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**Correction:** 11/02/05, A/02: Athens artist **Andi Steele** created a web that stretches across the gallery in the "Switch" art exhibit at Eyedrum Gallery. The web was attributed to the wrong artist in a review in the Oct. 23 Arts & Books section.

## VISUAL ARTS: Turned on -- or turned off

### Light show a bedazzling puzzle

JERRY CULLUM

#### REVIEW

"Switch"

Through Nov. 5. Prices on request. Noon-5 p.m. Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays. Eyedrum Art and Music Gallery, 290 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. S.E., Suite 8, Atlanta. 404-522-0655; www.eyedrum.org.

Verdict: "Oh, wow"-type works don't shed much light, literally or figuratively.

"Switch," as in "light switch," is a show of art that uses light. It's a switch in another sense: The Eyedrum gallery, instead of being filled with light, is mostly dark.

It's appropriate that most of this show of what curator Karen Tauches describes as "audiovisual situations involving alternative or self-generating light" uses ultraviolet or so-called black light. This art does not necessarily shed much light on a subject.

Nevertheless, it dazzles the viewer, and the variety is overwhelming: Matthew Sugarman's Day-Glo wall drawings. Susan Cipic's room-size homage to Edison and the electric company cartoon character Reddy Kilowatt. Joe Peragine's 5-foot-high lit-up model of a Ferris wheel. As with the huge, inwardly lit Corinthian column Jared Haberer and others constructed out of transparent plastic sheeting, the glow is hard to ignore.

It's hard, too, to ignore the tentacles emerging from the wall in Robert Cheatham and Chea Prince's creepy post-Freudian exploration or Woody Cornwell and Hormuz Minina's kaleidoscopic vision of painting, in a circular niche set into the wall.

Inattentive viewers headed for the latter will, however, bump into Tauches' almost invisible web stretched across the gallery. That collision by the unwary is a good metaphor for viewers' dilemma in this subtle semidarkness.

Some works are difficult on a simple technical level: The button is almost impossible to find on Tauches and Kristofer Lamey's stereoscope. Without instruction, no one would think of swinging Bill Spence's twin light wands to get their surprise on-and-off effect.

Other works, visually stunning, may baffle viewers conceptually. Craig Dongoski's complex mix of an illuminated world globe and wall texts like the glowing assertion "Your coma is finding the dead" is meant to be read associatively, but to what end?

Obscure in a different way is Susan Harbage Page's evocative homage to foremothers, created by light shining through transparencies of vintage portraits, creating a shadowy image on the wall. The accompanying audio plays on the fear of creeping things in a manner that seems like a feminist echo of Cheatham and Prince's male-fantasies sense of dread in the adjacent gallery.

But overall the ideas embodied in these pieces are appropriately symbolized by the giant disco-ball question

But overall, the ideas embodied in these pieces are appropriately symbolized by the giant disco ball question mark of Pam Longobardi's installation. They shine brilliantly but leave most of us puzzled.

Photo

K. Tauches

Organizer Karen Tauches designed the main sign illuminated by candles at the entrance into the darkened space of "Switch."

Photo

A lighted cardboard model of a Ferris wheel by Joe Peragine is 5 feet high. Works are described as "audiovisual situations involving alternative or self-generating light."

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