

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Alan Swartz at the Sasse Museum of Art in the Progress Gallery, Pomona

John Brantingham · Saturday, June 26th, 2021

Alan Swartz's career as an artist began in the 1950s. He is a sculptor and painter whose one-artist show, *Illusion Intrusion*, opened on June 12 at the Sasse Museum of Art, which has recently moved to the Progress Gallery in Pomona. This is a collection of great humanity, a body of work that tries not only to capture what exists in and around the Inland Empire, but the way that we experience those things we see and experience.

What seems to epitomize the spirit of Mr Swartz's art is the playfulness he brings to it, often reconceptualizing a found object and allowing the suggestion of that object to influence his work. This playfulness is not surprising given that for years he worked as an art specialist with the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Department working with educators and children helping them to connect with the arts. He taught people how to play with art.

Swartz's sculpture collection often emphasizes the way we experience each other and objects that are close to us. He repurposes computer mice for example as a statement on the way that we, like mice caught in traps, are trapped ourselves because of our addiction to computers. His use of a rocking horse to recreate the Trojan Horse does this as well. There might be a statement in this piece. There probably is, but I just enjoyed it. Some of my favorites are busts that seek to capture the humanity of the person depicted. His Rabbi captures the spirit of the person rather than trying to be a copy of him. This is the way we experience this person.

His paintings have a similar approach in that they exaggerate the object as a way of getting to its essence. One of my favorites is his abandoned house which captures the way we see the breaking down of a place. He emphasizes what crumbles and sags. He highlights the chain link fence keeping the public from hurting or being hurt by the still standing structure.

Mr. Swartz's show is located at 300 S. Thomas Street, Pomona.

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