

ART

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Buffalo Arts Studio, 2495 Main St., Suite 500. 833-4450 or [www.buffaloartsstudio.org](http://www.buffaloartsstudio.org).

The current pair of shows on view at Buffalo Arts Studio have been receiving an enthusiastic response from gallerygoers, so much that the gallery has extended the show through March 27.

It's not hard to see why.

“Tom Hughes: The Shotgun Method”

Through March 27, also in Buffalo Arts Studio.

There's a great deal of humor and emotional authenticity in this exhibition of sculptural work by local artist Tom Hughes. Words are clearly of paramount importance to Hughes, and he employs them in simple but evocative sculptural installations containing words that range from the tentative and insecure (“Could not decide how best to get you to find you”) to the utterly all-encompassing and positively Whitmanesque (“I compete with the wind and gravity” and “What I am is constant”).

Two of his pieces are kind of playful interpretations of the sayings they present. For instance, in one piece, the phrase, “You are an athletic event,” is distributed word-by-word across separate metal frames of increasing height, meant to represent track and field hurdles. Another positions the words, “I compete with the wind and gravity,” across seven rickety wood constructions that look as if they are resisting a strong gust of wind.

It would be tough to walk away from Hughes' exhibition without at least a little grin on your face. But underlying the show's humor is an obvious love for words, and as Hughes says about his work, their simultaneous simplicity and complexity. •

“Beili Liu: One, Another”

Austin-based Beili Liu's sweet, meticulous and visually entrancing exhibition has everything to do with personal connections. In Liu's world, as in her native China, there is an often-held belief that lovers and friends are fated from birth to be together. This union is symbolized by a red string, which, in the famous Chinese proverb, is said to connect soulmates no matter where their journeys take them in life.

To capture this reassuring sense of predestination, Liu has created a painstakingly constructed installation featuring a weaved network of thin red string. On opposite walls, Liu has stuck sewing needles into the wall to form the outline of two human figures. Through those needles she has threaded the string from one wall to the other, creating a sweeping network of connections between the two people. It's a simple and powerful statement about the strength of love that might send cynics running for the hills, but is glorious to behold for everyone else.