

Cherry and Martin

Leonardo, Kathy. "Brian Bress Creates Art In Action At Cherry & Martin," *Santa Monica Mirror*, Nov. 28, 2014

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When one writes about art, one often comes to expect the norm – paintings, sculptures, photography, etc. Mixed media has crept into the repertoire of many skilled artists and now plays a prominent part in contemporary art. More often than not, the predictability of the fusion of paint, found objects and whatnot has caused many an art lover to heave a heavy sigh.

Rarely does an exhibition resonate on an entirely new plateau. However Brian Bress' exhibition does just that. Upon entering the Culver City gallery, Cherry and Martin, I was cleverly ambushed by a moving wall sculpture. I took a double take and approached the two person scenario that was unfolding before me. There were two beings – or what appeared to be illustrated characters peering back at me – moving.

In fact, they were scribbling and creating their own art right in front of me on the very glass that separated us.

“You can’t sleep on a door” is Cherry and Martin’s latest offering featuring the work of the immensely talented Brian Bress.

The title of the exhibit was a phrase coined by the grandfather of Bress.

“The absurdity of the sentence resonated with me,” said the artist. “And it touches something surrealist – themes like sleep, doors, combining quotidian imagery in absurd ways, Jungian... thinking about the power of dreams, the significance of our active minds when our bodies are inactive...”

One can only imagine what Bress must dream about if this is what he chooses to expose in his waking hours.

He continued, “And it feels at once comical and uncanny which is a place I would like the art I make to perhaps occupy.”

Most commonly referred to as video art, Bress prefers to call it “painting that uses time based media.”

The exhibition includes a variety of multi-faceted moving sculptures and paintings.

My favorite piece, which initially sparked my interest, is titled “Doctor/Patient #1 (on tan and violet lines)”.

Bress revealed the painstakingly long process it took to create it. “I make a drawing of a character of some kind and then I attempt to replicate that character as a costume but also as a wearable sculpture. The idea for the series came out of my love of drawing and wanting to create pieces where the viewer got to see drawings evolve.” Creating a costume out of foam and latex, he then painted the backgrounds each character inhabited.

He continued, “Once I have them built, I build a rig that holds a piece of glass between the performer in the costume (myself) and the camera. Then I use standard dry erase markers to draw on the glass.” I was impressed by his commitment to the end result and excited to learn this fascinating process, which culminated in a gleeful viewing experience.

Don’t walk – run – to Cherry and Martin. Bring the kids...they will love it!

“You can’t sleep on a door” will remain on view through Jan. 3, 2015.