

News

The Cell as Studio: William Noguera

By Frances Reade - published: March 24, 2006

Visionary artist William Noguera has spent the last 18 years in a 4-by-10 foot cell on San Quentin's death row. In his haunting hyper-realistic pen-and-ink compositions, hundreds upon hundreds of tiny black dots cling together to form concrete images, and each point testifies to the isolated and brutally shrunken world of a middle-aged man imprisoned since an adolescent felony conviction. Noguera first took upon drawing during a nearly month-long stay in solitary confinement; in the 23 years since that bid he has dedicated his abundant "free" time to a self-directed study of art. His subjects are mundane at first glance: umbrellas, musical instruments, shells. But clarinets and conchs are phantoms in San Quentin, and the work is chillingly beautiful and technically impeccable. For one night only, the Center for Unpopular Culture presents the first public showing of Noguera's art, along with installation artist Francisco Recabarren's painstakingly detailed replica of Noguera's concrete residence. Enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres by Nectar Wine Lounge chef Armando Litiatco; in honor of the featured artist's monochromatic work, black-and-white attire is encouraged.

"The Escape Artist: Shadowed Views From The Private World Of William Noguera" opens at 7 p.m. at the Space Gallery, 1141 Polk (at Sutter), S.F. Admission is free, call 674-1997

