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San Francisco Art Gallery Reviews for September

By **Jonathan Curiel** Wednesday, Aug 17 2011

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Various: "Bay Area Now 6"

Through Sept. 25 at *Yerba Buena Center for the Arts*, 701 Mission (at Third St.), S.F. \$5-\$7; 978-2700 or www.ybca.org.

Every three years, YBCA showcases a disparate range of artists for its "Bay Area Now" exhibition, all but guaranteeing that visitors will find at least one artist to go gaga over. In the video realm alone there are three worthy of attention this year: **Richard T. Walker**, **Chris Sollars**, and **Ranu Mukherjee**. Walker recorded his visit to a remote desert where he played music and listened to semi-existentialist writing. It might sound like so much hippieish navel-gazing, but Walker — whose camera captures breathtaking panoramas — orchestrates a memorable 10-minute meditation on nature, self-expression, and finding moments of clarity. By contrast, Sollars is a kind of clown prince, going for laughs and provocation with his hair-themed art, including a video that has him rubbing his long beard against an ax and removing odd objects (toy baby, *Star Wars* figure, earbuds, lighter) from inside his brown chin follicles. At YBCA, plastic heads display the actual beard and long Jesuslike locks that once adorned Sollars' face. Then there's Mukherjee, whose video, *Color of History — Sweating Rocks*, is an arresting, almost abstract work that plays with images of sand dunes, ash clouds, oil-like spillage, swaying necklaces, and, yes, rocks that seem to sweat. Wind accentuates the movement of forms in this six-minute video that seems to be a commentary about globalization's reliance on remote horizons. Among the nonvideo works at YBCA, a standout is **Mauricio Ancalmo's** *Dueling Pianos: Agape Agape in D Minor*, which incorporates two player pianos, two hangars, a word processor, rolling pin, and paper rolls. The music is stirring, while the sight of this working contraption should delight even the most snobbish artgoer.

"Soulful Stitching: Patchwork Quilts by Africans (Siddis) in India"

Through Sept. 18 at the *Museum of the African Diaspora*, 685 Mission (at Third St.), S.F. \$5-



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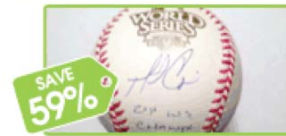
"A Pornography of Grief: Stories": Queer Performance Artist Revels in the Grim

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"Tigers Be Still": Hilarious Comedy Tinged with the Ache of Grief

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People of African descent have lived in India for at least 900 years — part of a worldwide diaspora that has led to innumerable hybrid art forms. In the United States, we have blues and jazz. India has quilts. Those on display at **MOAD** teem with color, style, and nuance. Often made from old garments, these quilts are reminiscent of the Ghanaian artist El Anatsui's giant tapestries — robelike sheaths of reused bottle caps and other discarded items, prized by museums worldwide. But these were intended for practical use in the homes of Siddis — India's African descendants. The MOAD quilts are supplemented by photos of the quilters, films that document Siddi life, and music distinct to Siddi communities. The quilts, then, become an entry point into learning about the full scope of African-Indian life. These impoverished communities are invisible on most India tourist maps. At MOAD, their quilts are elevated into high art.

Various: "The City We Love"

Through Sept. 3 at 941 Geary, 941 Geary (at Larkin), S.F. Free; 931-2500 or www.941geary.com.

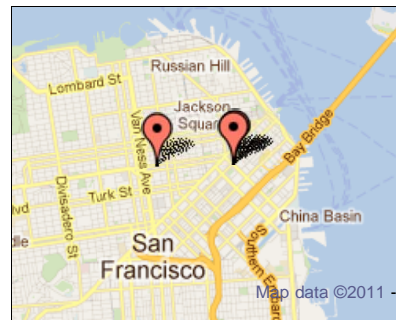
On the streets, the visual artist Apex is so revered that other street artists leave his wall figures untagged and unblemished. Full of interconnected bands, half-loops, and swirls, his paintings are psychedelic bonfires. The new Apex work featured in this exhibit of San Francisco street artists is intense and mesmerizing — a must-see for anyone eager to be challenged by what "street art" can be. Alongside Apex (who cocurated the exhibit) is **David Ball**, who creates surreal worlds of button-eyed animals and beings that crisscross dense landscapes. Backward letters and numbers are sprinkled on the outskirts of D Young V's scrupulous and stylish drawings, which depict a world where militarism, graffiti, and postpunk elements have an uneasy coexistence. For his "Rivera O2," a father holds a gun that his beaming child also grasps as if it were the key to their family's happiness. **Hugh Leeman**, who earlier this year won a



At Yerba Buena, Chris Sollars' beard goes multimedia. Photograph courtesy of artist.

Location Info

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts



Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
701 Mission (at Third St.)
San Francisco, CA 94103
Category: Community Venues
Region: South of Market

Museum of the African Diaspora
685 Mission (at Third St.)
San Francisco, CA 94105
Category: Museums
Region: Union Square/ Financial District

941 Geary
941 Geary (at Larkin)
San Francisco, CA 94109
Category: Galleries
Region: Hayes Valley/ Tenderloin

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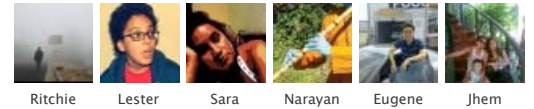
Music Links: Heavy Metal Quilts, the Smiths vs. the Misfits, and More
July 8, 2011

Whiskey & Waxing Contest Seeks SF's Best Beards and Mustaches
August 12, 2011

YBCA Offers Free Whiff of New Food Culture
February 18, 2011

Masterminds 2011: SF Weekly Recognizes Local Artists

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Masterminds grant in *SF Weekly's* Artopia contest, also has strong work represented here, paintings that celebrate the people who live on San Francisco's streets. Normally, you might notice the work of these artists for a few seconds — say, on a downtown wall as your Muni bus meanders past. But the pieces in "The City We Love" aren't casual distractions from everyday life. Rather, they are the distillation of that life, created by artists certain that their work deserves public attention.

February 16, 2011

Psycho Beach Party, Ferris Bueller's Day Off, Manuok and Pez's Sticker Art August 6, 2010

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Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Richard Walker

Chris Sollars

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