

Globe Arts

They rocked, shocked and taught

From raw work by emerging artists to elaborate cerebral rethinks of art history, **R.M. Vaughan** highlights five memorable exhibitions of the past year

Let me be honest about Best Of lists - I don't trust them, especially when applied to art.

How, for instance, does one rank a lovely, modest display of fresh paintings by an emerging artist against a gigantic historical survey show hosted by a museum? A video installation against a performance? An online, new media art portal versus an exhibition of 19th-century collages?

Forget apples and oranges, this is bumblebees and zombies. (Now, there's a title for a group show.) So, instead of making a Best Of list, I humbly submit a list of my five favourite exhibitions from 2010, in no particular order nor rank, and from no special genre nor discipline. I saw them, I liked them, I even wrote about them. Take from that what you will.

Tobaron Waxman's Mechitza 7.1 (motion activated), at the Institute For Cultural Inquiry, Berlin
Canadian multimedia artist Tobaron Waxman's conflation of sound sculpture, timed lights and dance (made in collaboration with sound artist James Hurley and dancer Jesse Zaritt) was the best 15 minutes I spent in a gallery all year long.

As Zaritt threw his body around the ICI space, responding to and enhancing the manipulated sounds (from Waxman's travels in contested spaces between Israel and Palestine), Zaritt himself became a "contested space" - a literalization of the violence and fraught semiotics of this too-long-running conflict.

Waxman's practice has always involved multiple and re-tooled elements, but with *Mechitza 7.1*, he blended the disparate into a cohesive and disturbing whole - a whole that he would argue is never meant to be read as such, but only, or even possibly, as part of a continuous, relentless flux.

As theatre and performance art continue to merge, Waxman is cutting a new path - while distrusting the very idea of paths or maps. *Mechitza 7.1* was a tasty, double-knotted pretzel.

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