'Art of the Human Spirit.'

"The human form is at the heart of all of my work," says Scott. "Being alive is a work of art in and of itself and my artistic process is so full of that which is alive. When I work with wood from a Douglas fir, for instance, I'm working with a material that creates oxygen. The houses we live in are made partly from wood and we sometimes take that for granted. When I work with stone, I'm



Toni Scott, painter, sculptor, photographer and...

thinking about how long the material has been around. Stone carving is such an ancient tradition and the whole process of getting stones from a quarry and chiseling, sanding, working with power tools—it's very active and makes me feel alive," said Scott, who has worked with stone from the Carrera quarry, where Michelangelo gathered rocks.

Her artistic family tree has well-watered roots, including parental and sibling branches of artful talent. A California native, Scott has been an artist since the age of 19, receiving training from Otis Parsons Art Institute and additional training from Master artists. Her collectors include filmmaker Gary Hardwick; writer Mike Ferris ("Terminator III"); and film star Gabrielle Union. She once commissioned a painting for Arsenio Hall's mother, who wanted to give her son a birthday

gift in line with his love of masks.

Scott has been no stranger to hauling, heaving and schlepping the materials from which she creates. There is no end to the tools with which she works: a rotary chainsaw, a right-angle grinder, and a respirator that she straps on for proper breathing amidst swirling sawdust. When she sits at the computer to do her digital artwork—a medium in which she feels she has the most artistic freedom and flexibility—the respirator and power tools get temporarily retired to the tent in her backyard where she carves.

Proud to be working in a group show at NoHo Art Gallery, Scott says she has shed the ego of her earlier years, when she thought a solo show was the only way to be seen. "I'm so happy to be in the NoHo show with other artists. It's important me to see the work of my peers and it's nice to get audience members from the other artists' work," says Scott, adding that curator Daniel Coronado DeBevoise chose a wide selection of her work. "It is nice to see that Dan is open to a variety of my stuff. I loved seeing which of my pieces he chose to display; it's another telling of my story."

Toni Scott is a living example of how the product and process of the artist live in direct relationship to one another. Smiling and confident, Scott is a reflection of the multi-faceted woman she creates and these women of her mind's eye reveal hints of Scott's nature. Nowhere is this communion with her work more apparent than in Scott's own interpretation of a piece entitled Different Views. "Four faces, four roads...which road to live? A mother, a career woman, passive, aggressive, so many choices." \*

**The Lankershim Arts Center, home of Noho Gallery LA, is located at 5108 Lankershim Blvd. For more information on the Art Bazaar, call 818.7617784. For more information on Toni Scott, visit <http://www.toniscott.com>. Art Bazaar Group Show runs through December 10.**