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New Works at Hamiltonian Gallery

U Street's new [Hamiltonian Gallery](#) opened on October 11 to a bustling crowd of curious onlookers. Those who were there to see how the space had been transformed after its twenty years of vacancy were in for a treat right from the start, and greeted at the front door by Nao Matsumoto's *Whore*, an oversized but functioning quarter-fed vibrator. The sculpture doesn't much resemble your typical sex toy, but instead is a huge, anvil-shaped pink eraser perched atop a black metal box labeled "WHORE", with a cutesy pink heart informing us it takes quarters only (it really does).

Each exhibit at Hamiltonian features one mentor artist and two fellows. Brooklyn sculptor Matsumoto is this month's mentor, and his extensive experience (which includes teaching at Pratt) shows in both the meticulous construction and engineering of his work, and in his confidence to deal with such provocative subject matter. Matsumoto's other sculptures on display include a set of plastic, vibrating fertility dolls, and a fully-functioning flame thrower.

This month's two fellows are Ian MacLean Davis, who holds an MFA from MICA, and Bryan Rojsuontikul, who graduated last year from George Mason with a BFA. While Davis' work is visually stimulating and his technique well-honed (often layering acrylic, drawing, and the oft-snubbed giclee), the content of his work is perplexing. One struggles to make sense of his squirming lines, which hint at elements of mapping and human form, often without clearly pinpointing a target of reference.



Nao Matsumoto's Whore is one of several provocative, functioning sculptures on display at the new Hamiltonian Gallery on U Street. Image courtesy of the gallery.



Rojsuontikul's intent is much more obvious, without suffering from a lack of ambiguity (which he does add into his titles). Clearly influenced by painting and the Washington Color School, the sculpture-trained artist uses duct tape as a

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replacement for paint, likely chosen both for its physical qualities and to question traditional methods of art-making. Rojsuontikul created most of his pieces at Hamiltonian, using hard-to-find duct tape brights that run seamlessly from the canvas to the wall to form the stripes and contrasts associated with the Color School. His "paint" often extends onto the floor, emulating the liquid medium with drips and splotches carved out of the rows of tape.

Though the work of the three artists' is quite different in both content and form, they share a drive for technique and exploring their medium's boundaries. Both Rojsuontikul and Davis elevate less respected media, while Matsumoto pushes sculpture into sometimes uncomfortable interactivity.

New Works by Nao Matsumoto, Ian MacLean Davis and Bryan Rojsuontikul *is on view at the Hamiltonian Gallery until November 7, and is open by appointment only at this time. The gallery's next exhibit will open on November 8 as part of [Fotoweeek DC](#).*

By [Lynne Venart](#) in [Arts and Events](#) on October 23, 2008 10:30 AM [13](#) [0 Recommends](#) [Share +]



COMMENTS (13) [RSS]



[1] | [IMGoph](#)

cleanup on aisle six, please

[REPLY](#) | [OCTOBER 23, 2008 10:36 AM](#)

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[2] | [Shelbsthomcat](#)

Just when they think U Street is finally cleaned up, here come the whores again.

[REPLY](#) | [OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:01 AM](#)

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[3] | [connie_dobbs](#)

Wow, a flame thrower? Really? Um, and functioning? (firefirefirefire) Can I tryyyyyy it? Yes-yes?!?

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Sad about Screen on the Green? We've got a comprehensive list of the outdoor film series coming this summer <http://tinyurl.com/q9ydl> about 16 hours ago

Huge bummer: HBO confirms is has canceled Screen on the Green. <http://bit.ly/MNjE1> 1 day ago

DCist reports on the D.C. United rally and march over the weekend. <http://bit.ly/DpSS1> 2 days ago

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[monkeyrotica on Photo of the Day: May 13, 2009](#): I think we

Seriously, though, what kind of permits do you need to have a flame thrower exhibit? I am intrigued.

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:17 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[4] | [monkeyrotica](#)

So does the vibrating sex doll sold *with* the fully-functioning flamethrower? Because somebody broke my sex doll/flamethrower combo and it's been impossible to find a replacement ever since Doc Johnson's Marital/Martial Products closed.

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:18 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[5] | [sumergocognito](#)

Ah, more haunts for snooty people that don't have any practical benefit. *Exactly* what U Street needed more of. Don't worry about a Chipotle or anything, I don't mind walking a mile to and a mile back from the one in Dupont.

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:19 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[6] | [NotTheRedBaron](#)

i would really appreciate if someone would explain why a giant vibrating pink "d*ldo" (looks more like an anvil to me) is art.

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:35 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[7] | [sumergocognito](#)

@NotTheRedBaron It's art because somebody was silly enough to pay for it?

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:36 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[8] | [IMGoph](#)

if you have to ask....

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:46 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[9] | [Tigidal](#)

@sumergocognito... My sentiments exactly. I'm not ashamed to say that I've even went as far as emailing Chipotle about leasing options in the 14th and U area. It's not so much the walk to the Dupont Chipotle that's the issue, but the return walk.

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 11:57 AM

[REPORT THIS]



[10] | [monkeyrotica](#)

"Everything the artist expectorates is art." Nathaniel West
"Art is a lie that helps us see the truth." Pablo Picasso
"Art is anything you can get away with." Andy Warhol
"Who *arted?" Monkeyrotica

REPLY | OCTOBER 23, 2008 12:01 PM

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[11] | [monkeyrotica](#)

I just can't understand how these works get their own gallery, yet my piece "Untitled VII" (a steampunk peanutbutter grinder in the shape of a huge vibrating butthole that plays The

learned an important lesson today: DCists are leg men. The only way...

[Over the River on Good News and Bad News for Cyclists:](#) Thanks for the photo. If I didn't know better it looks like Metro or Amtrak...

[crownplus5 on Ice Creampocalypse @ Häagen-Dazs:](#) Rats. I guess I missed out on this one....

[crownplus5 on Good News and Bad News for Cyclists:](#) Delays delays delays...finish it already!...

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Smiths' "Oscillate Wildly") sits in my studio unloved and unsold. I guess it's time to retrofit it with sheets of McCain/Palin bumperstickers, juggling babies, and a neon "SLUT" sign.

[REPLY](#) | [OCTOBER 23, 2008 1:02 PM](#)

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[12] | [IMGoph](#)

hey, at least that will get people to stop into the neighbors to let them know that people are planning to smash in your windows.

wait, that's not a good thing.

[REPLY](#) | [OCTOBER 23, 2008 2:30 PM](#)

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[13] | [monkeyrotica](#)

On second thought, I like the pink anvil. I'd put my peter in it.

[REPLY](#) | [OCTOBER 24, 2008 6:29 AM](#)

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