



CHILDHOOD IMAGERY: Kids disguised as ghosts walk through a nighttime forest in one of Craig Kucia's giant canvases.

Work of distinct artists on display

*EXHIBITS, FROM 1

First, Kucia's titles are spelled in lowercase letters.

Second, the bright colors and broad strokes that spill from his brush represent more poignant purpose.

"There are many stories in every painting. . . . They are pieces of my life," said Kucia, who moved to Miami in 2005.

The artist juxtaposes symbols that all at once bring him joy — and a bit of sadness.

But he also wants the viewer to make his work their own. He wants "to throw you off," he said.

"I'm open to let anyone see and attach my paintings to their own lives. With art, you can take sad moments and make them beautiful — infuse birthday parties, going to the park, playing in the woods. My work is just grand gestures of the simplest ideas," Kucia said.

In a smaller space called The Project Room, artist Pepe Mar of Miami offers another playful view.

IF YOU GO

- **What:** Art & Culture Center of Hollywood.
- **Where:** 1650 Harrison St., Hollywood.
- **When:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Saturday; noon to 4 p.m. Sunday.
- **Admission:** Free for members, \$6 for adults, \$3 for students.
- **Information:** Call 954-921-3274 or visit www.artandculturecenter.org.

Wigs of dyed hair are placed amid thick strokes of acrylic paint and pieces of cardboard cut from packages of ordinary goods like beer, soda and laundry soap.

"These works are very pop, very happy, all taken from pop culture like masters devouring the mass media," Mar said.

Mar's exhibit combines beauty and monstrosity and kicks off a new series set to show in the tiny space

CULTURE CENTER



PHOTOS BY ELLEN SCORER/FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

THE PROJECT ROOM: Works by Pepe Mar, including this multimedia sculpture, are the first in a series of avant-garde exhibitions.

was once used only to show art.

headed by Jane Hart, the center's curator of exhibitions, the space will highlight emerging artists featured in the avant-garde.

"It's a great opportunity to show talent with works that are very experimental. Artists don't get a chance in commercial galleries to

show such work," Hart said.

Kucia's work is featured through Dec. 16. The exhibit of Mar's work ends Oct. 14.

It will be followed by seven shows through August: Series artists include Christiaan Lopez-Miro, Georges LeBar, Tawnie Silva, Lou Anne Colodny, Jay Oró, Damian Rojo and Vanessa Tomchik.