

*Quoted Review by Wesley Pulka*

*From Albuquerque Journal, 1997*

*Steeped in history* and served piping hot, new paintings by Dan Griggs offer the visitor depth of content and skillful execution.

So begins the review of a gallery show that Wesley Pulka wrote for The Albuquerque Journal in 1997. Dan Griggs has since gone on to have his work displayed in many other galleries and venues, not the least of which is the wine label for Casa Rondeña's award-winning Cabernet Franc, of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mr. Pulka's review continues:

"To uncover the roots of many young contemporary artists one needs only to thumb through back issues of a few New York art magazines. But works by Griggs require foraging in the old growth forests of the European masters.

"Griggs uses the Flemish painting medium developed by Jacques Maroger (1884-1962). Maroger was an academically trained artist who worked as a chemist at the Louvre in Paris.

"In 1939 he came to America and settled in Baltimore where he published *Secret Formulas and Techniques of the Masters* in 1948. The book unveiled the chemistry and methods used by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) and others in the Flemish school.

"Griggs is among hundreds of artists still using the medium. However he has resisted Rubens' baroque compositional extravagance and Maroger's constraining academic chains. He has long been fascinated with stained glass windows and veiled women. His leaded windows, use of light, and compositional concepts come straight from works by Johannes Vermeer (1632-75), and his veiled faces are plucked from sculpture by Medardo Rosso (1858-1928). Though both historical references constitute the smoking brush of Griggs' appropriations, they do nothing to explain away his unique personal vision.

"Dan is a talented draftsman who is equally influenced by modernist geometric abstraction and the eccentric drama of the photographic snap shot. He is also a symbolist who tells strange Gothic tales that hover on the liminal edge of horror. Violence is somewhere out there just beyond the picture plane. His images live in the eye of the vortex.

"In silent rooms his veiled sensuous figures, with eyes covered or closed, become blind oracles about to speak, through slightly parted lips, of things to come as the millennium draws to a thundering close."