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# Drawing to a close Craghead & Mallman at Migration's end



THIS IS A GHOST

PUBLICITY PHOTO



fire.

**Warren Craghead,  
*This is a Ghost***

exercises his skill as a cartoonist and illustrator to track the elusive nature of memory. The last page, showing only a small empty palm with the final "t" from the word "ghost" beneath it,

**IT'S** rare to visit a gallery and receive a parting gift. But as Migration prepares to empty its walls and take flight, it's fitting that artist Warren Craghead III has created a special book, *The*

*Dot and The Line*, for the venue's final show of the same name, which features the work of Craghead and Brian Mallman.

Even more fitting is the fact that this tiny 2 x 2.25" souvenir represents something of a post-gallery approach to art. To get the prize, viewers must use a Migration-provided link at Craghead's website ([wcraghead.com](http://wcraghead.com)) to reach a downloadable document, which the recipient then prints, folds, and staples.

The resulting 16-page piece, though minimal, captures Craghead's unique aesthetic of intentional randomness, in which images and words fuse to form visual poetry. I realize that last sentence sounds like pompous art talk, but—trust me—it's literally true.

Among Craghead's works on display at Migration are original drawings for several other books. The 50 pages of *How to Be Everywhere*—presented in three separate groupings—combine fragments of poet Guillaume Apollinaire's writings with seemingly spontaneous bits of drawings. Varying his lettering and line refinement, and playing with how words and images interact, Craghead invents a visual syntax that treats words as drawings and drawings as words.

Particularly poignant is Craghead's 14-page story, "This is a Ghost," in which he

is achingly tender.

At first pass, Brian Mallman's large graphite-and-gesso drawings on wood depicting businessmen seem in sharp contrast to Craghead's notebook-like work. But the two artists share an interest in how marks convey information and how fragments prod viewers to fill in the blanks.

Mallman's "Meetings Series" offers caricature-like portraits of balding white men. Their facial features are often a barely there set of lines emphasizing teeth and eyes (perhaps alluding to the way dogs challenge each other), while their heavy black suits elide with their office chairs to form abstract shapes that the viewer can nevertheless read.

Presenting Mallman and Craghead together is the last hurrah for what Migration brought to the C'ville scene: an innovative approach to contemporary art distinct from that of other local galleries. I will miss the space and am grateful for Craghead's memento. ■

**"The Dot and The Line," an exhibition of work by Warren Craghead III, and Brian Mallman, is on view through January 31 at Migration: A Gallery, 119 Fifth St. SE. 293-2200.**