

Accent Plus

Exhibit gets personal at School 33

By Mike Giuliano

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A three-artist exhibit at the School 33 Art Center, "Personal Politics," is at its best when it's up close and very personal.

The highlight of the show is a video by Gail Rebhan, "The Family Tapes," in which she does a lot more than simply document her two sons and husband in home video fashion. Rebhan playfully handles such serious issues as the parental need to record their children's lives, as well

as the struggle between trying to take care of the kids and make art. She also has to deal with a 4-year-old son reluctant to be videotaped, who runs from the camera complaining: "You're bothering me." Her video is accompanied by still photographs taken from the video images.



"Street Idol" by Eric Miller.

If Rebhan works with overtly personal material, the other two artists in the show deal more with issues of urban alienation.

Matias O'Donnell is represented by woodcut prints about urban angst that seem influenced by German Expressionism. O'Donnell also has acrylic paintings such as "Vertigo II," in which a red silhouetted figure dangles over a city as if about to fall to its urban fate.

The third artist in the show, Jenny Silitch, likes to use global images and other images pulled from the mass media. In a painting such as "God Saves," with the title lettered across the top and images including a syringe labelled "misery," she seems too blunt.

"Rusted Eyes," an exhibit of photographic constructions by Dan Meyers in School 33's Gallery II, the photographs themselves are worse-for-wear family and yearbook type shots whose meaning intentionally does not come through for viewers. His reliance on evenly spaced photographs placed against real wallpaper gives a sense of domestic patterns.

Currently in the installation space at School 33 is Carol Fastuca's "Sleepwalk Spit: a confession." Here a text printed in black runs around the white walls, with occasional illustrative drawings and red highlighting. Oh yes, underfoot you'll see and feel clumps of hair put under the clear plastic sheet covering the floor. The installation text makes irritatingly vague connections between saliva and the skin, but perhaps only the artist understands what she is talking about here.

An off the wall exhibit at the Life Of Maryland Gallery is exactly that. "Off the Wall - Work by Artists for Whom Two Dimensions Are Not Enough" is a group show in which the artists use everything from wire to paper cut-outs to make their wall-mounted artworks literally stand out.

Especially noteworthy is Eric Miller, who uses weathered wood, reeds, yarn and found objects to cleverly make sculptural assemblages that have anthropomorphic and spiritual associations. In his artistic hands, a rusted can is transformed into a head.

"Personal Politics," photographic works by Dan Meyers and Carol Fastuca's installation remain at the School 33 Art Center, 1427 Light St., through May 17. Call 396-4575.

"Off the Wall" remains at the Life of Maryland Gallery, 901 N. Howard St., through May 24. Call 539-7900.