

TIME TRAVELING

Ronald Eugene Pennington-Satterfield explores *The Space Between Us* at *Epic Seconds*

Nearly 50 years ago Ronald Eugene Pennington-Satterfield was assigned to write an essay. He turned in a 200-page novel instead. His junior high school English teacher, he says, wanted to show it to a publisher, but the teenage Pennington-Satterfield didn't think he wanted to do that.

Fast forward to 1994. Pennington-Satterfield moved to Oregon, where he met and married his wife, Sandy Satterfield, who eventually encouraged him to tell his story in pictures.

How does it feel to tell a story that you've been carrying around most of your life?

"It's good to finally get it out," Pennington-Satterfield says.

The story he thought up in 1970 incorporates time and space travel, aliens, an evil federation and a case of mistaken identity. The main character, who looks a lot like Pennington-Satterfield, undergoes a transformation: One minute he's a young man sitting beside his wife, and then the next he's an old man his wife doesn't recognize.

Pennington-Satterfield cites George Asimov, H.G. Wells and *Star Trek* among his influences. He's inspired by space travel and science fiction and not necessarily figures from art history. The fact he wasn't formally trained as an artist would place his work within the genre of outsider art, but he describes himself, on his Facebook page, as someone who makes paintings he would like to sell.

His exhibit at *Epic Seconds* downtown is a series of oil paintings executed in the style of a comic book. The paintings are to be viewed and read in sequence like pages. Each painting is titled as a chapter: *Crash, Peace, Wife...*



"I see this as a movie," he says. So if you want to think of these oil paintings as storyboards, that's all right, too.

Epic Seconds, a vintage store selling music, videos and games, is owned by painter Benjamin Terrell. He recently renovated the store's upstairs level as a space where people can browse albums and view art on the walls.

Pennington-Satterfield's paintings upstairs are part of a two-person show titled *The Space Between Us*, a reference to the gap of age between the two artists showing, as well as to the common theme of space in their subject matter.

Pennington-Satterfield's work is illustrative, while Duskin D'Fonseca Becker's paintings are abstract and colorful, more akin to Terrell's own artwork. You can catch a sample of Terrell's art on the way up from the ground floor to the upstairs level — a large, intriguing painting of an ape shot through the heart and lying beneath a mass of dusky blue sky.

Any work of art incorporates space-time travel, moving from the time a work is created to the moment it is experienced, and between the realities of the artist's inner world — his imagination, memory and emotional life — to those of its viewers. The spaces within our minds and bodies, with which we experience and identify, are "spaces" artists seek to represent.

Pennington-Satterfield's comic-book oils — his space-time travel story — are dedicated to his wife, Sandy Satterfield, who passed away this summer but whose presence is very much a part of this series of paintings. ■

The Space Between Us continues through Oct. 28 at *Epic Seconds*, 30 E. 11th Avenue.

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