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There's a "gotcha" quality to many of the works in "Double-Take: The Poetics of Illusion and Light." Initial confusion gives way to ultimate wonder as visitors slowly unravel what museum Director Irene Hofmann calls the show's "tricks of the eye and mind."



Mary Temple's trompe l'oeil painting "Southwest Corner, Northeast Light" fools many visitors to the "Double-Take" exhibit in Baltimore.

Nowhere is this better epitomized than in Mary Temple's "Southwest Corner, Northeast Light," whose pools of fake sunlight had me inspecting the surface of the wall from about an inch away, looking for signs of paint. "What you're doing now is what I *want* viewers to do, but only after they do what they always do, which is this," says the artist, suddenly turning her back on her installation in a pantomimed search for a nonexistent window or skylight.

Such visual sleights of hand crop up in other works, too, inviting levels of viewer participation not typically seen in art shows. Yet it would be cruel to reveal all the show's secrets. As with magicians, giving away how something is done often spoils the fun.

Temple agrees, calling that interval between puzzlement and certainty the place where all real art happens. "The not knowing," she says, "is everything to me."

-- **Michael O'Sullivan**