

# Art gallery ignites interest

**Elizabeth Hitz**

*The Clackamas Print*

Spokane artist Thomas O'Day's new show, "Just About Everything," opened in the Alexander Gallery on Oct. 5.

The show opened with a bang, some mad dog, vinegar and a little fruit punch. O'Day gave an exhibition of what is called performance art, and he creates his art by first destroying it.

He takes artwork that he or other artists have created and buries, blows up, or otherwise demolishes the pieces. Then, he takes the left-over parts and incorporates them into new pieces.

He appropriately calls these

works "art disposals."

"The old work is turned into new work. The pieces are in a constant state of flux," said O'Day.

He demonstrated the first step of these "art disposals" in the presence of an avid audience. O'Day blew up a sliced painting in front of the Neimeyer building, and poured different liquids through pipes onto drawings from the top of a ladder. If ever it was, this is art in action.

Viewers agreed. "I kind of like the idea of getting rid of this stuff [art]," said Clackamas art teacher Rick True. "I ask it, 'Do you

want me to rip you up?' – and then I rip it up anyway. It's getting to the process of making."

O'Day also gave a lecture on his background, the history of his art style and an explanation of some of his past and present works.

The show's pieces have rich and varied histories. One creation, "Subtitle Zone," O'Day tied to pilings and submerged under water at Puget Sound for six years. When he went back to retrieve it, the diving crew he hired had

no luck. "Subtitle Zone" was gone. So O'Day made posters and offered a \$100 reward. Eventually, an elderly couple called him up. They had found the piece several years ago and were using it as a lawn ornament.

"Just About Everything" also boasts a video installation. The projected video against the background shows the process of O'Day's past shows and "disposals." In the foreground, pieces from the disposals are suspended. The effect is eye-catching and disorienting.

O'Day uses everything from paper shredders and liquid plumber to metal compactors in his work, and the entire show reflects this variety.



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Adam J. Manley Clackamas Print

**FAR LEFT:** Students get involved with Thomas O'Day's gallery by scrawling on top of a cut-up painting with markers supplied by the artist. Interactivity is a key part of O'Day's gallery.

**LEFT:** O'Day prepares to incinerate a butchered painting in an orgy of flame and smoke.

**BELOW LEFT:** Painting teacher Dave Anderson helps O'Day to lay the lines of flammable chemicals in between the pieces of a discarded canvas.

**BOTTOM:** O'Day explains the meanings of his unique sculptures housed in the Alexander Gallery, which is located in Niemeyer Hall.

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It seems—as with any other long-term journalistic endeavor—that the more I spend my time developing this column and wading deeper into the ocean of information surrounding my beloved gaming industry, the more I end up on one end of a certain spectrum or the other.

I am either a) struck silly by some entertaining new software review or hardware gimmick, or b) I find my tolerance wanting for people who try to put their personal agenda in the way of our basic human freedoms and rights.

This week's frustration is brought to the couple of you who read this by yesterday's release of Rockstar Games' latest title, *Bully*, in which players can take on the persona of a school yard ruffian as they hand out swirlies and beat up their classmates for lunch money. Is the new game questionable? Hell yeah, it is, but that's not the problem.

Florida lawyer Jack Thompson, an anti-video-game extremist and the only guy I've ever seen who's been hissed at publicly, took Rockstar's parent company, Take-Two Interactive, to court last week over a complaint he filed against the game's content.

"It appears that, finally, the violent video game industry is going to be held accountable to someone," Thompson wrote in his announcement Wednesday morning.

However, gaming site Destructoid.com reported on Friday morning that the judge ruled in favor of Take-Two, and had decided he didn't see anything that should prevent Take-Two from shipping *Bully*. Thompson, in true "bully" fashion, responded with a formal letter comparing the judge's ruling to the UN nuclear weapons inspections in Iran.

I wish I were making this up.

He continued to accuse Take-Two lawyer Rebecca Ward of lying in the courtroom about the enforcement of its ESRB rating and accused the judge of "railroading this entire matter—at the expense of children's safety."

Thompson promptly and publicly slammed a judge of a court of law for deciding that the actions of angry, destructive kids are not the responsibility—where have I heard that word?—of a video game.

The game is rated "T," a rating described on the ESRB's Web site as "content that may be suitable for ages 13 and older." If parents don't think their teenager can handle the content in a game like *Bully*, it's their responsibility—there's that word again!—to teach their kids the basic rules of behavior accepted by society.

People have a right to feel however they want about video games. Long ago, I accepted that not everyone in the world agrees with my opinion of them, but irresponsibly using millions in tax dollars and the media to force an opinion down the throat of anyone who disagrees?

Someone should tell Thompson we're tired of being "trilled."