



November 12th, 2008 at 11:00 am

## [Tina Visits the Hamiltonian Gallery on U Street](#)



This week I paid a visit to the newest addition to the U Street art scene, the Hamiltonian Gallery at 1353 U Street. As described on their website ([www.hamiltoniangallery.com](http://www.hamiltoniangallery.com)), the gallery is dedicated to showing the work of the So Hamiltonian Fellows and focuses on innovative works by emerging and mid-career artists. Perhaps a fortunate result having a day off in the middle of the week, I was lucky enough to have the space mostly to myself for a while, and had the opportunity to meet Paul So, the founder of the Gallery and the Hamiltonian Artist Organization.



Before I took a look around I spent some time talking to Paul and getting the scoop on the Gallery, and the fellowship program. The Hamiltonian Gallery is different from a traditional gallery in the sense that the artists who display their work were awarded a spot in a competitive two-year fellowship program. Paul's vision for the organization and the fellowship program was born out of his own experience in working towards his career as a Physics professor at George Mason University. He kind of equates the program to the Post Doctoral Research work that he did, and sees it as an opportunity to help guide up-and-coming artists as they begin their careers.



The program and the gallery function as both an opportunity for new artists to display their work, and participate in some of the gallery operations as a way to develop and hone their knowledge in the business of art management. Displays in the Gallery will be changing every 5 to 6 weeks, and will typically show two Fellows alongside one more established artists who has displayed in galleries before. Right now, the Gallery is showcasing the works of photographers Jonathan B. French, Anne Chan and Michael Dax Iacovone (Chan and Iacovone are the fellows). French's installation focuses on the faces and the displaced relationships of Africans in the Americas and throughout the rest of the world. Chan creates tiny dioramas using staples. These are really cool to look at, and had I not read the exhibition details I never would have guessed what it was. And, Iacovone (my personal favorite) has created some sweet looking landscape

photos using special dislocation and documentary photography techniques. *Continues after the jump.*

As if the art on display wasn't interesting enough – it turns out the space itself has some pretty cool history. The building dates back to the late 1800's and was purchased around 1920 by West Hamilton, a prominent African American Military General who also served on the DCPS school board. Ownership of the building changed hands a couple of times and was eventually abandoned. It sat, an empty façade, for about 20 years until Paul purchased it a couple of years ago. In a nod to Academia, Paul named the Gallery Hamiltonian, both after West Hamilton and as our physicists will note, Hamiltonian is also a physics term.



It just so happened, that Bill Shake, of the [construction group](#) behind the renovations on the space was in the gallery and he graciously offered to give me a tour of the building. Since the building is a historic site, the DC Historic Commission requires that the sightlines from the street remain the same...so Bill and his group did a great job of keeping all their renovations hidden from view. Looking at the gallery from the street, one would never guess that there was an entire build-out up top including two apartments, one of which is being used as exhibition space for another gallery. There are some pretty sweet views up there, you can see the Washington Monument from the South and a typical DC streetscape – with a community baseball diamond to boot - from the North. And, they are doing the enviro-friendly thing, as the building was designed with a green roof.

All in all the Hamiltonian Gallery is very cool. If you like art it's definitely worth a visit. If you don't like art – there are [plenty of other reasons](#) to be on U Street, and maybe you'll stop in and see something that changes your mind. Also, if you are an artist yourself and are interested in applying to become a So Hamiltonian Fellow, check out the website ([www.hamiltoniangallery.org](http://www.hamiltoniangallery.org)) as they'll be looking for new applicants in the near future.



This entry was posted on Wednesday, November 12th, 2008 at 11:00 am and is filed under [art](#), [U Street](#), [Tina](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

## 2 Responses to “Tina Visits the Hamiltonian Gallery on U Street”

1. *Crystal* Says:  
[November 12th, 2008 at 12:08 pm](#)

I'm excited to check it out! I'm glad you were able to scope out the scene for me and i'm anxious to see what Jackie has been up to the for the past few months!

2. *Anierka* Says:  
[November 13th, 2008 at 2:00 pm](#)

I went to the opening it is a wonderful exhibit. Each artist demands respect for their varied approach. Each one engages the viewer to become involve with their work. To understand and see what each piece of work is saying. It is difficult to say which please me, but being a people person I would say Jonathan because he captures the spirits of his subject.

## ● Contact Info

Prince Of Petworth

Send tips and questions to  
[princeofpetworth@gmail.com](mailto:princeofpetworth@gmail.com)



Copyright (c) Prince of Petworth LLC 2006-2009