

YOU'LL EITHER GET THE 'OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE' SHOW AT THE HUNTINGTON BEACH ART CENTER, OR YOU WON'T

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Not Negotiable

You'll either get 'Obsessive Compulsive,' or you won't



Courtesy Huntington Beach Art Center

Have you ever encountered somebody who doesn't get art? I don't just mean that they think abstract art is a load of hooley, or that they stomp around in the Norton Simon and mutter about how a chimp coulda painted that. I mean people on whom *all* visual art is simply lost. They. Don't. Get. It.

I encounter such people now and again, and they're fascinating specimens.

They'll insist that fine art is all a racket,

that nobody actually enjoys that stuff, that people are just trying to seem cool when they go to galleries and *ooh* and *ahh*.

When I meet these folks, I always think of Seven of Nine from *Star Trek: Voyager*, the young woman who was liberated from the Borg collective and struggled to find her place among humans . . . remember? *Sigh* . . . Okay, she was the blonde with the silver catsuit and the big boobs. (Yeah, *now* you remember.) When she was first introduced to art, poor Seven's Borgified brain simply couldn't comprehend it. "This activity is truly unproductive," she declared. "The end result has no use. No necessary task has been accomplished. Time has been expended, nothing more."

Even if you don't have Borg implants in your skull, some art shows do bring out the Seven of Nine in you. You stand there looking at big, splotchy canvases or "sculptures" that look like big, gray squares, and you find yourself thinking about the time you expended getting there and the necessary tasks you could have been accomplishing elsewhere, like getting your damn taxes done.

I really liked "Obsessive Compulsive," the show that's just about to close at the Huntington Beach Art Center. But it's some seriously artsy-fartsy nonsense, and if you're not in just the right mood . . . well, I can't guarantee you'll find these artists worthy of assimilation into your collective.

At least, if you go to this show, you can see some stuff blow up real good. Pascual Sisto does these projections of looped footage of various explosions against a dark backdrop. I've seen Sisto do some fascinating videos elsewhere, and these explosions don't make much of a boom, comparatively speaking. Still, even a Borg would have to admit that an indoor fireworks show is kind of cool. Resistance is futile!

Charlotte Smith creates these weird, blobby sculpture things that are all colorful and wriggly—kind of how maggots would look if you saw them when you were tripping on acid, only neat instead of so gross you want to scrub the eyeballs out of your head. Gina Han makes big, blobby canvases that make you think of the set for some kiddie TV show from the '70s, something in which a white guy with a big, orange afro comes out, strums an acoustic guitar, and sings some self-esteem-building song about the adventures of Bernie the Magic Bean. (Han's blobs look like a *lot* like beans.) It's silly, simple stuff, but it's also incredibly tactile. You're tempted to pull these canvases from the walls, lay them on the floor and take a nap on them, using those puffy blobs like big pillows. This, however, is not recommended. At the very least, be sure to get the okay from the Art Center staff first.

Finally, we come to Sayon Syprasoeuth, the artist who could be the real deal breaker here. Syprasoeuth creates these big, hanging things made of glitter, glue and hair. They look like naturally occurring wonders, reminiscent of spiderwebs sprinkled with the morning dew and lit by the rising sun. At least to me. To you, maybe they look more like a big tangle of goddamn hair covered with glue and glitter, the same crap you're always trying to scrub out of your kid's clothes after she gets home from craft day at the library.

I wish I were more certain that anybody but me will like "Small Pleasures," Ingrid Lilligren's concurrent show at the HBAC. Featuring dozens of collages made from pastel and eggshells, the "pleasures" part is debatable. But they sure are small! Love 'em or hate 'em, they won't take up much of your time.

"Obsessive Compulsive" at the Huntington Beach Art Center, 538 Main St., Huntington Beach, (714) 374-1650; www.ci.huntington-beach.ca.us. Call for hours. Through Sun.