

GALLERIES

Injecting a bit of color in forms

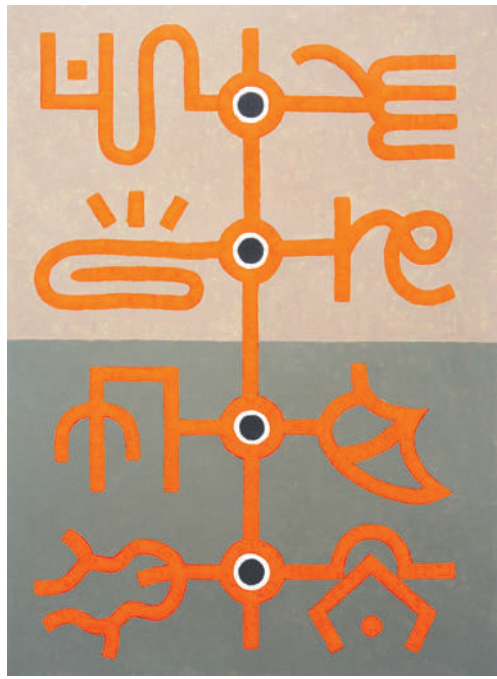
Veteran D.C. artist Tom Green goes beyond black and white

BY MARK JENKINS

In part because the paintings that originally defined his style were black and white, Tom Green has always seemed more concerned with form than color. The eight pieces in "Of This World," at the Curator's Office, show Green's continued interest in the hieroglyph-like forms that were originally inspired by his study of Mayan writing. But color plays a larger role here than in much of the veteran local artist's work.

All the paintings, which are acrylic on paper, follow the same essential form. A central axis, incorporating four dots within circles, serves as the spine for a series of ribs; these lead to various glyphs, whose exact forms are never repeated. The backgrounds are divided into two monochromatic blocks, which can be seen as purely geometric or as representing land and sky. (The darker shade is usually at the bottom, boosting the latter interpretation.) The backdrops range from pastel to bold and can be flat or textured.

These paintings are clearly linked to Green's earlier work yet have elements of color-field painting. The various hues play against one another, offering disparate effects in different combinations. The dots are all in black, the only



CURATOR'S OFFICE



OLD TOWN EDITIONS/MORTON FINE ART



G FINE ART

VARIETY: The eight pieces in Tom Green's Curator's Office show follow the same essential form: A central axis, incorporating four dots within circles, serves as the spine for a series of ribs; these lead to various glyphs. Above left is Green's "Of This World 8" (2011). Rosemary Feit Covey's "Fish," above center, is a highlight of "DC Now." Luis Silva contemplates metamorphosis in his G Fine Art show. Above right is Silva's "Untitled" (2011-12).

constant color on all eight paintings, yet their shade appears to shift slightly, depending on the complementary tints. This expanded use of color contrast seems a fruitful development for Green, but he may not be able to pursue it. These paintings, from 2011, were the last he made before he received a diagnosis of ALS, the muscle-weakening condition also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Luis Silva

From Ovid to anime, metamorphosis is a classic artistic theme. In the real world, cars don't turn into fighting robots, but some creatures merge into others by becoming their food. Versatile local artist Luis Silva melds both kinds of transformation in his painting cycle "The Fox's Tail," which is on display at G Fine Art. Alternately enchanted and eerie, these untitled paintings look like illustrations from a children's book that's not altogether suitable for kids.

In fact, Silva is writing a fable to complement his paintings (or maybe he's making pictures to il-

lustrate the story). Large chunks of the unfinished text, which features such fairy-tale regulars as a fox and a goose, are available on the gallery's Web site. The artist, who was born in Portugal but raised in the United States, uses English's flexibility with parts of speech to craft a literary equivalent of his images: "Chicken, porcupine and crow were moring through the act of lessing," he writes, turning adjectives into verbs as blithely as he grafts a mouse into a frog.

Silva sometimes reduces animals' bodies to slabs of meat or even, to repurpose a phrase, pink slime. Yet even the most disturbing of his images are elegantly rendered. The artist paints in oil on linen, with added pencil touches such as the black-on-black pattern that enlivens the background of his picture of an owl and tree stump. The colors are muted and often in the pastel range, but there's plenty of black and gray, notably in a spooky forest scene where the trees literally have eyes. Such images are fanciful, yet Silva's paintings contain too much realis-

tic detail to be easily relegated to the realm of fairy tale.

'Field Work'

The trees are genuine, but the setting surreal, in "Descent," one of the environmental-themed pieces in "Field Work," at Rockville's Visarts. Jackson Martin planted seven cypress trees inside plastic cones and suspended them from the ceiling of the Gibbs Street Gallery. Walking through this "collaboration between the natural and the cultural" may not be a sylvan experience, but it does prompt musings about how humankind routinely manipulates other living things.

Upstairs in the Kaplan Gallery, eight other artists explore similar ideas. Margaret Boozer and J.J. McCracken's "Waiting for Rain" is a slice of turf on a slanted wooden platform that's dry from lack of water. Dan Allende and Ian Cox's "Up in Smoke" comprises a photo and some blankets, relics of their project to send smoke signals from San Francisco to Rockville. The message was a Shaker homily instructing craftsmen to build only things that are "both useful and necessary" but to make them "as beautiful as you can."

Lynn Cazabon photographs wild foliage, growing with improbable vigor amid Baltimore's concrete and asphalt. Patterson Clark (who is also a graphic designer for The Post) tames invasive plants, turning them into paper, ink and wood to apply the pigment to his own wood-block-printed banners. Cazabon's photos are also printed on Clark's "alienweed paper," suggesting that new human actions can, on however small a scale, counter the harmful effects of previous ones.

The exhibition closes Saturday, and the last day features a Clark-led workshop on harvesting and processing weeds for artistic undertakings. For more information, see www.visartscenter.org.

'DC Now'

The turf looks healthier in "This Way, That Way, Right Way, Wrong Way," a piece by Victoria Shaheen included in "DC Now." Her three-part construction places such objects as a tiny white picket fence on squares of grass, evoking not Eden but suburbia. Shaheen's other piece in the show is the striking "White Light, White Heat," a grid of broken light bulbs rendered in cream-toned porcelain. It also shows her affinity for everyday objects — and the color white.

This group exhibition, organized by Morton Fine Art at Bethesda's Gallery B, displays the work of five District and Baltimore artists. Among the highlights are Maya Freelon Asante's compositions of colored tissue paper, stuffed into frames or hanging from the ceiling; Laurel Hausler's images in wax and oil, which resemble vintage family photos that have melted with age; and Rosemary Feit Covey's "Fish," a large, swirling composition of, yes, fish. Also notable are Billy Colbert's Warholian mug-shot collages, a teaser for the artist's upcoming show, opening next week at Morton's Adams-Morgan space.

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TOM GREEN: OF THIS WORLD
on view through April 21 at Curator's Office, 1515 14th St. NW; 202-387-1008; www.curatorsoffice.com.

FIELD WORK
on view through Saturday at VisArts Gibbs Street and Kaplan galleries; 155 Gibbs St., Rockville; 301-315-8200; www.visartscenter.org.



DAN ALLENDE AND IAN COX, VISARTS AT ROCKVILLE



JACKSON MARTIN, VISARTS AT ROCKVILLE

ENVIRONMENT: In "Descent" (2012), above, Jackson Martin planted trees inside cones at the Gibbs Street Gallery. Dan Allende

LUIS SILVA: THE FOX'S TAIL
on view through May 5 at G Fine Art, 1350 Florida Ave. NE; 202-462-1601; www.gfineartdc.com.

DC NOW: AN EXHIBITION OF NEW WORK BY FIVE CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS LIVING IN AND AROUND WASHINGTON, D.C.

on view through April 29 at A Pop Up Project at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda; 202-628-2787; apopupproject.com.

CROSSYNERGY CROSSWORD "ON THE ROAD MAP"

ACROSS

1. Loot
5. "That ___ lady ..."
10. 911 caller's quest
14. Puerto ___
15. Hollywood's Hawke
16. Way off
17. In the case of
18. Lag behind
19. "Can't argue with that"
20. Exorbitant charge
23. Grass skirt accessory
24. Appetite-whetting phenomena
25. "Stand by Me" star
31. Salute with stanzas
32. Start of an Army recruitment slogan
33. Sitcom landlord Fred
37. Out of the womb
39. Water park feature
41. NYC region
42. Nudging joint
44. "Wheel of Fortune" category
46. Office computer syst.
47. Herder's helper
50. A ___ (deductive)
53. Tigger's bouncy buddy
54. Historic court decision
60. Resort city east of Santa Barbara
61. Home Depot rival
62. Word after dream or drill
64. Die down
65. Raise a glass to
66. "Because of that ..."
67. Females
68. Passes over
69. Go hither and yon

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| 3. Pinocchio | member | 43. Minnow alternative | booking, at times |
| 4. Overture follower | 34. Take a turn in Yahtzee | 45. Shop class aid | 56. It's bridged in a 1957 film |
| 4. Site with an "I'm Feeling Lucky" button | 35. Laotian's neighbor | 48. Theater district | 57. Get some downtime |
| 5. Moist towelettes | 36. It may be demilitarized | 49. Remain without a reason | 58. Emperor advised by Seneca |
| 6. Gillette brand | 38. Insignificant sorts | 50. Creates furrows | 59. Infatuated |
| 7. Light horse-drawn carriage | 40. Forms a hard coating on | 51. Indian nobleman | 63. Alice Mitchell, to Dennis the Menace |

THURSDAY'S CROSSYNERGY SOLUTION

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O	L	I	V	E	R	I	C	E	Z	O	O	M
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DOWN

1. Mrs., in Mazatlán
2. Becoming a real boy, for
26. Worshipped one
27. Sink or swim
28. Compelled to go
29. Pizza tidbit
30. Preceding generation