

# ARTIST STUDIOS AVAILABLE IN WYNWOOD

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### Magical Mystery Lure

Wendy Wischer sparks the imagination while Pepe Orbein stirs the spirit

By Carlos Suarez De Jesus

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*Angels & Ancestors:* Wischer's eclectic light parade

Details:

Through November 28. Miami Dade College Centre Gallery, 300 NE 2nd Ave, Bldg 1, 3rd Fl, Miami;

305-237-7186, [www.mdc.edu](http://www.mdc.edu). Through November 30. Contemporánea Fine Art, 1555 SW 8th St, Miami; 305-642-3080.

In her beautiful new show, Wendy Wischer has harnessed light to conjure an enchanting atmosphere where visitors might feel as if they're floating within the canopy of the night sky.

Her luminous mirrored sculptures become the scaffolding for the constant interplay between light, spectators, and space in a darkened room. The intensity of her works' glow shifts from angle to angle, engulfing the imagination, the floor, ceiling, and walls.

"**In Search of Magic**," her solo exhibit at Miami Dade College's Centre Gallery, features just a few well-placed pieces, but they harmonically converge to deliver a spellbinding whammy.

Situated in the middle of the gallery, *Angels & Ancestors (Part III)* is a human-scale baobab tree sculpture the artist has covered with 25,000 half-inch cut mirror tiles. She has strategically aimed spotlights at it, creating a disco ball effect. As the viewer orbits the stunning piece, the glint of lights

refracting from its serpentine boughs pop like camera bulb flashes at a concert. The spray of lights bathes spectators with stardust while their shadows seem to drift ethereally along nearby walls.

Walk around Wischer's tree, explore its hollows and twists, and become amazed by its power to charm.

Nestled against an opposing wall is *The Magic of Melancholy*, a phallus-shape piece that ripples light off of its mirrored surface not unlike a cascading waterfall. Standing under its radiant mist, the viewer sees what seem like shimmering soap bubbles of light rising toward the ceiling, while incandescent salmonlike specks appear to be swimming across the gallery's polished black floor.

A trio of boulder-size works called *Gemstones*, near the gallery's entrance, casts a brilliant shower where spotlights appear to have frozen billions of droplets of water in midair.

Under the artist's deft hand and dazzling play with light, the constellation-splashed gallery exudes shooting stars.

In the project room, Wischer takes us in another direction with her curtain call, "**Intermission**," an



intriguing series of five digital prints depicting barren Miami theaters in which the spectator lands the solitary actor role.

The artist focused her lens on the empty interiors of the Colony Theater, the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts, the Lincoln Theatre of the New World Symphony, and the Tower Theater, among others, capturing them from the bare stage.

Some photos reveal row upon row of empty theater seats, while other images take us backstage.

In one of the shots, the curtains have been pulled back to reveal the pulleys and ropes used to move scenery around. At the upper right corner is a winding staircase that allows stage workers a quick escape. It's a nice bow to the unseen drama that takes place behind the scenes during a show.

These photos are imbued with a sense of solitude and mystery, leaving viewers wondering who — a playwright, a director, a janitor — is looking through the lens.

The images capture the sense of loss that might come for some actors when a favorite production ends, or the anticipation an audience feels when the lights go down before a new show. They also seem to hint at the quaky gulf separating entertainment from art.

Wischer's call to join her dreamy, star-filled idyll is an invitation worth accepting.