

OUR TOWN

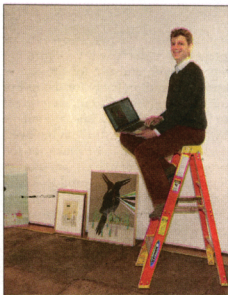
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Just Between Us



Just Between Us artists take a break from installing their group show at the Vollmer Gallery; Wesley Anderegg, Rafael Perea de la Cabada and Maria Rendon



Jeremy Tessmer, the Gallery Director at Sullivan Goss, working on the layout of the works for the exhibit

Jeremy Tessmer, the Gallery Director at Sullivan Goss, has curated an exhibit with a provocatively fresh statement for the traditionally inclined gallery. The new show opening April 4 at the Vollmer Gallery titled *Just Between Us* is a group show of three artists Wesley Anderegg, Rafael Perea de la Cabada and Maria Rendon, each with different mediums and personal inspirations. Influences noted in their works range from surrealism to core Latino narrative art in

a modernist fashion.

Perea is well known in Santa Barbara for his pieces of art throughout our town, in addition to prime commissions for the city, such as his ceramic tile works that decorate the sidewalks of Cabrillo Boulevard (which he did with Richard Irvine), and as faculty in the Fine Arts Department at Santa Barbara City College. Maria's fine art has seen the walls of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Westmont Ridley-Tree Museum of Art, Contemporary Arts

Forum, Atkinson Gallery at SBCC, and now Lotusland's current *Swarm Exhibit*, all while pursuing her MFA from UCSB. Wesley's playful sculptures from various materials yielded a prolific 22 solo exhibitions in 26 years. Here's what the artists shared in my preview of the works during its installation on Sunday:

Q. *Jeremy, what was your inspiration to bring these artists and the works they are showing together in one show, and does the art collectively have a message?*

A. *Jeremy:* Putting these three together was an intuitive move. They don't quite all "go together," but there are interesting intersections between Rafael and Maria Rendon and Rafael and Wesley Anderegg. Getting from Wesley to Maria requires a big leap, but that's what makes the exhibition so fun and challenging. Narrative art is not dead. Personal history and imagination still have vital roles to play in contemporary art practice. Highly personal work can still reach a very wide audience if artists employ abstraction, either through reduction, characterization, or generalization. It is that layer of uncertainty – of ambiguity – that abstraction creates that lets others enter the work, care about it, maybe even project their own private stories into it.

Maria, after viewing your works in the show, what would you hope and wish the viewers feel about your works individually and also collectively as a group exhibit?

A. *Maria:* I would like the viewer of my work to fill in the blanks and instill meaningful metaphors. I want them to create their own realities. I value the dialogue between the viewer and my paintings.

Maria, Wesley and Rafael, how do the works in this exhibit speak about your life? Is your artist statement purely personal, or do you feel the viewer can "relate" to the life elements you wish to convey?

A. *Maria:* The works in this exhibition stem from a personal experience and were initially meant to build "connections" with my paralyzed (now deceased) mother: bridging the distance that exists between her and me. Her condition triggered me to explore the space between perception and reality. The impression of what "is not" there interests me as much as what "is" there.

A. *Rafael:* The more personal the more universal.

A. *Wesley:* I make what I am interested in. It can be personal, social, political, environmental, no topic is out of bounds.

Rafael, given the noted surrealist influence in the art, would you say it is intentional, and what or who would you say is your strongest inspiration or who moved you toward that direction? Is this style of expression typical for you, or a new experience in your growth as an artist?

A. *Rafael:* Art labels are a futile attempt to catalog and explain the unexplainable. I do not subscribe to any movement. We all are one of a kind and respond to life influences differently. The artist function is not to look for answers but to open new avenues for questioning. *(For more information, visit www.sullivan-goss.com/Exhibits/justbetweenus.asp. The exhibit will run from April 4 through June 2, 2013.)*