

# Tyson Reeder is in love at the Green Gallery

By Rafael Francisco Salas, Art City Contributor  
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Tyson Reeder's exhibit at Green Gallery is an homage to painting, painters and their audience. It is exuberant and in love.

Reeder gleans from the history of painting and combines what he finds with a flair of the now. His subject matter is diverse but on inspection reveals connections. Landscapes, fruit, a beach road and a painting of the Falcon Bowl combine to create an allegory of art and artists.

An aqua painting of a fountain offers glimpses of Gauguin and Bonnard, but also hints of contemporary painter Peter Doig. Romantic vision? A magical font of...longevity? The creative muse? Reeder seems to be using the fountain as a symbol to ask what an artist might wish for.

From the Tyson Reeder exhibit at Green Gallery.

A road leading to the water reminds us of the search for the sublime in nature and art. "Yellow Mannequins" shows three figures in a mustard storefront wearing similarly colored dresses and slacks. They are artist models, fashionistas, real and false at the same time. They equate to a multiple reflection on color and content.

The anchor to the show is a large painting of surfboards leaned vertically against one another on a blue checked ground. Artists Raymond Pettibon, Mary Heilmann and Robert Longo have used the surfer and waves as stand-ins for the artist. Reeder appears to follow suit here, somewhat hilariously when combined with the chrome-silver mannequin that haunts the gallery along with the paintings.



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Reeder has used this readymade sculpture as a proxy artist-cum-viewer. The mannequin appears to contemplate the surfboards and also resembles the Marvel superhero Silver Surfer. The artist as hero. It's a jest from Reeder, but the paintings have enough gravity to pull it off. The title of the exhibit, "TV Dinner," echoes the silvery surface of this figure, and how the viewer might consume the various approaches to subject and object in the show. At the opening of the exhibit, Reeder also dressed in a costume of aluminum foil and beat drums outside the gallery as a summons, further exposing links between the paintings, the mysterious silver witness in the gallery, and the title.



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I was thinking of this show in relation to Tyson Reeder's brother, Scott Reeder, who also exhibits at Green Gallery. I reviewed his show in 2010. In that exhibit I found Scott Reeder's work to be cynical, even mean spirited. As the Reeder brothers show and create artwork together on occasion, I thought this comparison worth noting. I found the paintings by Tyson Reeder, in contrast, to be confidently optimistic.

As a whole they may be a bit breezy. Reeder's brush is facile, and the painters that he is referring to have an upper hand in my view. But I appreciated Reeder's nod to the language of art and his personal connections to it. His painting of the Falcon Bowl, for instance, is a remembrance of "Milwaukee International," an avant-garde art fair at the Riverwest bar that both Reeder brothers and several other artists and gallery owners created together.

The painting is a testament to art and a love story to Milwaukee, the place where Reeder is choosing to create it. The exhibit is on view at the Green Gallery, 1500 N. Farwell Ave., through Nov. 7.

*Rafael Francisco Salas is a painter, a professor of art at Ripon College and a regular Art City contributor. He recently participated in an "Art City Asks" with fellow contributor Karin Wolf.*