

ART REVIEW

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Art on paper: Edgy, blustering, thoughtful

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ENGAGING SHOWS

Francie Bishop Good: Carly, So Far and *Conversations* at Ambrosino Gallery in North Miami are engaging shows of photography, mixed media works, and drawings. *Carly, So Far* looks at photographs that Broward-based Bishop Good has taken of her niece Carly, from when she was about 7 to around 16 years of age. They show a child morphing into a teenager. More interestingly, they show the artist experimenting with different contexts and styles for her series of portraits -- we see Carly watching TV, with a set showing actual news shots or digitally altered to show famous paintings. We see an older Carly among waxy celebrities, like Frida Kahlo, at Madame Tussaud's famous museum, and among street fair wares, as in *Carly Fair, with Braids*. Kahlo is too clichéd to be an effective icon in this context. But in the street fair photo, Carly's profile looking away from the viewer, as she rounds out a row of mannequins sporting beaded braids, moves us into an unexpected take on a girl negotiating the difficult border between child and adult.

Also at Ambrosino is *Conversations*, a show of 18 works curated by New York-based artist Sharon Loudon, who picked nine pairs of artists whose work she thought had enough in common to inspire a kind of visual "conversation." It's a fascinating concept. The pairings don't always make sense, but they do provide a novel way to look at disparate work. One pairing really stands out: a work of acrylic on paper, *Clearing* by Jennifer Coates, and a layered acrylic work on Mylar, *Opium Dream 1 (Visions of Home)* by Tomas Vu. Coates' sparse, arching landscape is a beautiful complement to the tumbling, futuristic forms that arch, like an abstracted landscape, through Vu's work.

Natalia Benedetti: Freefall 2005 at MOCA at Goldman Warehouse in Wynwood is a compelling double-screen video installation by Miami-based Natalia Benedetti. One screen documents the artist's 125-mph free fall from a skydiving jump. She jumps from 18,000 feet above South Florida, with the Atlantic Ocean, sprawling development, and watery patches of Everglades whirling into view as she falls. The video ends when her parachute inflates. A second video screen shows a close-up of sunlight glistening on water, a mesmerizing scene of water and light to counter views of sky and earth.