



## Merry Christmas at Merry Karnowsky

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Edward Walton Wilcox "Spinning Installation"  
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Merry Karnowsky Gallery celebrated the holidays with a nice exhibition of work for the Angeleno art connoisseur. Participants included the cream of the L.A. low-brow, pop surrealism scene including Victor Castillo, Edward Walton Wilcox, Shepard Fairey, and Camille Rose Garcia.

Shepard Fairey, widely known in mainstream media for independently creating the iconic "Hope" portrait of Barack Obama, presented limited edition silkscreen prints of earlier work. Fairey's work takes a cue from Andy Warhol's examination of popular American iconic figures but mixes it up with a psychedelic rock poster aesthetic of Haight-Ashbury circa 1967. The result is Fairey's portrait of Bob Marley, where the silkscreen process emphasizes the singer's iconic gravity, masterfully manipulating contours and colors of his prints. His trademark "Obey" prints were also in force, those powerful Orwellian compositions of his "absurdist propaganda" campaign, a homage to Soviet agitpop posters.

The work of Edward Walton Wilcox has been described by the LA Times as "Southern California Noir." Wilcox combines his passion for Late Gothic fantasy of Durer, Hieronymus Bosch and Dutch Golden Age painting with his own personal romanticism. "Gothiness" remains the most consistent characteristic of Wilcox's fantasies, which have an almost Surrealist quality. His large composition "Death and the Maiden" (2008, oil on panel) is a new interpretation and transformation of an old erotic motif: the overpowering confrontation between the little girl and death. The whole painting has an aura of the fantastic, while still preserving the dramatic

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romantic interpretation of the overwhelmingly dark subject matter. "Der Burnin Mill (Nokturn)" (2009, bitumen on canvas) is another pieces by the artist. It is a symbiosis of traditional Dutch landscape art and Wilcox's own Gothic style of painting, delineating danger through dark and sepia tones and fine brushstrokes.

Wilcox also exhibited several retro-medieval triptychs at the show such as his "Lazarus Altarpiece" with beautiful polychrome statues of Jesus, Lazarus and two angels. The wings of the triptych open just like Late Gothic "old school" altarpieces and the piece might seem perfectly at home in a dim cathedral. For a public accustomed to abstractions and generalizations, the visual impact of this work is profound.

Barcelona-based Pop surrealist Victor Castillo also brought his own unique revolutionary approach to the exhibition. One of his more memorable acrylics on canvas, "This is Not a Love Song," depicts two clowns dressed in black standing in front of the bonfire. Castillo's work is a powerful reaction to the violence of everyday life, contemporary popular culture and representational commercial images.

Painter, book illustrator, and graphic artist Camille Rose Garcia cites as her influences

Walt Disney and Phillip K. Dick. Her acrylic, mica, and giclee on paper pieces are particularly intriguing and recall the Art Nouveau illustrations of Aubrey Beardsley and non-surreal abstract fantasy of Paul Klee. "One Yellow Bird" (acrylic and gold mica on paper) contains the elements of abstract design and yet not pure abstractionist work. It depicts scattered and combined elements of a girl, a bottle and a bird. One design changes into another, creating a visual web worthy of Beardsley's "The Peacock Skirt". Another piece by Camille Rose Garcia, "Escape to Darlingtonia," is a Miroesque composition of bird-like creatures roasting marshmallows inside the giant head of a deer kissing a butterfly.

French artist Miss Van was drawn to graffiti art by the thrill of creating work outside the laws and rules of the gallery space. She has become one of the best-known female painters of the graffiti scene, gaining worldwide acclaim for her work. Miss Van's "writing" is unique in style and concept. She draws cartoon characters of sensual busty women, called "poupees" (or dolls). Merry Karnowsky Gallery presents her signature "poupees" in giclee on paper format.

For more information about the gallery, please, go to <http://www.mkgallery.com>

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