

painting reflects contemporary technology. "And here is yet another way to bring great art into your home!" you might say. Certainly it is a witty contemporary comment on the contradictions of our society, as well as a statement about Treeby's devotion to his work.

Both exhibits continue through March 25.

## The Painter Painting the Painting at Insite

"Paintings of Pictures of People with Paintings" is the title of **Bruce Adams'** exhibit currently being shown at **Insite Gallery**. The paintings tell the story of viewing art in white box museum spaces. As you walk into the space, the painting to the left of the door comically looks like a couple of young people sitting on a sofa watching TV. The couple is holding museum tour wands up to their ears—the kind provided by most museums these days—and both have the kind of dumbed-out expression one gets when watching TV. This is not what you'd expect to see in an art gallery.

Adams has visited museums around this country and France, taken pictures of people looking at art at each location, and used those same photos for his paintings. Each painting shows a person or several people checking out a work of art with varying degrees of interest. This group of paintings was made over several years and includes a few different approaches to the work. Some paintings present the gallery spectators in a photo-realism style. In others, where the photograph may have been blurry, the features are not clearly depicted. In each painting there are three main components — the artwork they are looking at (usually a recognizable painting or era of painting), the people doing the looking, and the white space in between.

The white space of these paintings can be distracting. Take for instance, the largest painting in this show, which is about 16-feet wide by 7-feet tall. Here, two groups of people are looking at the same small Impressionist painting. In this massive work which fills the main exhibition wall, the angles of the people and the painting being depicted sets up an interesting sense of space. The painting falls flat when you walk up close and look at the surface. Adams uses an entirely different painting technique in the white area, which is the majority of the painting. The white wall is painted in large, fast brush strokes, with lack of attention to the way the white space touches the people and painting. While it is obvious that portraying the artwork or the people in the paintings can be more complicated than creating white space, that is not a good enough excuse. In a world where Robert Ryman devotes his life to painting fields of white, the background of any painting needs to be dealt with just as much thought as the "subjects." Otherwise, the entire work falls apart.

Nonetheless, Bruce Adams should be applauded for this significant body of work and the effort put into these pictures. "Paintings of Pictures of People with Paintings" is on view through March 12 at Insite Gallery (810 Elmwood Ave., behind the Neighborhood Collective).

—cynn timer

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