

Exhibit Review: 'Protagonist' at And/Or Gallery puts artists in the picture

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By CHARLES DEE MITCHELL / Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

"Protagonist," a group show at And/Or Gallery, features videos, photographs, a PowerPoint presentation and a group of drawings in which the artists often take the leading role.

Wendy Red Star proves that Cindy Sherman doesn't have a lock on the idea of dressing up and acting out in the studio. In Red Star's Technicolor photographs, she teases up her hair and dons a pale green cocktail dress to commit such inappropriate actions as ironing an end table. She has titled the series *Things I Do When I'm Bored*.

Martin Thebes dominates his installation by his absence. There is a note explaining why he was unable to finish the work he had promised, a message from the curator (also almost certainly by the artist himself) on the frustrations of working with him, and a PowerPoint presentation that tries to describe what the work would have been.

For two of her videos, Kara Hearn used actors to perform scenarios that should have carried with them a grateful acknowledgment to Carl Jung. In *Void 1 (Wrestling)*, a woman wrestles with her shadow, a role performed by an actress Hearn has digitally blacked out on the set. Even though it is fairly easy to imagine how the effect is created, the never-ending wrestling match is still unsettling. *Void 2 (Holding)* shows a changing procession of men and women held in their shadow's arms.

In *One Thing After Another*, Hearn plays both herself and a doppelgänger-like character with whom, to say the least, she has a difficult relationship.

One Hearn is confident and going about what seems to be a healthy life. The other Hearn is needy and prone to both minor and major disasters.

At one point she accidentally sets fire to the garage. From the dialogue, you pick up that years are passing during the course of the video, with Hearn always disappointed to see herself reappear but resigned to the inevitability of these encounters. Standing and wearing headphones is not the best way to view this 30-minute video, but it's both funny and sadly familiar, and Hearn is a good actress.

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And/Or Gallery
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