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Confusion in film doubles the spoof

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03/30/2003

"Body Double 15," a 10-minute film that will be showing at the Drake Anderson Gallery starting Wednesday, causes the kind of confusion that can lead to laughter, which is exactly what a truly camp artwork is supposed to do.

It opens with a woman who is supposed to be Angie Dickinson in her role in the 1980 Brian de Palma film "Dressed to Kill."

But the woman we see in this version of the film, a remake by artist Brice Dellsperger, doesn't have blond hair like Dickinson. This woman is wearing a dark-haired wig.

In fact, she is not a woman at all, but a man dressed and made up to look like one.

Although the film is set in a different museum, and made in 2001, the same things happen in this scene as in the museum scene of the de Palma film. It is also set to the same, sappy 1980's soundtrack.

But the other actor in this short film is not another actor; it's the same person, in the same outfit.

Dellsperger (pronounced Dells-pur-Zhay) creates these confusing illusions, using one actor, usually in drag, to play every role in remakes of scenes from popular films. His work has also shown at the Museum of Modern Art's cinema in New York, the Center Georges Pompidou in Paris, and various galleries internationally.

"All my work is kind of a constant recycling of cinematic images," Dellsperger said from his hotel room in Switzerland, where he is working on "Body Double 16." "I am trying to give multiple visions of the movie, and new clues about the movie."

He has been developing the series since 1995, also re-creating scenes from "Return of the Jedi," "Psycho" and "Saturday Night Fever."

Cira Pascual Marquina, director of the Anderson Gallery, believes anyone who grew up with such movies will catch on fast.

"When we are looking at works of art so heavily based on contemporary pop culture, there are so many layers, and so many interpretations," she said. "We are well-equipped to read them, because they don't make obscure references to Greek gods or anything."

He is particularly fond of re-creating scenes from old de Palma movies, made in the Alfred Hitchcock tradition, full of twists and illusions. De

Palma often employed dream sequences, and the characters in his movies are not usually who they seem.

"De Palma is also trying to make you believe in something that doesn't exist," Dellsperger said.

In "Body Double 15," Dellsperger himself acts both roles. The character appears to flirt with herself, stare at herself, and pursue herself at alternate times.

The work is post-modern, dissecting the meaning of things like gender and entertainment by taking them out of their familiar context. It mocks everything from personal identity to Dickinson's acting to de Palma's movies to the film medium itself.

At times, the layering process is uneven. Dellsperger winks at the viewer in this way, letting them in on the joke.

Opening in the gallery at the same time is an exhibit of student work, "Carbon." Twenty-eight student visual artists and students in varying disciplines, such as policy, bio-chemistry and poetry, worked together to create works for the show.