



Install Art Here Open House. October 13, 2012

October 15, 2012 [Hektor Esparza](#)

As part of the Rediscover Downtown Day programming last Saturday, this open house at Michele C. Quinn Fine Art was an all-day affair, and a classy one at that. Install Art Here, with paintings, photography, sculpture and installations by Erik Beehn, Mark Brandvik, JW Caldwell, Shawn Hummel and RC Wonderly, is the second of its kind at MCQ: an exhibit comprised of works by artists who are also art handlers. Each has worked for gallerist Michele C. Quinn as well as at other fine art galleries around town. I arrived as the space was opening just after 11 a.m. To wake me up and whet my palate, I paired brunch-style passed hors d'oeuvres of quail eggs served over wild mushrooms with an Anchor Steam Ale. These and other delicacies and libations were provided by *The Apartment*, which is due to set up shop downtown soon. If this morning's well-chosen yummys are typical of what they do, then I am so looking forward to that.

I sat down with Shawn Hummel and RC Wonderly to talk about how the show came together and the about the effects of having an exhibit created exclusively by art handlers. Hummel and Wonderly gave an informal interview, filling me in.



They both agreed that since Install Art Here features far fewer artists than the previous art handler's showcase, it was not as challenging to spatially or thematically work out. They also agreed that the concept allowed for a more casual, experimental approach as each artist was expected to submit a work both typical of what they are known for as well as a piece that was created to work with the architecture, interior design or landscape of the space. As craftsman art handlers, Wonderly and Hummel are more than familiar with a well-made shipping crate. A long-running inside joke between the two is that sometimes their custom-made crates have more time put into them than the works of art they carry.



Hummel took this idea to its logical conclusion by turning one of these wooden transports into a sculpture/installation piece in the courtyard behind the gallery. I was so stoked to see the superb DJ Aurajin's turntable, that I walked right by this piece. Fortunately someone pointed it out to me. Using a simple peep-hole device and minimal interior design, Hummel transformed the utilitarian object into a magic box.

Wonderly also went the utilitarian route, replacing a curtain that usually separates gallery from work space with linen that he ornamented with a subtly engaging pattern and texture. This was accomplished by using a needlepoint-like process, displaying the fuzzy opposite side instead of the front.



Mark Brandvik's rocket-in-the-fireplace made smart use of the space inside the gallery's main room, as did Erik Beehn's photo transfers on the opposing wall. To get a good view of the rocket, you have to get down low. To get a better understanding of the photo transfers, take a look around the outside of the building first. An intriguing experiment in mental hocus-focus and memory manipulation.

MCQ is located on 7th Street not far from LVA, the performing, visual and language arts high school. I'd like to see more galleries and music venues in this area just outside of the arts district. It would make it more appealing for those trying to make a day or evening out of a visit to the increasingly interesting work-in-progress that is the new downtown. *Install Art Here* offers plenty of pleasurable experiences. Brief visits most definitely inspire return trips because of the depth of substance available for hard study.

Portrait photos by Checko Salgado. All other photos by Sidney Esparza.