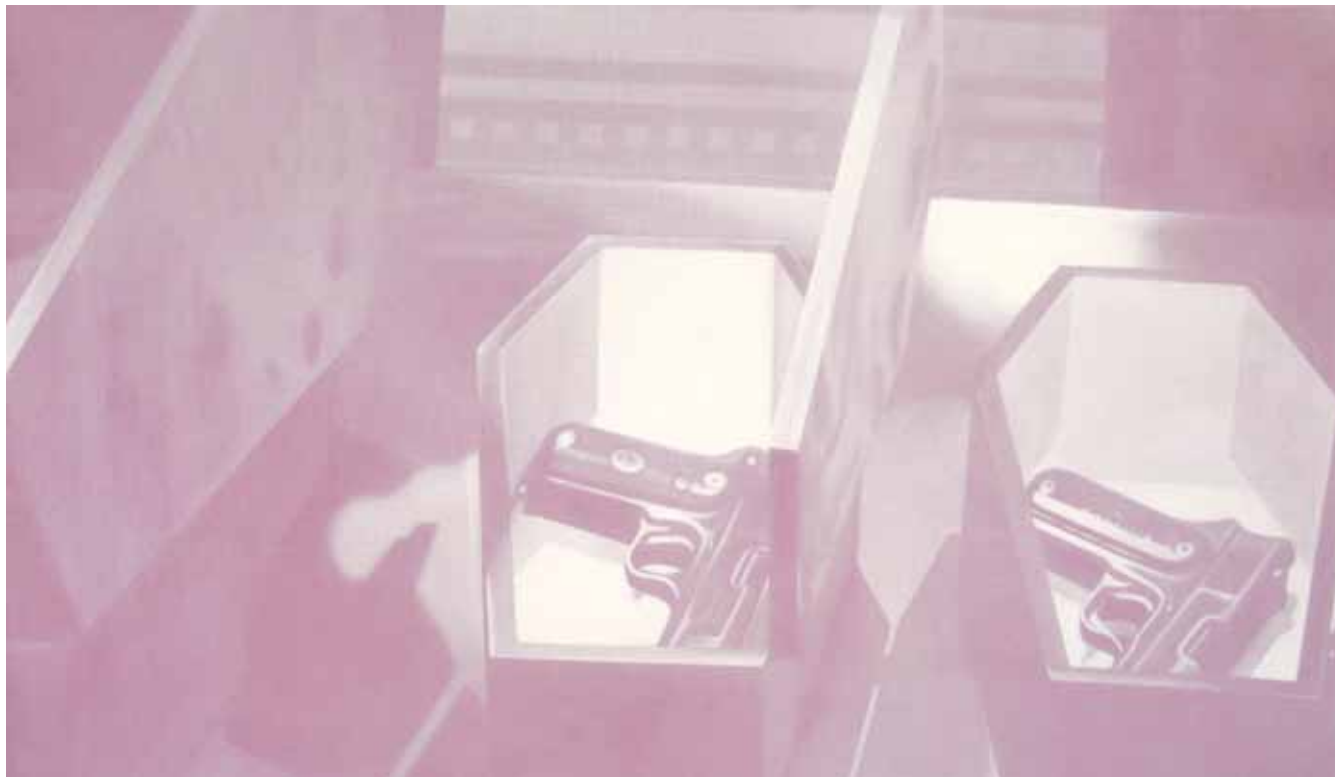


Artist Portrait:
Andrew Wodzianski

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Andrew Wodzianski, House III, 2008, Titanium white oil on tinted canvas, 30 x 48 inches



He is the only artist to ever come to an interview wearing a black suit. But, hmm, this is no ordinary business suit. There is something oddly familiar about the cut of the cloth, the old-fashioned tie clip, the handkerchief—even his haircut and neat handlebar mustache. Of course, it's the look of those dapper villains from the classic horror flicks of the 50's.

Andrew Wodzianski looks at his art from the inside, not from a distance. He becomes his art, or maybe he always has been the central character in the games he played since childhood—manipulating with delight the false assumptions that leap from first appearances.

He received a toy as a child that let him make drawings of monsters. The fun part was that it allowed the mixing of monster parts; he could create his own ogres, and new stories at the same time. Andrew does exactly that in two separate gallery shows during October. (See "At the Galleries") The paintings and drawings celebrate the times and contributions of earlier artists and film makers while making their own contribution to the wonderful world of art and visual fantasy.

His early passions led him to a BFA, and to teaching at high

school level while he was building a body of work. He received an MFA at the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2002 and soon took a leap into the professional art world. He has received awards and has been exhibited frequently in galleries throughout the area.

Theatrics, make-believe, promotions, gimmicks, fun: it's all there in his work. It's art from the inside, looking out at us and looking back at the same time. And you know what? It turns out to be very good.

Jim Magner's Thoughts on Art

We all know the visual arts are based on appearances. You look at them and you like them or you don't. Maybe you think a painting of a pear should look exactly like a pear, complete with highlights and a dewdrop or two. Perhaps you want a landscape to be so "real" and inviting that you can almost smell the



House VI, 2009, Titanium white oil on tinted canvas, 30 x 48 inches

wildflowers and feel the soft earth beneath your feet. Maybe you don't care about that; you want exciting colors and wild forms that defy the way things are supposed to look. Or, it could be that all you want is color—lots of it: swirling, throbbing and roaring like a Midwest tornado through a paint factory.

But what if the visual arts are not about what you see but about something else. Andrew Wodzianski (see Artist Profile) lives his art. He's a walking, breathing affirmation of the notion that the scary stuff we invent in pictures, stories and film are the real inner monsters waiting to pop out of our chests like in the "Alien." Very dangerous indeed. Then again, he suggests it could just be theater—entertainment on a flat surface.

So, all of the visual stuff of the ages could be the collective forces of fun, or the currents that reach beyond human survival to another reality—something beyond the surface—the coerced appearance of invisible spirits, yearning to be seen. Which is it for you? You have choices.

At the Museums

"Man Ray, African Art and the Modernist Lens"

The Phillips Collection
1600 21st St. NW; Oct. 10–Jan. 10

Man Ray and his Harlem Renaissance contemporaries unveil the power of African art in Western culture with black and white photos from the 1920s and 30s.

Ray always gives you photographs that strike back with images hard to shrug off. His interpretation is as much a result of know-how—camera angles, lighting and cropping—as it is subject selection. This is a learn-something show. www.phillipscollection.org

At the Galleries

"Abra Cadaver"
The Fraser Gallery
7700 Wisconsin Ave, Suite E
Bethesda, MD; Oct. 9–Nov. 13

This is a solo exhibition of drawings by DC artist, Andrew Wodzianski, (see "Artist Profile") which features illustrations derived from his old "Zoid Masters" plates. All 40 of the "Androids of Mass Destruction" drawings are of women with male or droid characteristics. Ambiguity is intended. An opening reception is timed with the Bethesda Art Walk, Oct. 9, 6–9. A closing reception will be timed with the Nov. 13 Art Walk. www.thefraser-gallery.com.

"House"
Flashpoint Gallery
916 G St. NW; Oct. 8–Nov. 7
Andrew Wodzianski's subtle and shadowy

oil paintings play with the nonhuman images of William Castle's 1959, "House on Haunted Hill." The 50th anniversary celebration of the high-camp horror flick, which starred the one and only Vincent Price, begins Oct. 8 with a Wodzianski performance piece, House XIII. There is also a scavenger hunt, House Hunt DC, with the winner taking home a painting from the show. A costume party will be held at the gallery Oct. 30. The promotional gimmicks, audience participation and goofy fun are fitting tribute to the eccentric Castle but they don't take away from the quality of the paintings. www.flashpointdc.org.

All Media Show
Capitol Hill Art League
545 7th St. SE; Oct. 17–Nov. 6

CHAL opens its second all media show of the 2009-10 season, Oct. 17, 5-7, with a reception and gallery talk for the public. Admission is free. It's all original art and for sale. The juror is Delna Dastur, an instructor at the Alexandria Art League and the Smithsonian Associates. www.chaw.org.

"Landscapes"
The Village Gallery
705 No. Carolina Av. SE; to Oct. 18

Alan Braley lets loose free flowing, yet controlled depictions of the dynamics of the natural world in a new series of landscapes. www.braleyart.com.

"Exotic Textures"
Evolve Urban Arts Gallery
@ Pierce School Lofts
1375 Maryland Ave. NE; Oct. 3–Nov. 15

The large photographs of Columbian-born Betto Ortiz capture "situations familiar to local subjects yet seemingly exotic to our eyes." In each case, color, shape and texture become the actual subject matter. He integrates the smooth surfaces of the prints with the three-dimensional mixed-media matting—hundreds of tiny photographs covered in layers of acrylic paint. The opening is Oct. 3, 4-7, and features a free "tasting menu" paired with selected works. www.evolvedc.com.

"Trust us for just us"
Marsha Mateyka Gallery
2012 R St. NW; Oct. 2–Nov. 14

This exhibition of new watercolors and constructions is a major career retrospective for the delightful art of the delightful William T. Wiley. The reception is Oct. 3, 4-6. It is opening concurrent with "What's It All Means. William T. Wiley in Retrospect" opening at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, (Oct. 3–Jan. 24). You're going to love this work. www.marshamateyka.com. ★

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