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# The Art and Language of Transition at Totah Gallery

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**Pareidolia by Carol Szymanski at Totah Gallery, installation view, New York.**

Currently on view at Totah gallery is a show that lends artistic voice to a process we all experience. Through her work, Szymanski has provided the viewer a world often avoided and thus, virtually unknown. The limbo land found in between the indefinite and the concrete. As the artist suggests, in order to explore this little-known territory we need an intermediary partner. This partner is language. My overwhelming impression was that Szymanski's language makes the viewer comfortable enough to explore and even rest in the most challenging stages of metamorphosis.

Each piece feels like it's in some form of transition. I got the sense that if I looked away I might miss something. This was especially true with *High Noon*. This image appears to be alive and evoked in me some unexpected emotions. I was uncomfortable, then excited and finally expectant. I began to hypothesize what would happen if the image were to somehow become animate, and continue the transformation it appears to have begun. But Szymanski's art forces you to just stay planted in-between place that's hard to describe.



**Carol Szymanski, High Noon (re.Di-1), 2017, cibachrome unique print, 4.7 x 4.7 inches (12 x 12 cm).**

Transition. We've all experienced it. The space that separates here and there.

Oftentimes uncharted territory, it can be at once scary, and exciting, painful and blissful.

Sometimes those times we experience between the indefinite and concrete make us feel like there is nothing happening on the surface, while just beneath the confines of our consciousness there is a hotbed of activity that's about to explode into vibrant life. Transition seems to always be the precursor to growth. I experienced Szymanski's pieces as the art equivalent of the transition experience common among us all.

What makes many of the images so unique is how the artist managed to combine so many different textures. The contrasts of luminescence and matte surfaces, color and different forms create a multidimensional effect that is quite pleasing to the eye. *Self Portrait* is the perfect example of this phenomenon. The piece has a prism effect that appears to refract texture and light simultaneously.



**Carol Szymanski, *Self Portrait (re.Te-10)*, 2017, cibachrome unique print, 4.5 x 3 inches (11.5 x 8 cm).**

The show impressed me with how the artist managed to incorporate so many different forms while still being cohesive. The pieces have elements of the characteristics of watercolor, origami, mixed media and collage. The images simultaneously defy and embrace each of these expressions. They defy them by being too unique to be pinned down to any one technique, and whether or not it was the artist's intent, there is a clever nod to each of them.

The human mind always tries to fit images and ideas into a familiar paradigm. That's what I naturally did when first confronted with Pareidolia. What am I looking at? Is it a flower? Is it a crumpled up metallic balloon? However, with this work, all you can do is rest in the unknown. Not a comfortable place to be in life, but a delightful place to rest in art.

**Pareidolia by Carol Szymanski at Totah Gallery, installation views, New York.**



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THAVMA WRITES AND DIRECTS FOR STAGE AND FILM AND HAS A BACKGROUND ACTING IN COMMERCIALS, INDEPENDENT FILMS AND PLAYS. HER PLAYS HAVE BEEN SEEN AT THE DC BLACK THEATER FESTIVAL, MIDTOWN INTERNATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL AND OTHER VENUES. ALTHOUGH THAVMA HAS LIVED IN VARIOUS AREAS OF THE U.S. AND PUERTO RICO, HER WORK IS PRIMARILY INSPIRED BY NEW YORK CITY WHERE SHE WAS BORN AND CURRENTLY RESIDES. SHE IS EXPANDING HER WRITING CAREER TO INCLUDE NOVELLAS, ARTICLES AND BLOG POSTS, AND HAS A PASSION FOR INSPIRING OTHERS TO ENJOY THE ARTS.