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Three Questions: Area 919

Posted by [Shaun Baer](#) on 12/02/09 • Categorized as [Three Questions](#)

Up this week: Area 919. The answers come to us via Michael Garden, who runs the art/object space in the illadelph's NoLibs section. 13 Months, a retrospective of the exhibitions from the past 13 months, is on view through December 12th, 2009.



Installation shot of 13 Months at Area 919.

Light box images of chairs by Mark Khaisman, Center Image, Toy Soldier, by Abby Schmidt

FunnelPages: *What was your mindset when you began your gallery, and how has it evolved?*

Michael Garden: When I opened AREA 919, it was my intent to present works of art that required the viewer to go beyond the frame and into their own experience to respond to the ways in which the work challenges us to perceive, think and feel. Part of that objective is expressed in presenting modern work in a dynamic

space that is also home to period architectural antiques and decorative objects. Contemporary art in Philadelphia is widely perceived as a flash moment. It has been my desire to engage in a culture that experiences contemporary art in context of history and re-experiences historical objects as signifiers of the present. Working with writers, alongside artists, has been an important element to achieving that goal. My most recent exhibition, Mark Khaisman: Intraspective, presented iconic historical

images executed in everyday materials (packing tape) and utilized those materials and contemporary aesthetics in an integrated installation with the collection of antiques. The Khaisman installation brought home my earliest objectives. The group exhibition that opens November 12th, entitled: 13 Months, takes these notions further.

FP: *What excites you most about doing what you do?*

MG: The most exciting aspect of my work has been the opportunity to collaborate with bright, talented, and thoughtful artists and writers to create powerful and provocative exhibitions that have encouraged new perspectives in Philadelphia's visual art culture.

FP: *Desert Island: What are the 4 non-essential items you'd take with?*

MG: If an item comes to mind in response to that question it requires me to question the items non-essentiality. But for the pleasure of the inquiry, I give you: a gray scarf, a stone, a door knocker, and a copy of Malouf's *An Imaginary Life*.

For more information on Area 919, visit www.area919.com

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