

# TIF SIGFRIDS

## Art in America

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### Joe Sola Shows Microscopic Paintings In Dealer's Ear

by Maxwell Williams



When visitors enter the inaugural show at Tif Sigfrids's new Hollywood gallery, they might wonder where the art is. The independent-curator-turned-dealer will be seated at a desk in the middle of the empty space for "Portraits: An Exhibition Inside Tif Sigfrids' Ear" (Oct. 12-Nov. 9). Those brave enough to peer into Sigfrids' head will find six tiny oil paintings by L.A.-based artist Joe Sola, hung exactly as promised.

Those familiar with Sola's work have come to expect this sort of antic, out-of-left-field approach. One video, *Saint Henry Composition* (2001), features a high-school football team repeatedly tackling the artist. Another video, *Studio Visit* (2005), features real reactions from curators as Sola jumps out the window of his second-story studio during a meeting. It's the sort of sacrifice-the-body approach to art-making that Chris Burden took, but with the po-faced, lo-fi irony of a Michael Smith video

"Portraits" is surely a critique of the nature of painting exhibitions, but what is the hypothesis? Maybe that size doesn't matter when it comes to expressionist portraiture, or that most art is only worth a ball of earwax? Whatever the case, the show's site-specific nature is both its advantage and its challenge, binding the dealer to the work in a bizarrely intimate manner

Sola spoke to *A.I.A.* over e-mail this week about what inspired the show and the challenges of installing it.

**MAXWELL WILLIAMS** This show comes across as both a rare instance of the dealer being physically involved in the work, and a critique of the limitations on the exhibition space, but one that looks inward rather than trying to "break out" of the gallery's strictures. Why does the dealer's ear make a good gallery-within-a-gallery?