

# The San Francisco Bay Guardian

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## Ripoff: On the Nature of Security

Wayne Zebzda's recent multimedia installation work is on view at Artspace in an exhibition entitled, "Ripoff: On the Nature of Security."

In his first solo exhibition, the San Francisco artist explores issues of personal, social and political security and the systems designed to maintain them. The effect is both amusing and unsettling as Zebzda combines conflicting elements within a single piece.

His 1988 piece, "Have a Nice Day," is made out of ski masks (mugging masks) stuffed with wire mesh that forms them into three-dimensional head shapes. Each stuffed mask hangs from the wall suspended by wire, and the masks are arranged on the wall in the shape of a smiley face. The initial association of the masks themselves with urban terror becomes a commentary on the all too present image of the smiley face and have-a-nice-day culture.

"Tricycle (for bad boys)" is another piece that creates both tension and humor through the combination of disparate images. An old, rusty tricycle

sits in the middle of the floor, attached to a ball and chain. The sound of angry parents scolding their children comes to mind: "You bad boy, you are grounded and you're not going anywhere. Do I make myself perfectly clear, young man?"

WAYNE ZEBZDA'S TRICYCLE (FOR BAD BOYS)



The piece that creates the greatest disorientation is the "Set for Life (tilted living quarters)," in which life-size objects from the '50s, all in shades of yellow and beige, are arranged on a wall of the gallery, perpendicular to the

floor. On the coffee table are two books, *The Real Book About Space Travel* and *I'm Getting Married*. The wall includes both living and bedroom area, and a window is mounted on the ceiling. The installation looks like a 1950s middle-class motel room tilted on its side, and the spectacle of it creates a great sense of vertigo and fascination.

In the piece, "Nice Doggie, Nice Doggie," guard dog cages run throughout the gallery and kindly Dobermans and German Shepherds who have been trained as guard dogs will be happy to greet you from their cages as you examine the rest of the show. I visited on a weekend and missed the guard dogs, but if you go to the show soon you may be able to catch them before they go completely crazy.

Video tapes of past pieces are also available for viewing during gallery hours.

Wayne Zebzda's "Ripoff" will be showing at Artspace, 1286 Folsom, SF, 626-9100, through April 30th. Gallery hours: Tues.-Sat., 11 am-5 pm.

— Laura Brill