

THE SEEN CHICAGO'S INTERNATIONAL ART & DESIGN BLOG

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ART SEEN: CHICAGO

CARRIE SECRIST GALLERY // ANDREW HOLMQUIST: MARCO (POLO)



Andrew Holmquist, *Armature*, 2013, Powder coated steel, with *Give and Receive* (left) and *Basketball Goldfish* (right).

by Nicole Rhoden, posted 27 September 2013

Andrew Holmquist pays homage to summer in *Marco (Polo)*, his newest exhibit at Carrie Secrist Gallery. The artist is known for his sweeping brushstrokes and fearless use of neon colors. The result feels like sunshine, swimsuits and street art — graffiti without a hint of angst.

Holmquist's varied materials and spontaneous mark-making epitomize play, a theme perhaps most elegantly embodied by *Armature*, a canary yellow, powder coated steel structure that takes over one corner of the gallery. The sculpture, somehow reminiscent of both minimalism and jungle gyms, seems to be a 3D dictation of the angular yellow strokes in a nearby painting called *Give and Receive*.

Among a few other bright, free-spirited works on canvas, a trio of smaller mixed media pieces called *Twist*, *Smack*, and *Flip* feel especially thoughtful. Metallic spray paint and neon drips nod toward juvenility but maintain delicate compositional balance. Negative space, colors and lines form geometric planes and angles, shapes that are simultaneously transparent and opaque, complete and incomplete.

In a second gallery, Holmquist embraces illustrative tendencies with enormous archival inkjet prints, where abstract shapes and Maurice Sendak-esque characters — grotesque but friendly — are superimposed onto beach photographs. This *Phantom Geisha* series

seems to read sequentially, but the narrative is ambiguous among the magenta and cerulean noise. All that matters, it seems, is the cheerful rebellion they radiate. Equally mysterious is a comparatively calm and quiet white-on-white panel painting that hangs alongside the prints and shares their *Phantom Geisha* name.

In the hallway, a sculpture called *Balancing Act* is just that — sculpted steel and an acrylic and oil painting balanced together on a shelf. Like *Armature*, 3D elements reiterate the playful lines of their 2D accompaniments.

Another small gallery is occupied by an installation, *Rosy Fingered Dawn*. Transparent colored clipboards are layered in front of an overhead projector to illuminate one wall of the dim room with cerise and lavender stripes. This artificial sunset, appropriately built from school supplies, gestures toward jelly-pink pool floats and rose-colored shades. Those mourning the start of fall — or those '90s kids like me with a soft spot for Double-Dare-slime-green and Nickelodeon orange — are sure to find comfort in Holmquist's mischievous splashes.

Marco (Polo) will be on display at Carrie Secrist Gallery, 835 W. Washington Boulevard, until October 12. For more information, visit www.secrisrgallery.com.

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