

Panoptic Mind

A Video Smorgasbord at Eyedrum

Creative Loafing

By Felecia Feaster

An artist who samples from our culture (and throws it back in our faces) is local artist Oliver Smith, one of the more progressive, imaginative forces on the local video scene. Smith's hypnotic interplay of found footage and electronic distortion always manages to send the creepy-meter soaring as he takes familiar images, hones in, slows down and manipulates them into a nightmare dreamscape.

A segment of Joe Pesci stomping the bejesus out of a fellow goodfella in Scorsese's film is mixed with a techno-frantic montage of commercials, TV and news footage paced to the blink of an eye. With violent action slowed down into a grotesque spectacle, or the process of editing used to create an adrenaline-rush of violent sensation, Smith returns again and again to an idea of assault in this video omnibus. Smith's work is as mesmeric and seductive in its own way as any TV program that renders human flesh into inert spud.