

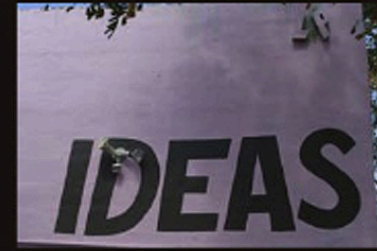
Talking Building: Michelle Weinberg's Hand Painted Warehouse

by Dinorah de Jesús Rodriguez

From a vantage point far out on Google Earth: The perspiring pastel city of Miami. Zoom in: A neighborhood transitioning from a gritty, low-rent industrial zone in urban disarray to an iconoclastic showcase of art chic. Zoom in closer: A quasi-Caribbean stretch of warehouses, small homes, barbed wire and empty lots. Some yards have chickens running through them, while others are filled with experimental, avant-garde art installations. Closer still and here you are: A warehouse that houses the edgy alternative art space known as Locust Projects. On its surface, artist Michelle Weinberg has instigated a conversation with its surroundings called Hand Painted Warehouse. The mural spans the entire façade, the South facing side, and heads to the back of the building. At first glance, this building looks like any other in Wynwood, a colorful two-tone container with casually hand-painted text announcing the business within. In fact, the work blends in so well with its neighbors that one might initially pass it by. A double-take will bring the signage into clearer focus: "Social Club", "Party Salon", "Supermarket," "Ideas" and "Temporary Projects Selected by Committee". To further confuse (or clarify?) Weinberg has inserted cartoon bubbles directing the passerby to "Make up Your Own Mind", claiming that it's "E-Z In 'N Out", playfully critiquing the presenting and viewing of art. Hand Painted Warehouse, already a Wynwood landmark, is a tribute to the folksiness of the neighborhood itself. Its visual archetypes are informal, naive and playful, suggesting that local propaganda, like everything else in the neighborhood, is undergoing a volatile social and cultural transition. Weinberg is known for other public projects and works on paper inspired by the latent, untapped aesthetic potential of warehouses and industrial spaces. She pulls out of their seemingly unremarkable architecture a place where we live, think and dream. Hand Painted Warehouse provides a backdrop for any of us to become a player in this explosive and rapidly transforming scenario of art and urban life.

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Michelle Weinberg
Miami, USA



Mural Project
Hand Painted Warehouse