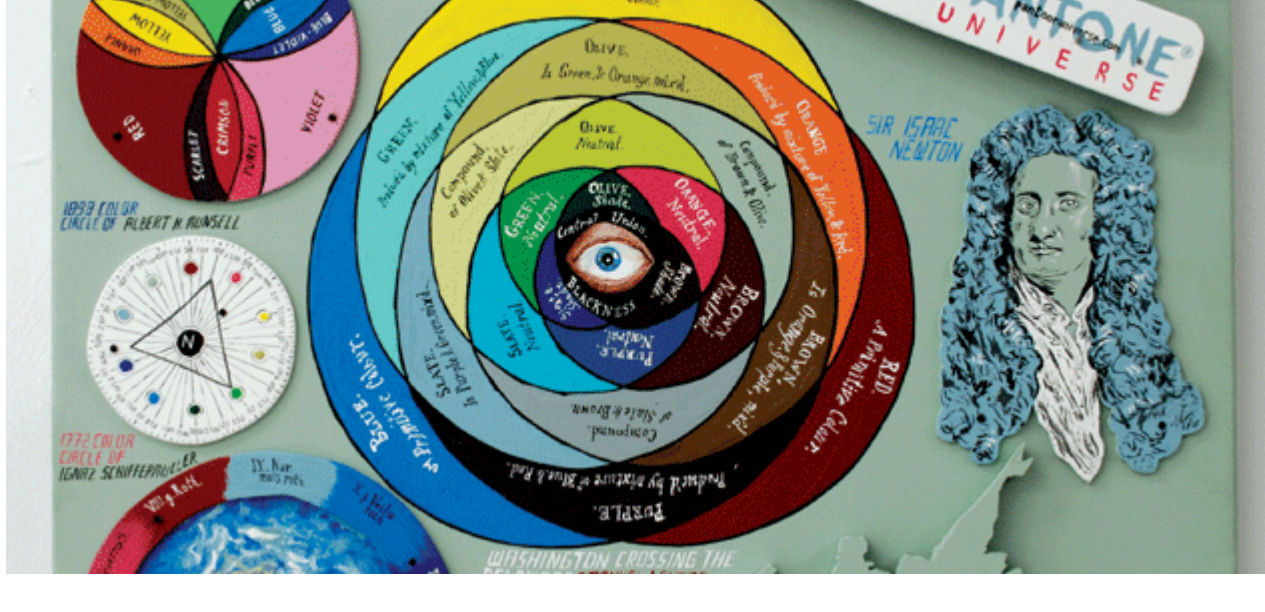


GALLERIES



[Comments](#) [Print](#) [Share](#) [Tag on Delicious](#) [Digg This](#)

William Buzzell Contact High: Study Aids and Learning Tools

[Favourite](#) [Add to Favorites](#) [Recommend: 4](#)

BY DAVID BALZER March 25, 2009 21:03

EDITORIAL RATING:
To Apr 18, Wed-Sat 11am-5pm.
Paul Bright Gallery, 1265 Bloor W.
647-342-5463.
www.paulbrightgallery.com.

Good, cheap art alert: most of the prices at up-and-comer William Buzzell's mind-blowing show hover just below \$1,000. OK, so that's not a pittance, especially not for the kind of spendthrift, chronic young audience Buzzell's art is liable to attract. (The exhibit, as painted in scrappy block letters on a couple of boards in Paul Bright Gallery's window, is called "Contact High.") Still, think of how blown you could get just by looking at his pieces every day.

Buzzell was born in Providence, Rhode Island and his art looks it. (PBG's press release makes the most of this, telling us that he now works with Philadelphia's Space 1026, "a collectively run artists' space similar to the now demolished Fort Thunder.") His cartoonish style is a stunningly personal yet strongly resonant comment on contemporary ephemera. Everything is made painstakingly and idiosyncratically by hand. Buzzell's media are wood and house paint, and he is indeed like an amateur carpenter, affixing cut-out shapes to his substrates with nails, which you can see through the paint. The approach, made manifest in the piece Structure and Optical Properties, is science-fair savant. In that piece, Buzzell shows us, hilariously, the grade he thinks a teacher would give his projects: "C-," not because he didn't make something beautiful and detailed, but because his tendencies towards beauty and detail inevitably cause him to, as teach' puts it, veer "off topic."

But as an artist rather than a budding scientist, Buzzell is completely on task. Each piece is a world of its own, a riff-filled visual essay in the grand tradition of Hieronymus Bosch. There is so much to look at: scrawled, cramped writing; saturated colours; verbal and visual puns and allusions. Each work is an instructive game – in Scholastic Summer Reading List Sticker Sheet you can match up classic literary titles with quaint illustrations of their famous scenes and in Black Mixed With Sunlight and Firelight Turns Crimson you can compare and contrast colour wheels from throughout history – but also a quiet manifesto on how to approach representational art in an age of rapid cultural consumption and its attendant, abundant trash. Buzzell subverts collage, fabricating each of his clippings by hand in order to emphasize their weird symbolism, and their own, pretty integrity.

Email us at: LETTERS@EYEWEEKLY.COM or send your questions to EYEWEEKLY.COM
1 Yonge Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto Ontario, M5E 1E6

User Comments

[Comment Using Facebook Connect or EyeID](#) or [Comment Anonymously](#)

[Newest first](#)

Select a City

- [ABBOTSFORD 83% Off at U Weigh](#)
- [ALLISTON / INNISFIL](#)
- [Half Off Music Le](#)
- [AURORA / NEWM 62% off a Niagara G](#)

Toronto Listings Finder

FILM **MUSIC** **CLUBS** **ARTS**

Film Finder [Films](#) | [Theatres](#)

All

Any Movie Genre

Any Movie Rating

Any Movie Title

Film Chart [Grab this finder](#)

Related Stories

- CONTACT decision maker**
Don't know what to see at Toronto's biggest photography festival? Check out our handy CONTACT primer.
-
- Refined crude**
In his ROM photo exhibit about the impact of oil, Edward Burtynsky once again creates haunting images of modern landscapes
-
- The projectionist**
UK artist Lindsay Seers plays with film history in her Images Festival installation.

- MORE INSIDE**
- [EYE WEEKLY Guides](#)
 - [Fringe Festival 2009](#)
 - [Pride Guide 2009](#)
 - [Toronto Jazz Festival Guide 2009](#)
 - [Cool Summer Guide 2009](#)
 - [Bar and Patio Guide 2009](#)
 - [Green Living Guide](#)
 - [Love and Sex Guide](#)
 - [Cheap Thrills](#)