

ARTSCENE - NOVEMBER 2016

**TOM DOWLING, *INTERCHANGE***

Paul Williams Gallery

119 W. Transition Street

Ontario, CA 91762

Jan Derek Taylor - Gallery Director

915-880-7432

CLOSES: November 26, 2016

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*Interchange* is about Tom Dowling's abstracted "Baroque Minimalist" wall sculptures. Baroque means that the viewer dynamically moves in and out of fragmented and shifting forms, spaces, light, and shadows, as contemporary perceptions are pushed through Minimal configurations. The sculptures hang in a picturesque 100 year old Spanish Revival building designed by one the first and legendary African-American architects to make his mark in Los Angeles in the 1920s – Paul Revere Williams. Inside, over a Spanish tile floor hovers a very high dark brown ornate elongated ceiling, hand painted by a little known German artist. The meticulous brush work on the expansive ceiling, is composed of intricate Germanic, not as expected, Latin designs. The contrast of time and space, building, forms, mixed vision and cultures begs the questions: Should art fit the venue? Or, should the venue fit the art? And to cut to the chase – what is it about Dowling's art that works so well in such a vintage setting?

Dowling slices apart antique frames, constructs them sculpturally to become individual dimensional line drawings in space, a reminder of his "Zips." Reductive modulated forms emerge; color is applied as each sculpture becomes spatial poetry. Set on huge well-lit walls,

intrusive light and shadows make their way across the gallery, altering effects on each individual piece as surfaces appear, drift away and appear again – a sculptural *trompe l'oeil*. Hung vertically or askew, each configuration seems to be scooped up by the wall ahead, moving our eye from the tile floor to the ceiling above. An energy emerges that enlivens each sculpture within the gallery and brings the exhibition to life. Therefore, it is not the venue's diverse contradictions that grabs attention, but the classic nature of Dowling's vision; the strength of his intentions, and his skill in producing art worth viewing.

Roberta Carasso