

# Musician turned photographer makes art debut

*by Dan R. Goddard  
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Walker Pickering started out as a music major at Texas State University in San Marcos, but he switched to fine art photography. When it came to doing his senior project, however, he decided to return to the rehearsal hall.

“People forget about how much time musicians spend alone practicing their instruments,” Pickering said. “I worked with people I knew from school. I usually had them play something while I took the photo. I think that worked best for both of us. I wanted to bring practicing into the light, so to speak.”

Pickering is making his professional debut as a photographer with his one-man show on view through Sept. 30 at the Robot Gallery.

He worked with Polaroid Type 55 P/N Sheet Film and a 4x5 camera. This allowed him to make contact prints, placing the negative in direct contact with the photo paper without using an enlarger. Each print is made without cropping and with the edge of the negative clearly visible.

But the prints are small and force viewers to get up close. In some ways, it's like wandering through a music hall and stumbling upon musicians deep in concentration as they try to master their instrument.

“Ryan” stares at the disassembled parts of a trumpet, looking as if he'll never figure out how to put it together again. “Andy” is turned away from the camera, bent over his guitar. “Billy” is playing a steel drum. “Raul” plays the trumpet in a big, empty room, which seems to be waiting for an audience.