

<http://www.artblog.net/extra/caw.html>

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Raquel

I don't see the connection between the title of Christians Duran's show at the Ingalls and Associates entitled "Apparitions" to his body of work. His work looks like a page ripped out of an old anatomy book turned into art. His paintings remind me of some map to all the arteries and veins located in the human body. I counted at least 4 different layers of branched out veins of all different colors.

Each branch meticulously painted again and again, layer over layer of paint. Each figure or head seems like it comes out of a dream or even a psychedelic episode having taken too much X. In the middle of the floor lays a sculpture which I personally think isn't a strong piece. Although the plastic branches and skulls are reminiscent of Chris' paintings, they lack the same energy his other work gives off.

Christian's pieces poses morbid beauty. The human body and its inner workings is art to begin with. But his take on it gives off a dark vibe. Something the TM Sisters successfully do with their religious themes tying it in with punk.

Next, we have Pedro Valdez's show named RASF UNI VAS UR FALUT. He takes magazine ads and adds his own street art/graffiti or cut outs of words to create collages. This gives us the viewer an idea that perhaps Pedro has a very busy mind; constantly trying to branch out into different ideas and themes. His take on street art helps the acceptance of graffiti and street art as actually art in today's society.

Pedro adds his own, personal touches to one wall which is completely covered with ripped out magazine ads and photographs from books. He finds words that would relate to the image then draw "old school" graffiti on top with marker or ball point pen. He even rips out a page from his own high school year book making a self portrait. Pedro even draws on the gallery wall with pencil creating a one of a kind piece. In his trademark graffiti style, it starts from the staircase to over the arch way of the door to the larger wall. There in the middle of the wall hangs a photograph of a girl sitting in a tub. I fought the urges to smack that photo off the wall. That idiotic image had no place being there.

Another artist tied up into the Miami street art scene is the TM Sisters. They do collages with fabric, pre-existing images with their trademark hologram paper. The sisters use themselves in their work also. Tasha and Monica usually portray themselves as the person looking for the guidance in their lives; reaching for the hologram lighting bolt coming down from the sky. The TM sisters transformed the entire Rocket Project's front room into their art. Once entering the building, you'd think you were sucked into one of their pieces. Fluffy clouds hang from the sky; you almost expect for lighting to hit you

right there and then. The show was truly interactive with two video games the TM Sisters brother help create.

In STATIC you play as a hand, which you shoot out lighting, bolts at black lines aimed at you. Wither or not this is symbolic; personally I think it's meant to be. You're firing at the darkness, which tries to weight you down and loose track of everything else. The second game is controlled by foot pads connected to sensors which you guide one of the TM Sisters through the level dodging lighting to reach you stomp on both pads gaining more and more points. My highest score was 182,420.

All three shows are meant to explore our inner feelings of self-worth and meaning. Although in different packaging, the meaning is all the same. Each artist work is special, and are a must see.

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Paula Celman

Ingalls and Associates Gallery: "Apparitions", **Christian Duran's** drawings struggle between the freedom of its lines and the way he forces them to describe a recognizable image. The lines imitate those of a plant, they subdivide and ramify, constantly changing their width and direction. On *Skinless*, the overlapping of the lines brings depth into the picture. The different areas subtly show and hide the lines beneath them. The layers bend and seem to grow from each other. In the drawings of a skull, the lines shape themselves to narrate the different parts of it. A circular-shaped floral termination depicts the eye holes and small vertical strokes illustrate the teeth. The centrally located figure contrasts the background with the use of color and an always obedient line reinforces the separation. The background echoes the figure with fencing bands that grow from each other with constant thickness. The skull floats over a symmetrical and also floating stencil-like branch. Another piece portrays a human figure in its most recognizable position, a frontal view of the body and a profile head. The figure spreads throughout the paper mimicking the way a plant would grow.

Dorsch Gallery: While Duran tries to imitate life in his drawings, **Rene Barge's** "Gifts" are alive. They are tiny 4x4 drawings on paper. He used traditional materials: pencil, watercolor and inks; he handled them in a straight forward way. Each one of these drawings shows sensibility and a profound connection with the act of doing. The ink splashes seem to emerge from the paper and dissolve back into it. They spread out and concentrate, playing with the emptiness of the paper. The areas breath and dialogue between each other enlarging and decreasing its sizes before our own eyes. On his most successful pieces, the marks emanate from a corner and expand activating the whole space. The pencil lines explore the area, erupting under a white veil of ink and then straightening up again. Unlike Duran's drawings, Barge's exist independent from anything outside the work. They don't intend to describe anything, they live by themselves.

Kevin Bruk Gallery: Unlike the previous works, **Jesse Bransford's** drawings were never intended to look alive. When entering the gallery, a steam-roller sized piece startles the viewer. But after the initial shock comes the comfort of understanding it's just a drawing on the wall. The piece succeeds in creating the visual illusion of coming forward. This is achieved by placing the center of the design opposite to the entrance, and the use of perspective-deformed lines. Those who find interest in the world's symbols might find this show worth visiting. The pictures integrate elements from different cultures into the composition. Some glass caged drawings of lesser size decorate the remaining walls. The graphics look printed but a closer inspection betrays the hand made origin. Pencil outlines and flat filled areas construct the surfaces and lines. The pieces accentuate their computer-generated style with shadows of every symbol; an easy 3 step command trick on an image editing program but a rather tedious one on actual paper.

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Pony Pagano

Viewing the shows of Rubell Family, Dorsch, and Ingalls, there lies a common theme: receptivity. Each show provoked a different feeling, and it's been awhile since work has affected me in some way. I feared I'd feel permanently indifferent towards contemporary art, but these shows proved to be a silver lining in the gray clouds of emotionless images of past exhibits.

Beginning with the "Supersize" show at Rubell Family Collection, I found myself amused with some of the sick humor there. Naomi Fisher's Booty Bouquets proves there can be more than two functions of the ass. Using genitalia as everyday objects (in this case, a vase?) always evokes a chuckle. Each photo takes place in the woods. Rich, green foliage and brown trees, sticks and brush provide a shadowy background (and great contrast) to the pasty, white ass that is the center of attention. In the ass's grasp is a beautiful bouquet of exotic flowers, bright and colorful. There are more photos like this, just the flower arrangements differ. These images give a whole new meaning to "stop and smell the roses".

In another room of the Rubell gallery, Charles Ray pleases himself in more ways than one. He created his image as six or seven life sized sculptures, each on partaking, or about to, in a sexual act. Talk about loving one's self! Like many people only imagine doing, Charles Ray does it. The only thing I wondered about with Oh Charlie, Charlie, Charlie was: if Charlie loves himself so much, then why don't any of the Charlie's have boners? If he's going for shock, he should've used more X-Rated imagery. It was a humorous display, but could've been even funnier.

The show at Dorsch gallery evoked feelings of sentiment. Renee Barges "Gifts" are personal, heartfelt, and are executed as such. These small paintings exude more emotion than a gargantuan slop-art work does. The CD's were less impressive, but the painting were little gems.

Peggy Levison-Nolan's exhibit, "Beginner's Luck", is like looking through a family album. The many artists who contributed to this provided images to what is beautiful and special to them, purely without technical assistance or craft awareness. I felt I was let in to their lives, like a person welcomes one into their home. Each photo reveals the personality of the artists: who's socially oriented, nature based, commercially driven, etc. There was more personality to the presentation, also. Instead of a framed, polished, nice-and-neat display, the photos were arranged unmethodically, just there to be experienced. There were no worries about touching, or getting too close.

Looking at Christian Duran's "Apparitions" at Ingalls and Associated, I get a feeling of unease. The name of the show give the mixed media images a haunted forest appearance. But titles of the work like Skinless offer the drawings of limbs and branches an alternate interpretation. I get the impression these could also be the nervous system under stress. Whatever the meaning behind them may be, Duran's work provokes feeling. There is also a liveliness to them, from the directions of the lines withing the works.

The shows in the three galleries held my interest in one way or another. They were amusing, lighthearted, and sentimental. Rubell's exhibits held most amusement, while the work at Dorsch's felt more intimate, and the setting, comfortable. At Rubell, I felt overwhelmed by the large amount of work that huge gallery held. But the art was equally impressive to the small exhibits of Dorsch and Ingalls.

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Sweet Girl 27

The mixed media collages of the TM Sisters resembled to Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's "La Goulue." The silhouetted figures in the background of Lautrec's work similarizes to the black and white background of the collages of the TM Sisters. The sisters's work reminded me of a mixture of comic books and the 1970's movies.

They also had similarities to Roy Lichtenstein's "Drowning Girl" and Andy Warhol's "Gold Marilyn Monroe." They had their oldies style and comic book styles. The lightning bolt on their work makes everything stand out. The shiny part of it captures my attention. In my opinion, I would have like to have seen some of the people stand out as well, so that the audience can see it's about a person being struck by the bolt. It could have been at least 1 person just to get the idea like in their video games.

An artist from this century named Pedro Velez had the sisters's style as well. They both do mixed media work. I observed that now a days people like doing this style of work better than anything else. They like pasting a variety of stuff on a piece of paper.

Even though they have similar work, it makes me want to get these papers and crunch them up. I just want to throw them away just by looking at them. In my opinion, these "artists" are still living in the past. I see their work and think, "high school work." They should take a step more to achieve something more interesting.

Pedro Velez seems like a mad drug addict. I don't get what message he's trying to give. It seems like he's mad at President Bush. He displays that in a lot on his images or cut out articles. What Velez writes looks very offensive. He writes things like "hell" and "god fuck." I am a religious person and I don't like what I see.

Who knows what this guy's into? Instead of creating beautiful artwork, Velez goes out and write, not draw or paint, but writes very offensive stuff. It seems like he's diabolic, like in the movie "Exorcism of Emily Rose." I haven't seen the movie and wouldn't even set eyes on that.

God gave us this creativity. I would like to use it for good things, not bad like Velez. I wouldn't want to hang out with these type of people. I'd like to do things people would be proud to hang on their walls, plus with the amount of money being asked. The writing of Pedro Velez gives me an imaginary vision of David Wojnarowicz's "Death in the Cornfield." I bet that as a child, he was treated like this ugly picture of Wojnarowicz.

Christian Duran's work on "apparitions" and Maria Martinez-Canas's "Lies," gives a similar message in one reason to one another. They're both showing images of the human body,

but not showing who they're are. It gives you a mysterious thought to it. It makes you wonder who they are and what they're doing there. That's what the meaning of art is meant to be. It keeps you in interest.

There's one piece on Martinez-Canas's called "Lies: Doll," which at first you might think its a person falling or lying down, but in reality its a doll. At first, it tricks your mind. There's also a picture of a man looking up. You'd think, "what is he looking at that is giving him this impression?" Her pictures always leave you thinking about it. That makes it great to look at for hours until you come up with a solution to it.

This happen with me with Duran's work. All of his work are made of vines. At first, I thought, "cool, a picture full of vines with different colors; great." Then I saw that in-between these vines formed the human body and head. These paintings are educational because it shows you the circulatory system. It also shows you how to use different colors to separate the hair with the rest of the face.

Consequently, I would say that the most interesting work I've seen would have to be Christian Duran's "Apparitions". It's not only about the educational meanings of it. It's about the use of lines, textures, and colors put into his work. In his statement, he says that the use of vines that he puts into his work with the human figure is to show the connection we have with nature. I believe he put this meaning and love into his work. I have been trying to find a work that goes with its statement and I finally found it.