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Afterimage

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Afterimage

9.14 / 11.18 2012

DePaul Art Museum

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Selina Trepp / Claudine Isé

Trubble Club / Abigail Satinsky

Zach Wirsum / Robyn Farrell

DPAM

Curated by
Thea Liberty Nichols
& Dahlia Tulett-Gross

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& Dahlia Tulett-Gross 08

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DPAM
DEPAUL ART MUSEUM

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Foreword

6 Artists do not work in a vacuum; like all of us they partake of and are shaped by their own circumstances, by the Zeitgeist, and by the work and ideas of their teachers, mentors, and friends. But sorting through strands of influence on an individual or for that matter a group of artists is not a simple process, because there are so many points of leverage. Influence frequently manifests itself through visual quotation, selective appropriation, or shared attitude, but there can be smaller resonances in the titling of works, for example, or palette, or scale. Even those who stake out a radically oppositional style or approach may be understood to do so in reaction to art of the past. And the ways subsequent artists diverge from their sources is similarly important to examine for evidence of fresh eyes, fresh concerns.

This exhibition is about sources and influences, and also about generation—both in the sense of bringing into being and that of age, cohorts, and lifespans. Most of the contemporary artists whose work forms the core of the show are around the age of thirty, and their work manifests a fitting sense of exuberance and experimentation. All of them have some connection to Chicago either by residence or correspondence, and they share a number of interests and subjects, in part a result of having studied under or been otherwise influenced by an earlier generation of Chicago artists, the so-called Imagists, who defied the canons of 1970s abstraction and Pop with their figural distortions and hot palettes derived from comics and other vernacular

images. Because their work was so distinctive and so localized, they have come to define in part how “Chicago art” is understood, and subsequent artists, including those in Afterimage, inevitably respond to that legacy.

The Afterimage project has been conceived and organized by Thea Liberty Nichols and Dahlia Tulett-Gross, independent curators whose research interests in Chicago Imagism have provided a grounding for their exploration of Imagism’s more contemporary approaches and iterations. Nichols and Tulett-Gross have astutely recognized that comparison of the two not only deepens our understanding of the “Afterimage” cohort, but also illuminates the work of the Imagists themselves. Through the contemporary perspective Nichols and Tulett-Gross and the younger artists provide, the inventive subject matter, humor, and pedagogical and social models of the 1960s and ’70s come into focus more strongly. Their careful dissection of the subtle and nuanced qualities of “influence,” particularly in the complex and rapidly evolving world of art in Chicago, has guided not only the content of the exhibition project, but also shaped its structure, drawing in both emerging artists and emerging critics, creating partnerships with other academic art venues, and developing programs that echo the generosity and enthusiasms of both Imagists and their followers.

The DePaul Art Museum is, we hope, a natural home for a project like this one. Its permanent collection has strong holdings of work

by Chicago artists, our autumn exhibitions regularly address Chicago themes, and like DePaul University itself, the museum is deeply rooted in the history and culture of the city. The broad disciplinary reach of the subject is another point of correspondence: this is not simply an exhibition of works on a gallery wall, but it incorporates as well musical performance, a comics installation and reading room, and even an inventive Chicago-themed culinary program.

We are immensely grateful to the artists and critics who have participated in the project, listed on page 35. We also thank our sister institutions which have hosted related simultaneous satellite exhibitions: the Roger Brown Study Collection and the Joan Flasch Artists’ Book Collection, both at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; and Columbia College Chicago’s Center for Book and Paper Arts. The publication has been edited by Susan Weidemeyer and Betsy Stepina Zinn, and designed by Dominic Fortunato. Finally, we salute our curators Thea Liberty Nichols and Dahlia Tulett-Gross, who have articulated and sustained an innovative approach to contemporary art of the region and, on a broader level, contributed new ways of understanding the workings of artistic influence in general. It is a pleasure to see their hard work take concrete form.

Louise Lincoln
Director
DePaul Art Museum

Acknowledgments

We were lucky enough to have our own small but dedicated clutch of advisors and mentors, all of whom kindly offered their insight, expertise, and encouragement at every level of this project. It reminded us of a remark that James Yood made early on in the planning stages of this exhibition about the charms and risks of this city: “It used to be that if you wanted to learn more about Ed Paschke, you could just look him up in the phonebook and give him a ring”—or something to that effect.

Art Green deserves special recognition for his thoughtful correspondence and indispensable recommendations, which introduced us to the work of many outstanding artists. Both Mark Pascale and Lisa Stone were tireless cheerleaders who reminded us to trust our eyes and our gut instincts. John Corbett and Jim Dempsey of Corbett vs. Dempsey

7 Gallery, as well as Dan Nadel of Picturebox Inc., graciously shared their arsenal of tactical advice and practical wisdom. And our colleagues Jessica Cochran and Paige K. Johnston’s enthusiasm and flexibility helped expand the reach of the exhibition to other institutions, enriching its depth through the exploration of its related facets. We thank Susannah Ribstein and James Connolly for their tremendous assistance with our research. The staff of DPAM, including Louise Lincoln, Laura Fatemi, Greg Harris, Drea Jones, and Alison Kleiman, facilitated many of the thorny logistics, playing host to an ambitious and organically expanding set of work and programming with grace and good humor. We are certain they would echo our sentiments in saving the biggest thanks of all for the artists and writers involved in these shows, to whom we owe a debt of gratitude.

Thea Liberty Nichols
Dahlia Tulett-Gross
Guest Curators

Afterimage

Thea Liberty Nichols
& Dahlia Tulett-Gross

8 In a pun befitting the Imagists, the term *afterimage* describes the optical phenomenon that persists in one's field of vision even after exposure to it has ceased. Figuratively, this phenomenon reflects the persistence of Imagism decades after its emergence; by extension, the contemporary artists who compose *Afterimage* are a generation *after* Imagism, and in ways both visual and ideological they have worked with it, but also moved through and beyond it.

So what is Imagism and who are the Imagists? If you ask three Chicago artists you might get four opinions. Aesthetically, Imagism can be understood as a focus on the image, typically set in opposition to abstraction, but in fact it is a more complex fusion of representation and nonobjectivity. Philosophically, it foregrounds "the authenticity of personal vision and the intensity with which it (is) articulated," summarizing the thrust of decades of art production in Chicago.¹

The term was first used in a 1963 column by Franz Schulze, art critic for the *Chicago Daily News*.² Initially, Schulze applied it to a generation of his peers, colleagues, and fellow School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) graduates, including the artists Cosmo Campoli, Leon Golub, Theodore Halkin, June Leaf, and H. C. Westermann, among others, whom he had also subsequently dubbed the "Monster Roster."³ While Imagism is a term that has served many masters, its other chief proponent was writer and curator Dennis Adrian, who employed the term while resisting

and ultimately redefining the concept. His first refutation of Imagism was a 1969 article arguing that Schulze had organized artists into artificial "schools"; Adrian preferred concise formal analysis outlining a younger generation's busy, flat, shallow pictorial space populated by forms abstracted from nature.⁴

The 1972 publication of Schulze's pivotal *Fantastic Images: Chicago Art since 1945* cemented the term *Imagism* into mainstream discourse and served as the first text to elucidate Chicago's visual art of the postwar period.⁵ Schulze tentatively expanded his definition of Imagism to include not only the monumental, existential, chiefly figurative work of the 1940s and 1950s generations but also the graphic, text-infused, narrative work of the Hairy Who, a self-titled series of exhibitions held at the Hyde Park Art Center (HPAC) in 1966, 1967, and 1968 featuring artists James Falconer, Art Green, Gladys Nilsson, Jim Nutt, Suellen Rocca, and Karl Wirsum.

As the term circulated it mutated, at times expanding to include other artists who exhibited at HPAC, such as Roger Brown, Ed Paschke, Christina Ramberg, and Barbara Rossi. Eventually, it also contracted, more in accordance with Adrian's reluctant usage and eventual redefinition. It is now generally used to refer solely to the 1960s generation of artists.

The contemporary artists brought together in *Afterimage* do not necessarily make work that is iterative of Imagism; in fact, most

of the pieces in the exhibition are generative—they do not mimic, solely rely on, or act parenthetically to Imagism in any finite way, and in several cases, Imagism is merely "a point of both reference and departure."⁶ The works can, however, be clustered into three general relationships to Imagism: those that share its formal approach; its subject matter; or its source material. Not surprisingly, given the pluralism of the subject, nothing fits neatly into a single category, and several works can easily be placed in more than one. Even the diversity of artists on view in *Afterimage* does not represent an exhaustive list, but merely a cross section.

Works that demonstrate a shared formal approach with Imagism evoke its visual vocabulary, including pieces that assimilate the Imagists' color palette, level of finish, and high volume of forms—typically arranged indexically or bilaterally—within a single picture plane. Often these works can be read, either through the incorporation of actual words or short strings of text, or through imagery that functions as a sort of rebus. Yet these artists maintain their autonomy from Imagism by employing additional strategies or addressing other formal concerns, as in Selina Trepp's playful experimentation with media and deep space in her photograph *The Painter* (2011) (p. 32).

Some works share subject matter with the Imagists. Despite the variation of intent within Imagist and *Afterimage* artists' work, they both address topics such as gender and sexuality or nostalgia and obsolescence, or modes of

expression such as a cheeky sense of humor, whether we are in on the joke or the joke is on us. The complexity of these works rests in their inventive narrative and personalized symbolism, as in Carl Baratta's lyrical landscape *Driver, Take Me to the River 3* (2010) (p. 12), whose beguiling combination of directness and discontinuity defamiliarizes the familiar.

Lastly, several works either appropriate, pastiche, or allude to the same art-historical, commercial, pop-cultural, or vernacular source material referenced by the Imagists.

Although Imagism looms large in the history of Chicago art, it continues to go under-recognized in the history of American art, and it is quite possibly this very sense of obscurity and remoteness that gives it cachet in other parts of the country.

These works challenge the embedded narratives of their historical referents by expanding upon their meaning. Eric Lebofsky's *Time Machine* (p. 21), with its madcap imagery drawn from a painting by his grandmother, also includes a partial representation of *Esso-LSD*, a notorious work by the Imagist contemporary Öyvind Fahlström.

The artists whose work is exhibited in *Afterimage* have also all either studied with or been influenced by the Imagists and were inclined to participate in this exhibition because of these relationships. Local art schools, remarkable for their number and quality, have always been a hotbed of meaningful teacher-student relationships, for the Imagists as well as the contemporary artists in *Afterimage*.⁷ Many of the artists featured in the show have cultivated relationships with the Imagists through direct classroom instruction, epitomized

by David Leggett, who came to Chicago specifically "with hopes of meeting the Hairy Who group." The move paid off: "They were so helpful in my practice . . . I still think about them whenever I work."⁸ Indirect tutelage has also been a point of connection. SAIC alumna Lilli Carré has noted that she "never did take a class with any of them . . . but have since been kicking myself for not having done so! I have been a fan of Roger Brown and Karl Wirsum's work since coming to Chicago ten years ago and learning about them."⁹

This rich pedagogical legacy is exemplified by a selection of Imagist work concurrently on view at DePaul Art Museum (DPAM), featuring their permanent collection's growing number of Imagist works supplemented exclusively by loans from other local university art museums.¹⁰ For the most part, "greatest hits" were eschewed in favor of "deep cuts," some of which have seldom or never been seen, such as Roger Brown's early student painting *Title unknown (Triptych: lightning bolts/rain/miscellaneous images)* (1967). Early works were selected because they functioned most effectively as palimpsests, providing fertile illustrations of the Imagists' own development of style by exposing slabs of their raw, unmetabolized influences. Because of this, these works lay a firm contextual foundation for *Afterimage*; they also allow us to re-examine the historic work through the lens of the contemporary work. For example, Steven Husby's potent painting *Untitled* (2011) inspires a new read of Roger Brown's patterned cloud formations as the geometric abstraction they truly are.

Tracing influence is slippery due to its fungibility and liminality. It pops up in unexpected places—such as Rob Doran's former band *Pit er Pat* taking its name from text found in one of Nutt's paintings—and its reach extends well beyond what has fermented among the artists represented in *Afterimage*.

The quantum-mechanics theory of "spooky action at a distance" asserts that particle A can inexplicably be linked to and affect

change in particle B across any given distance; in similar ways artists distant in age and physical location from Chicago Imagism have recognized its influence on their work. This includes everyone from those working at the epicenter, such as Carroll Dunham,¹¹ Eric Fischl,¹² Mike Kelley,¹³ and Jeff Koons, to notables working more on the fringe, such as Brian Donnelly (known as KAWS), Frank Gaard,¹⁴ Trenton Doyle Hancock, Ray Johnson,¹⁵ Gary Panter,¹⁶ and David Sandlin,¹⁷ illustrating the nonhierarchical, rhizomatic flow of influence.

These types of relationships also advance a curious notion of influence once removed, wherein many contemporary artists, and indeed several in *Afterimage* specifically, may count Kelley or Panter as influences without being aware of the relationships that unravel their way back to the Imagists.

Like several of the artists in *Afterimage*, those listed above work outside of Chicago, even if they passed through it at some point. Historically, in Chicago specifically, the generation of artists directly following the Imagists resisted comparison to them because of a sort of Imagist fatigue. Typically, this has not been the case for artists working in other art centers. Although Imagism looms large in the history of Chicago art, it continues to go underrecognized in the history of American art, and it is quite possibly this very sense of obscurity and remoteness that gives it cachet in other parts of the country. Only recently has Imagism become a viable way of thinking about the generation of artists represented in *Afterimage*. As more time passes, these artists are less likely to share the distancing or negative sentiments of being associated with Imagism; many, in fact, espouse the opposite.

The majority of Imagists have stuck around town, despite frequent and chronic complaints about talent drain to either coast,¹⁸ and since the very term itself is inculcated by its physical location, it has become synonymous with "provincialism."

Imagism’s magnetic pull has drawn young artists to the city, as the examples of Leggett and Lebofsky, among others, suggest. In contrast to this influx, there has also been a dispersal. Thanks in part to this movement to and fro, Imagism has been disseminated by contemporary artists to cities such as Los Angeles (John Parot) or Boston (David Ingenthron). New artists’ relationships to Imagism are coming to light daily, and it is important to recognize such examples as they emerge because they illustrate a central tenet of *Afterimage*: work that does not assert an overt visual resonance with Imagism may nevertheless be influenced by it, just as the Imagist Art Green has noted: “Jim Nutt’s work doesn’t really remind me very much of Sienese painting, an influence he has cited.”¹⁹

So what, beyond the visual, is the central connection between Imagism and contemporary art? Certainly its sustained relevance is due in part to the fact that the work still looks as electric today as it did in its heyday almost fifty years ago. But it is also the way that the Imagists’ art practice, which espoused many avant-garde ideologies and pluralistic disciplines, very strongly resembles what has come to be understood as postmodernism. These practices resonate equally as much as the visual affinities to Imagism for many of the contemporary artists in *Afterimage*, if not more so.

In conjunction with DPAM’s presentation of *Afterimage*, three related exhibitions at other Chicago venues pay special attention to the shared aspects of these ideological approaches. SAIC’s Roger Brown Study Collection hosts artist-curated microexhibitions that draw connections between the contemporary artists and the Imagists’ collecting, curating, and modes of display; Columbia College Chicago’s Center for Book and Paper Arts underscores the endurance of interdisciplinary modes of expression and collaborative art-making strategies between generations; and SAIC’s Joan Flasch Artists’ Book Collection highlights creation, production, and distribution, frequently through independent

networks, of self-published and artist-made books and ephemera. In addition, programming accompanying *Afterimage* highlights the pluralistic disciplines shared by both generations: music by the bands Avagami, Spectralina, and artist Richard Hull and jazz saxophonist and composer Ken Vandermark; the social art practice of Chef Eric May’s E-Dogz Mobile Culinary Community Center food truck; and Trubble Club’s monumental “jam comic” installation (p. 33). All of these performances and projects share in the Imagists’ manipulation of popular culture as a vehicle for the transmission of radical work and ideas.

Because Imagism “too overtly questioned dominant aesthetic standards of the time,”²⁰ it has languished in a sort of limbo—thrust off the timeline, out of the canon, with the term itself rendered meaningless through erratic application and enigmatic definition. But by reestablishing the previously obscure relationship between Imagism and contemporary art, Imagism’s strong connection to and influence over the dominant idiom of contemporary art making is revealed.

This prescient perspective is rebooting the conversation surrounding Imagism for the twenty-first century, infusing it with new energy and talent. While Imagism functions as a sort of catalyst for much of the work in *Afterimage*, inspiring a metaphorical “chemical reaction” in the contemporary artists on view, it is the contemporary artists themselves who are the catalysis—the ingredient that not only speeds the processes up but also renders it more stable in its aftermath.

More importantly, catalysis is not exhausted after one go around; it can participate in multiple chemical transformations. The contemporary artists’ sensitivity to and comprehension of Imagism allows them to utilize it as both a tool in their artwork and a platform for their art practice. As they continue to develop and execute their own unique aesthetic, they are of course reluctant to be grouped or labeled (again echoing

the sentiment of the Imagists). But it is important to remember that, unlike the Imagists—whose self-chosen or outwardly imposed critical mass was a mixed blessing—these contemporary artists have all made their impact chiefly as individuals. The exhibition, and truly this catalogue itself, reflects the diligent attention paid to each maker as a discrete individual, and the following entries, written by dozens of art critics, writers, curators, artists, and enthusiasts, demonstrate this fierce independence.

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ENDNOTES

¹Cozzolino, *Art in Chicago*, 13.

²Schulze, “The Image and the Dream: Identities of Postwar Chicago Art,” 3. Schulze has acknowledged similar usage of the term by curator Peter Selz and gallerist Alan Frumkin around the same time; “As far as ‘Imagism’ is concerned, Selz had used the term ‘new images’; Frumkin spoke of the ‘the image’; we were all of us talking about images in the ‘50s, ‘60s and ‘70s.” (Schulze, “The Legacy of Imagism,” 30).

³Ibid 30.

⁴Adrian, “*Aspects of Form Among Some Chicago Artists*,” 10–15.

⁵See also *Art in Chicago, 1945–1995*; for Chicago art prior to the World Wars, see *The Old Guard and the Avant-Garde*; for Chicago art from the turn of the century to the mid 1970s see *Art in Chicago: Resisting Regionalism, Transforming Modernism*.

⁶Thorson and Yood, “Who Follows,” 153.

⁷Some Imagists include Don Baum, Kathleen Blacksheer, Whitney Halsted, and Ray Yoshida, among others. The meaningful relationships that these artists had with several of their instructors and mentors undoubtedly led many of them to go on to teach as well; Art Green, now professor emeritus, held his post at University of Waterloo, Ontario, since 1977. Ed Paschke was an instructor at Northwestern University from 1978 to 2004. Christina Ramberg taught briefly at Roosevelt University, and then at SAIC from 1974 to 1995. As faculty at SAIC, Phil Hanson (since 1973), Gladys Nilsson and Jim Nutt (both since 1990), Barbara Rossi (since 1971), and Karl Wirsum (since 1972) have impacted generations of students there.

⁸“Artist of the week: David Leggett,” LVL3 Gallery blog, December 7, 2010, <http://lvl3.tumblr.com/post/2135570594/artist-of-the-week-david-leggett>.

⁹Lilli Carré, e-mail message to author, June 2008

¹⁰These institutions include Elmhurst College’s A. C. Buehler Library, University of Chicago’s Smart Museum of Art, Northwestern University’s Block Museum of Art, and SAIC’s Roger Brown Study Collection.

¹¹“I’ve come to think that Jim Nutt is actually a central figure in my personal artistic cosmology because I don’t think he’s involved with critique as we now talk about it in anyway at all and it’s really pretty much old-fashioned self-expression done by a very eccentric man.” Carroll Dunham, “Case Studies of Selected Works on View: Jim Nutt” (lecture, Art Institute of Chicago, October 16, 2009), http://www.artic.edu/aic/resources/resource/950?search_id=1&index=0.

¹²“The underbelly, carnie world of Ed Paschke and the hilarious sexual vulgarity of Jim Nutt were revelatory experiences for me.” <http://www.janeeckertfineart.com/portfolio/eric-fischl/>.

¹³“I was most interested in the works of Nutt, Saul, and to a lesser extent,

Westermann (though I do admire Westermann’s parodies of folksy Americana) during my undergraduate student years when I was primarily a painter. The problematic issues raised by their work relative to formal composition and moral readings continues to interest me to this day, however, and still informs my work.” Kelley, *Minor Histories*, 167.

¹⁴“I met Jim [Nutt] a couple times and I don’t know if I met anyone else from that bunch. I remember going to that show at the Hyde Park Art Center, and they had made a little comic – I have a copy of it someplace – and that made a big impression on me: to have a comic made by the artist in the show as the catalog. I don’t know. I like Jim’s work the best of that gang. I like [Karl] Wirsum too, but I like Jim.” BOMB GLOBAL: Frank Gaard, by Jonathan Thomas, Mar 12, 2012, <http://bombsite.com/issues/1000/articles/6461>.

¹⁵In several of Johnson’s drawings and collages, the artist pays tangible homage to the Imagists by appropriating elements from Karl Wirsum’s drawing for the back cover of *The Portable Hairy Who!*, the exhibition comic book for the first Hairy Who show at the Hyde Park Art Center in 1966.

¹⁶“In the 70s, the few times I was in New York, I would go to Phyllis Kind Gallery and ask to look at Karl Wirsum and Jim Nutt’s work. There was a treasure trove of paintings on plexiglas, polychromes wood sculpture, insane marionettes and ink drawings in her back room. Killer stuff. When I saw [Wirsum’s] album cover for Screamin’ Jay Hawkins in a record shop in about 19seventysomething my big toe jumped up in my boot. It was about the greatest piece of art I had ever seen.” “Karl Wirsum,” Gary Panter blog, September 9, 2010, <http://garypanter.com/site/blog?p=231>.

¹⁷“Of course I was interested in Warhol, Rivers, Oldenburg, Rosenquist; basically New York Pop. But something was missing. It was too cold. Then I found the Hairy Who...their stuff made me feel like I was on the right track. To me, here was art about America that wasn’t trying to hard to be cool and hip. It was quirky, subversive, and smart-ass – not afraid to get down and dirty with popular culture. This art seemed to be made by fans, participants – it reminded me of what punk rock was doing at about this time, another form of art that was engaged and populist.” Sandlin, “Learning from the Master,” 95–96.

¹⁸Although Nutt, Nilsson, and Wirsum all spent periods of time on the West Coast in the 1970s, Art Green is the primary exception. Green has lived and taught in Canada since the early 1970s, and his student Anders Onionen is just one example of a slew of Canadian artists (including Marc Bell and Amy Lockhart) who also draw inspiration from the Imagists.

¹⁹Art Green, e-mail message to author, July 27, 2010.

²⁰Kelley, *Minor Histories*, 168.

Carl Baratta



Driver, Take Me To The River 3, 2010 | Watercolor, gouache and ink on paper | 18 in x 25.5 in | Courtesy of the artist

A river snakes through most, if not all, of Carl Baratta's landscape paintings. Sometimes that river is bloody or is on fire; sometimes a finger beckons from the murky water; sometimes ducks rest there. A river is a road to an undiscovered country, an invitation to a quest. This is a place ripe with visions. It is anywhere but here. *Driver, Take Me to the River 3* commands an escape to this wilderness. Armed with a witch's brew of freak, fringe, and folk subcultures, Baratta wanders through Joseph Yoakum's fertile lobes and rivers, over André Derain's ripe red earth, past the

brood of duck decoys from Roger Brown's collection, and beneath a Mughal sky. The eye easily meanders through Baratta's landscapes. More than that, they are themselves an experiential walkabout through off-the-grid folklores and art-historical fantasies.

Baratta establishes the same relationship to his influences that the Chicago Imagists did, lifting the pure authenticity of folk art, without apparent irony, as a collaboration with his adopted ancestors. Imitation or cannibalization of one's influences is not without precedent, appearing,

even, in the famed folk artist Rufus Porter's 1825 techniques manual for self-trained artists. Porter prescribed tracing as a way to order imagery, a technique Baratta uses to correspond with history. For example, the curve of a horse's rump in a Gericault drama mirrors the lumpy coastline in a Nick Engelbert landscape, making it a fruitful shape for a new painting.

Making his own egg tempera paint is an important aspect of the artist's practice, adding dimension to his self-made approach and further connecting him with

the ancients. In this way, Baratta patchworks many referents—from arcane to mass-media ephemera—into an alchemical pastiche that solidifies into a memory painting of his artistic inheritance.

—Jason Foumberg

Marc Bell first embraced the work of the Chicago Imagists after a decade of making fine art and drawing comics for independent print media. In 2003 he was invited to show his mixed-media constructions in *The Ganzfeld* (Unbound) exhibition at Adam Baumgold Gallery in New York. Through his ongoing relationship with this gallery, Bell was exposed to work by Roger Brown, Jim Nutt, Christina Ramberg, Joseph Yoakum, and Ray Yoshida. Bell's affinity for the Imagists may stem from a shared passion for the toys and printed mass art of his youth,

the urban landscape and its detritus, and non-Western visual cultures.

Bell is not afraid to reference his fine art in his comics, and much of his current practice seems predicated on his comic art. In a nod to the wordplay employed by the Imagists, he playfully differentiates his contemporary works from his comics by referring to them as "fine ahtwerks." Over the last few years, Bell has taken cues from Brown, Art Green, and Yoshida about how to amplify the graphic and formal qualities of his self-

appropriated content, bestowing on it further psychic relevance as personal symbols.

Recently, Bell has consciously adopted Yoshida's manner of "grid-like composition," arranging his figures and doodles in all-over drawings as a means of reintroducing the comic strip form to his "ahtwerks." In mixed-media constructions such as *R*, the influences of Brown and Art Green are also clear. This piece, which incorporates elements taken from earlier collages, also references, if abstractly, various aspects of

Bell's comic world through the medium of paint. Through Bell's employment of a symmetrical composition and axial bands of unmodulated colors, the sculpted Styrofoam cup achieves gravitas—the seemingly banal symbol of consumption becomes an object of meditation.

—Lucas Bucholtz

Marc Bell



R, 2011 | Acrylic ink, paper, and found objects on board | 12 in x 9 in x 3.5 in | Courtesy of the artist and Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York

Eric Cain



Pujol's First Triumph, 2011 | Acrylic on PVC board | 72 in x 48 in x 48 in | Courtesy of the artist

The celebration of the spectacle and the demand for the grotesque align with the strange stage of our contemporary moment in Eric Cain's *Pujol's First Triumph*. French flatulist Joseph Pujol—or "Le Pétomane" (The Farting Maniac) as he was also known—was a popular stage act at the Moulin Rouge in Paris during the final years of the nineteenth century. Pieced together from two-dimensional parts, Cain's sculpture deconstructs this anecdote, leaving the flattened cues of a moustache, a bow tie, and the

Moulin Rouge's monumental elephant. The fascination with the sideshow act reflects the social and political ridiculousness of our world, in which illusion and delusion play out in a state of cultural change. The historical parallels and colorful dissent that Cain draws through metaphor and satirical imagery are open for discussion within Pujol's curiously empty speech bubble.

In this and other self-described "screwball history paintings," Cain references pop-cultural

influences from his youth, including Warner Brothers cartoons and Mad magazines. Channeling aesthetics akin to the Chicago Imagists, Cain developed his illustrative style during the twenty years he worked as a tattoo artist. Abstracted, comic-style imagery meets abjection in Cain's art, reflecting his continued infatuation with poking fun at the windbag establishments of past and present.

—Mia DMeo

Lilli Carré



Bleedin' Heart, 2011 | Hand-drawn animation, 1:15 minutes | Courtesy of the artist

Like dreams, personal fantasies cull images that persist in one's memory; even long after exposure, they are accumulated by the subconscious. Lilli Carré's animations have absorbed the fantasy-based practices of the Chicago Imagists, while unfolding into sensitive existential tableaux. In Carré's art, the figurative style of the Imagists persists, though her subjects are intimately

represented in a manner that adds a disarming dimension to the work of her predecessors. The flashes of visual influence that Carré's work shares with the Imagists are rooted in underground comics, and in folk and outsider art. Her narratives possess a folkloric fixation on love, death, myth, and bodily transformation.

An experimental dive into abstraction, *Bleedin' Heart* offers a suggestion of the quickening of one's heartbeat—through pulsing sound and flashing images—by a lover. Carré makes prominent her usage of low-art materials—permanent markers and index cards—paying homage to the vernacular artists that inspire her. In *Bleedin' Heart*, Carré's experimentation with

new materials and erasure of a figurative central character portrays a more suspended, enigmatic statement. Through the progression of Carré's work, the enduring influence of the Imagists prevails, as her otherworldly fantasies begin to bleed into a world of abstraction.

—Erin Nixon

Justin Cooper



16

Untitled (ties), 2010 | Pigment print | 45 in x 30 in
Courtesy of moniquemeloche Gallery, Chicago

Justin Cooper's relationship with the Chicago Imagists is not one of direct influence. He attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, as did many of the Imagists roughly forty years earlier, but his appreciation for these artists only came much later. If Cooper has an affinity with the Imagists, then, it is more natural than cultivated. The Imagists readily borrowed from popular culture, assimilating it into their work so that it came out looking strange and not quite

recognizable. Cooper also takes familiar elements, edging into the realm of kitsch, and shows them to us in a weirder, funnier light. He picks up on oddities and amplifies ingrained contradictions. While his artworks are precisely realized, Cooper pulls at the loose ends of normal life until everything seems at risk of unraveling.

In Cooper's photograph *Untitled (Ties)*, a man's head is wrapped entirely in boisterous neckties, yet his demeanor is relaxed: he

stands at ease with his hands behind his back, as if nothing is out of the ordinary. Even the title of the photograph denies any funny business, pointing to its subject impassively without commenting on why the man's closet has swallowed his head. In the quiet aftermath of a turbulent encounter with everyday objects, the artist shows our world to be a little unhinged but somehow no less pleasant for it.

-Karsten Lund

Rob Doran



17

Bruno Antony, 2010 | Clay, ink, enamel, acrylic and carborundum grit on paper | 30 in x 22 in | Courtesy of the artist

Rob Doran was introduced to the Chicago Imagists at age nineteen through his friend's father, the artist Patrick Rodriguez. Rodriguez had been a fellow student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with Karl Wirsum, Roger Brown, and Phyllis Bramson, and their works—as well as those by other Imagists—filled the Rodriguez home. Immediately struck by the work, Doran soon discovered a succession of other

artists, including Billy Al Bengston, Ken Price, and Peter Saul, who became incredibly influential on his practice.

Doran's work is also firmly rooted in the visual style of another Chicago artist and influencer of the Imagists, H. C. Westermann. The affinities evident in both Westermann's lithographic prints (particularly his *See America First* series) and Doran's

Bruno Antony are complemented by an underlying sense of the sinister: Westermann's antiwar stance and Doran's portrait of the psychotic murderer-for-hire in Alfred Hitchcock's 1951 movie *Strangers on a Train*.

Bruno Antony is an amalgam of physical materials (clay, ink, enamel, acrylic, and carborundum) whose parts come together to create a complexity

that is simultaneously flat and multi-dimensional. In this portrait of a fictional character, we see an antagonist who is dangerous but also adventurous, thrifty yet ultimately sad. Nevertheless, the protagonist in this scenario—the artist—assures us that the future of Imagism will never dissipate.

-Britton Bertran

Richard Hull



18 *Adolescence*, 2011 | Oil on linen | 36 in x 30 in | Collection of Brian Herbstritt

Despite many points of contact with the Imagists—as artists, instructors, friends, and purveyors of shared reference materials and similar influences—Richard Hull has always forged a distinct name for himself. This may be due, in part, to his sensitivity to other realms of experience and his openness to collaboration. Paintings in his current series are all named after poems—a perennial source of inspiration for Hull—with the poet’s initials inscribed on the back

of each canvas; in the case of *Adolescence*, the artist chose a word from a W. H. Auden poem as the title.

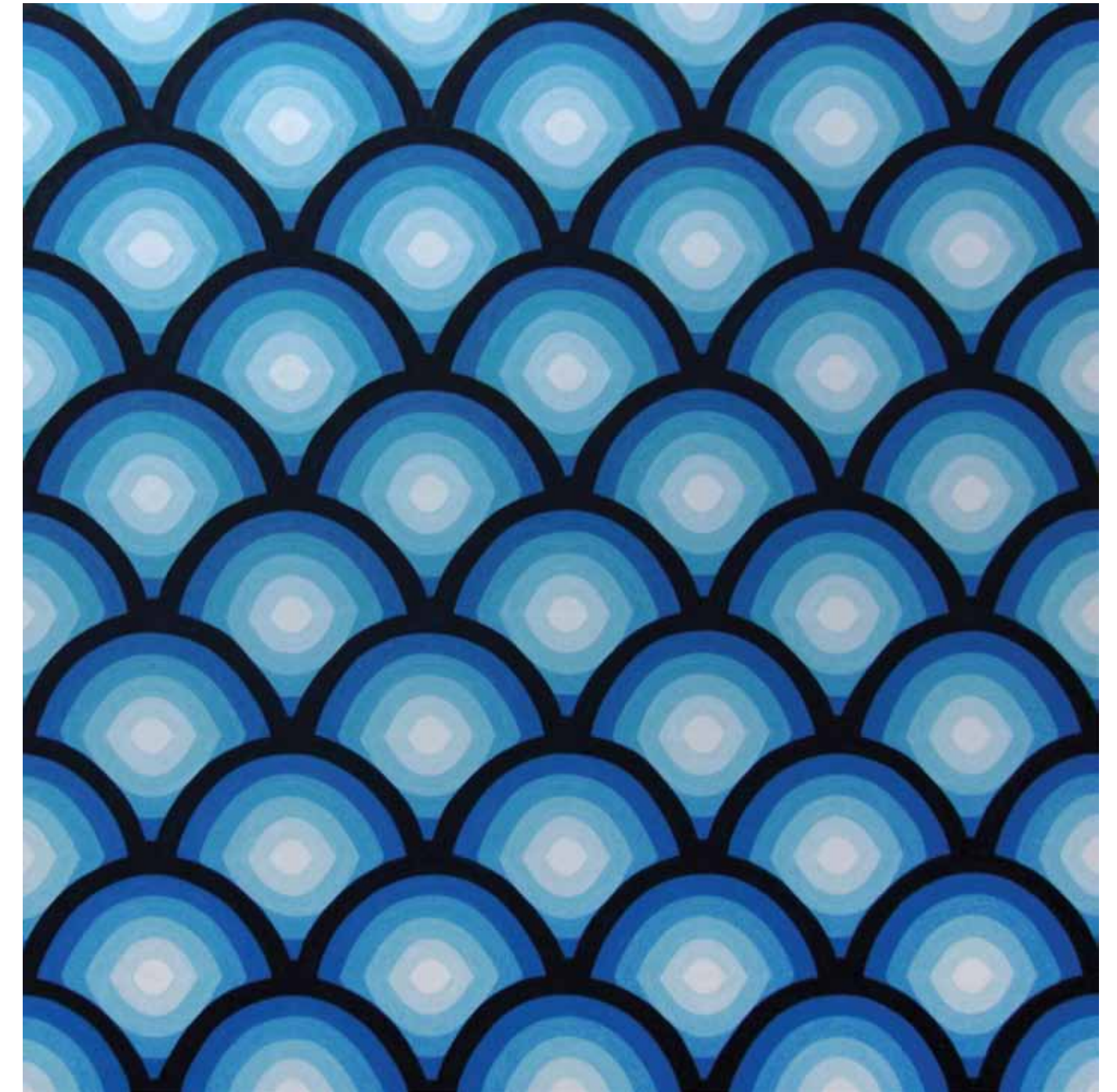
Hull’s teardrop forms contain concentric abstractions slowly doubled, giving way to bow-tie or hourglass shapes. Filled in, rather than around, these shapes feature his signature crazy-quilt patterning and hot and cold color palette. In this current body of work, Hull’s forms have morphed once again, with looping shapes

now multiplying exponentially and taking on more recognizably human postures and poses. This development may be liminally related to a course he co-teaches with James Nutt at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago entitled “Pictorial Spaces.” *Adolescence* exhibits a playful push and pull between its constituent parts and whole, endlessly telescoping the viewer’s attention into, and then around, the composition.

Much has been made about the prominence of the figure in Chicago art, specifically in connection to the Imagists, but here we find Hull chasing down a new mode of representation that not only evolves his previous visual vocabularies but also blends figuration with painterly abstraction. This twist, so typically Hull, proves that the only constant within his seasoned practice is change.

—Thea Liberty Nichols

Steven Husby



19 *Untitled*, 2011 | Acrylic on canvas | 48 in x 48 in | Courtesy of the artist

Hyper-controlled, systematic, and recursive, Steven Husby’s practice does not immediately evoke or directly recall Imagism’s most recognizable tropes. A native of South Dakota, Husby attended Minnesota State University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he began improvising with geometric abstraction, near-monochromes, and value gradation. He also began his now-characteristic rule-based serial painting procedure, adding and subtracting elements or stretching particular proportions

in a sequence of paintings. Much of his work can be divided into visually similar groups of paintings, in which individual pieces “tweak” the formula of the previous ones. In his new work, however, Husby is somewhat abandoning the rigidity of his earlier recursiveness

Untitled exemplifies the qualities that continue to attract critical interest; formally geometric, rhythmic, and immaculately constructed, the painting invokes digital logics, labor, and the intellectual projects of both

abstraction and Post-Minimalism. Critics have been strongly drawn to his paintings’ impersonality, which suggests a lack of artistic ego and obvious persistence and careful attention in a system of art making that seems deeply tedious in practice. In fact, many of his paintings rely on gut instincts and trust in how their changing incarnations “feel” rather than “work,” adding a subtle human element to the “ideology of formalism.”

Husby’s work has much in common with Imagism. *Untitled* is in obvious dialogue with Roger Brown’s scalloped backgrounds in gradients of tone and hue. But more generally, Husby’s use of unmodulated colors, in the form of everyday or vernacular hues, semiotics, and repetition; the straightforwardness of his facture; and what he calls his “atavistic” tendency all align him with the Imagists and larger trends in postmodern art.

—Monica Westin

David Ingenthron



Natural Love, 2007 | Acrylic and gouache on gesso board | 12 in x 12 in | Collection of Letitia Noel

The months from November through February, and sometimes March, are icy, cold, and gray in Chicago. Since leaving the house can take a herculean effort, this time offers an annual, forced hibernation. David Ingenthron's first winter in Chicago had a profound effect on him and his practice, which took substantial form in his painting *Natural Love*. The artist's open experimentation and freely associated shapes are the backbone of the work. Flowing throughout its boldly patterned surface, saturated hues blend and bleed, imbuing it with a strong sense of movement. There are vague allusions to trees, figures, phalluses, and sky in

this landscape, and intermingling throughout is a sense that new formal relationships and discoveries can and do appear.

In 2002 Ingenthron accepted a position as senior preparator at the University of Chicago's Smart Museum, the same year that the H. C. Westermann Study Collection was founded through gifts from the artist's wife and estate. Westermann's influence on Ingenthron's work can be seen in *Attachments Thread*, an odd sculpture made of plaster and sawdust that comes with interchangeable parts. Painted a pale Pepto-Bismol pink, the figure is missing any identifiable armatures

besides a sad, cartoonish black face and what appears to be a leg with swappable limbs. *Attachments Thread* has an extended appendage that upon exchange can alter its image, if only so slightly, by morphing the end of its leg into another form. The artist's focus on the figure, emphasis on distortion, and use of garish color also bring to mind the work of the Hairy Who, an affiliation of artists working in Chicago who exhibited together at the Hyde Park Art Center in the late 1960s.

Leaving home can offer a rare opportunity to reinvent, reestablish, and perhaps redefine oneself, and there is an undeniable

freedom and sense of risk taking in Ingenthron's practice. *Natural Love* and *Attachment Threads* are reminders that at one point Chicago influenced Ingenthron's work, whether through the psychological effect of winter, H. C. Westermann, or the prevalent sense of enigmatic forms, humor, high-pitched color, and distortion that pervades the work of the Hairy Who.

—Jenny Gheith

Eric Lebofsky



Time Machine (Hinda 1), 2011 | Acrylic on canvas | 24.5 in x 24.5 in | Courtesy of the artist

At first glance, one might think Eric Lebofsky's *Time Machine* is a painted remix based on spirited printed ephemera from *False Image* (one of the early Hairy Who exhibitions at the Hyde Park Art Center) or a Ray Yoshida comic book. It is, however, based on an untitled painting created by Lebofsky's grandmother Hinda Bilenker in the late 1970s. Bilenker, who lived in Elizabeth, New Jersey, enrolled in a class at Keene College, where she made her first painting. The work is an unresolved, exploratory cacophony of red Spiderman heads, zigzags, and floating limbs that alternately belong to a businessman and a superhero. Set on a flat expanse of muted pink, the contents of

this painting wearily bridge fantasy and reality. While it is fun to speculate that Bilenker saw one of the very few Imagist exhibitions in New York during the 1970s, it is more likely that this irreverent painting was fueled by her own anxieties, energy, and humor.

With *Time Machine*, Lebofsky appropriated the essential elements of his grandmother's picture—the Spiderman head and the figure fragments—giving her soupy composition a particularly Imagist sense of symmetry. Amplifying Bilenker's colors into bright blues, pinks, and greens, he gave the background fluffy, flat clouds that add a shallow, finite sense of depth to the complex

surface. Multiple fragmented bodies are bisected along three edges of the painting, placing parts of his grandmother's characters effectively beyond view. Lebofsky also employs what Imagist critic Dennis Adrian referred to as a "truncation" technique internally on the picture plane itself, where legs and halved heads meet artificial edges, often created by Lebofsky's ambiguous, rendered shapes.

While Lebofsky's painting is based on his grandmother's, many of the explicit Imagist influences in it (and in his work in general) may be the result of his professional and educational experiences in the shadow of Imagist predecessors.

His use of the fragmented figure recalls the work of Roger Brown, Philip Hanson, Jim Nutt, and Christina Ramberg. These floating fragments suggest a discursive, situational conundrum of events—a comic strip condensed and flattened. In the center of the picture, the narrative becomes rhetorical. Above a small control panel, Lebofsky rendered the word *LSD* in plain red. Is this gently subversive, albeit adolescent, gesture—punchy, nostalgic, and certainly Pop—Lebofsky's reminder to us all that *he* is at the helm?

—Jessica Cochran

David Leggett



Summer of Dreams and Magic, 2010 | Acrylic, watercolor and ink on paper | 30 in x 22 in | Courtesy of the artist

David Leggett's work looks and feels just as complete and confusing as life in America. Fragments of text float like snatches of overheard conversation or arguments. Racial and homophobic epithets sometimes appear in Leggett's work, ugly attitudes that are often buried just below the surface, and Leggett is not afraid to expose them as a reflection of his experiences as an African American man. Internecine conflicts between

artists, art movements, and ideas are referenced as Leggett asserts his position as an artist. Leggett is not shy or squeamish about presenting the body in his art, influenced as he is by the Chicago Imagists and Hairy Who artists. These tensions—racial, sexual, bodily, and artistic—all regularly appear in the artist's work, just as we deal with them every day.

Summer of Dreams and Magic reflects many of Leggett's consistent themes. Leggett pays homage to the notable Chicago artist Henry Darger, referencing his Vivian Girls via the figure in the lower-left corner. The phrase "Folk ART" conjures the sometimes contentious divisions between artists; those who work without training, and those who have it, those who prefer realism, and those who prefer abstraction. Likewise, the "low" materials

of felt and glitter knowingly upend the traditional perceptions of what makes "high" art. A disembodied brain hovers in the picture, perhaps indicating the mind-body divide while adding to the strangeness of the scene, as a coke-sniffing alien (a Scarface reference?) looks on. Yes, this is America understood.

-Abraham Ritchie

Amy Lockhart



The Collagist, 2009 | Paper puppet and cut out animation, 2:00 minutes | Courtesy of the artist

Canadian artist and filmmaker Amy Lockhart has been making idiosyncratic, handmade animations for over a decade. Even as technological advances in computer software have made it possible to animate with little recourse to physical material, Lockhart has continued to work with frame-by-frame photographic techniques. Using hand-painted props, cut-outs, and replacement and drawn animation, Lockhart produces works with a cartoon-like style, offbeat sense of humor, and youthful, frenetic energy. Her work recalls the irreverence of Imagists James Nutt, Christina Ramberg, and Karl Wirsum.

The Collagist is a short video animation that Lockhart created in 2009 in collaboration with the artist Marc Bell. As the video opens, the viewer sees a tightly framed shot of two paper puppet hands, themselves at work with paper and scissors. Over the course of the video's two minutes, the hands sketch and arrange drawings, clippings, and text across a white page. Grasping a cup of coffee, the protagonist pauses, as if to reflect on how the larger work has come together. A long puff of smoke from a cigarette takes over the screen as the collage flashes and vibrates below. Suddenly, the clouds of gray smoke drop orange sparks across

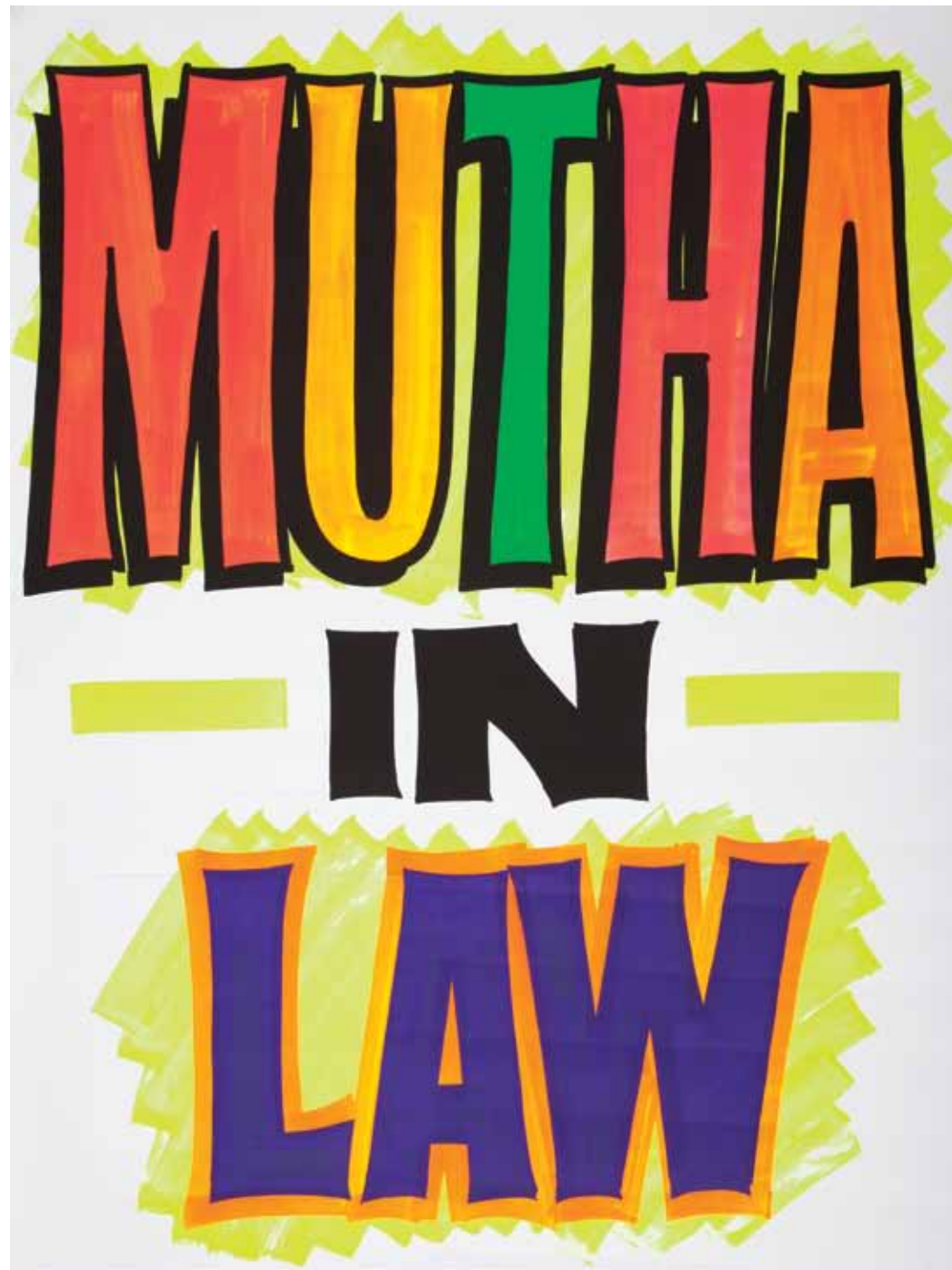
the collage, igniting and quickly engulfing it. With a splash of the coffee, the fire is extinguished, leaving the collage a wet and jumbled mess. The video ends as the hands wipe it all away to reveal the blank page once again.

The piece was drawn directly from Bell's collage process—Lockhart literally traced his hands for the paper puppets and re-created two-dimensional versions of his tools. Yet the work transcends the particularities of Bell's practice. The mise en abyme created by Lockhart suggests a desire to reveal something of the artistic process—systematic and unpredictable, harmonious

and unsightly. Lockhart's earlier animations display a cool distance from their subject matter, but *The Collagist* is decidedly self-reflexive. When the video ends, the viewer is left to ponder the slippage between permanence and ephemerality, further twisted by Lockhart's decision to install the video alongside the original drawings and puppets from the animation.

-Paige K. Johnston

Eric May / E-Dogz Mobile Community Culinary Center



Eat in the Streets, 2012 | Flash paint on paper | 48 in x 36 in |
Courtesy of the artist

Like the Imagists, Eric May uses the unique character of Chicago as fertile ground for cultivating an expanded definition of artistic practice. On October 8, 2011, he hosted the first International Hot Dog Forum outside Roots and Culture, the gallery he owns and operates. A line of artists, students, families and couples, neighbors, and curious passersby queued up to sample the various regional hot dogs being prepared by the crew inside the E-Dogz Mobile Community Culinary Center, May's food truck. E-Dogz has been the site of several recent projects that drew

inspiration from unique food cultures in and around Chicago.

May's ongoing series of deli signs demonstrates his sincere approach to the phenomenological exploration of food and culture. His appropriation of the graphic style of deli signs for painted phrases such as "Food Oasis" and "Mongrel Cuisine" subtly reminds viewers of our deep political and cultural associations with food.

For this catalogue, May submitted a new recipe, combining a chili and tamale "Mother-in-Law" with an Italian beef sandwich. More than

just a culinary amalgamation, the combination of these two South Side classics connects the Great Migration, which brought the Mississippi Delta-style tamale to Chicago; the creative seasoning methods that turned thin slices of beef into tender delicacies during lean times; and the importance of Chicago as a production center for various Mexican food products.

May is clearly influenced by Chicago's traditions, incorporating these directly into the medium of his practice. If the Imagists formulated the recipe for a distinct

brand of art making rooted in Chicago, May is no doubt aware of this recipe. But like any self-respecting cook, he cultivates relationships and ingredients that make each project he presents to the public uniquely his own.

-Anthony Stepter

Ellen Nielsen



Spectacle Box, 2007 | Sequins, pins, wood, glass, velvet | 18 in x 17.5 in x 2.5 in |
Courtesy of the artist

The Chicago Imagists created work that challenged the dominant narrative of art history from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. More personal and surreal than Pop Art, Imagism embraced the figure and representation in ways that modernism eschewed. The paintings and drawings produced by this group of artists emphasized whimsy and absurdity, the grotesque and the lowbrow.

The Imagists made art that was charged with the energy and politics of the time—irreverent and loaded with the possibilities of a radical generation.

Years later this same energy, enthusiasm for the abject, and desire to reorient the dominant narrative and creative strategies of the time appeared in the work of a new generation of artists,

including Ellen Nielsen. Like the Imagists, Nielsen creates a counternarrative to modernism. Her work celebrates ornament, the personal, the feminine, and the tacky, while maintaining a deep appreciation for whimsy and the absurd.

In *Spectacle Box*, Nielsen created a grid out of large and small, variously colored and shaped

sequins that are organized by size on top of a bed of black velvet. It is a taxonomy of tackiness, an ordering system for playfulness. Like much of her work, *Spectacle Box* is a tactile exploration that elevates traditionally cheap materials through manipulation and recontextualization.

-Elizabeth Chodos

Anders Oinonen



Island Lake, 2009 | Oil on canvas | 20 in x 24 in | Collection of Joshua Newcomer and Tejal Shah

Anders Oinonen was greatly influenced by his teacher Art Green, who exhibited in the first Hairy Who show at the Hyde Park Art Center in 1966, but has made his home in Canada since the mid-1970s. While he lived in Chicago, Green absorbed the architectural patchwork of downtown and used the built forms to explore his fascination with geometry. Oinonen may not focus on these same geometric concerns, but he is similarly interested in making the viewer's mind shuffle between vantage points. This is perhaps most noticeable in his paintings

where faces are conjured out of abstract planes of color.

Waterloo, Canada—where Oinonen studied with Green—is something of an island. It sits in the middle of the part of Ontario surrounded on three sides by Lakes Ontario, Huron, and Erie. *Island Lake* is clearly about islands—figurative islands as well as islands of color within a painting—and how the definition of an island can change. The colorful mound at the painting's center is an island in a lake, but the lake itself is also turned into an

island by the violet shores pressing in from each corner. These shores end at the canvas's edge, and the surrounding gallery wall turns the entire painting into an island.

A bull's-eye is the perfect emblem for an island; there is one in this painting, colored by the only unrepeated shade of blue and peeking through at the base of the green swath. With the addition of this bull's-eye, the island becomes not just an island, but a face as well, and one of Oinonen's slyest faces at that. This turns the painting, what seems like an excursion away

from his primary figural motif, into one of its most subtle invocations. *Island Lake's* face does not tell us anything or betray any emotion. It looks back at the viewer like a face in a cloud, existing only when the mind sees it and conjured with the telescoped concentration one focuses on a bull's-eye.

—Bryce Dwyer

John Parot



Navarro's Problem, 2010 | Gouache, enamel and ink collage on paper | 34 in x 30 in | Courtesy of Western Exhibitions

PDA: A letter on/to John Parot

Dear John,
Do you know the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty? He's been on my mind recently, especially while preparing this essay. Your work that has such a peculiar feel to it, particularly in the faces you draw. The way you handle the surface and the way the lines fold in on each other. It's almost like an endless folding that is derived from vision and the force of looking. A gaze tattoos us, marks us, and changes us. Not unlike the common interpretation of Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, in which observation can alter the structure of the thing that's being observed. It occurs to me that this is essentially what is suggested in the way you deal with vision. Your work foregrounds the flesh-i-ness of vision itself; what Merleau-Ponty might call the "flesh of the world." Merleau-Ponty's is a puzzling account of perception that mixes the two senses of

touch and vision together. It has always been an elusive concept for me—that is until I saw your work and studied the faces you draw so eloquently.

Eyes seem to be a constant motif in your work, "eyes without a face." Looking. Looking at what? Then there is the color: bright pink that feels plugged into the electric socket paired with light-tight black. Like night vision goggles, your work seems to dart in and out of the shadows. Now the tattoo plays a double function, a marking, but also camouflage. Revealing and concealing. Hide and seek within a world of sharp-edged geometric abstraction. Somebody could get cut if they ran too fast through some of your paintings. But that's what someone would be doing inside your painting, running or some activity that required a similar amount of energy. Whoever steps into your painting is going to have to be alert. The question then is why?

Why this mix of the visual and the tactile? But why this constellation of exuberance and danger?

You once described your work as a type of "Fantastic Realism," and that seems to me to be an accurate self-assessment. But maybe it leaves out an important dimension in the work. I am thinking of your piece *Navarro's Problem*, which at first sounds like a mathematical problem or a philosophical conundrum like Gödel's incompleteness theorems or Zeno's paradox. Which given the source of the title might actually make sense. The "Navarro" in question is Ramon Navarro, a closeted gay film star from the 1930s who was embroiled in an extortion plot by an ex-lover who threatened to out him, effectively destroying his career, if he did not invest in the purchase of a house designed by Lloyd Wright, son of Frank Lloyd Wright. When you described how you started from an interest in the work of Lloyd Wright and later

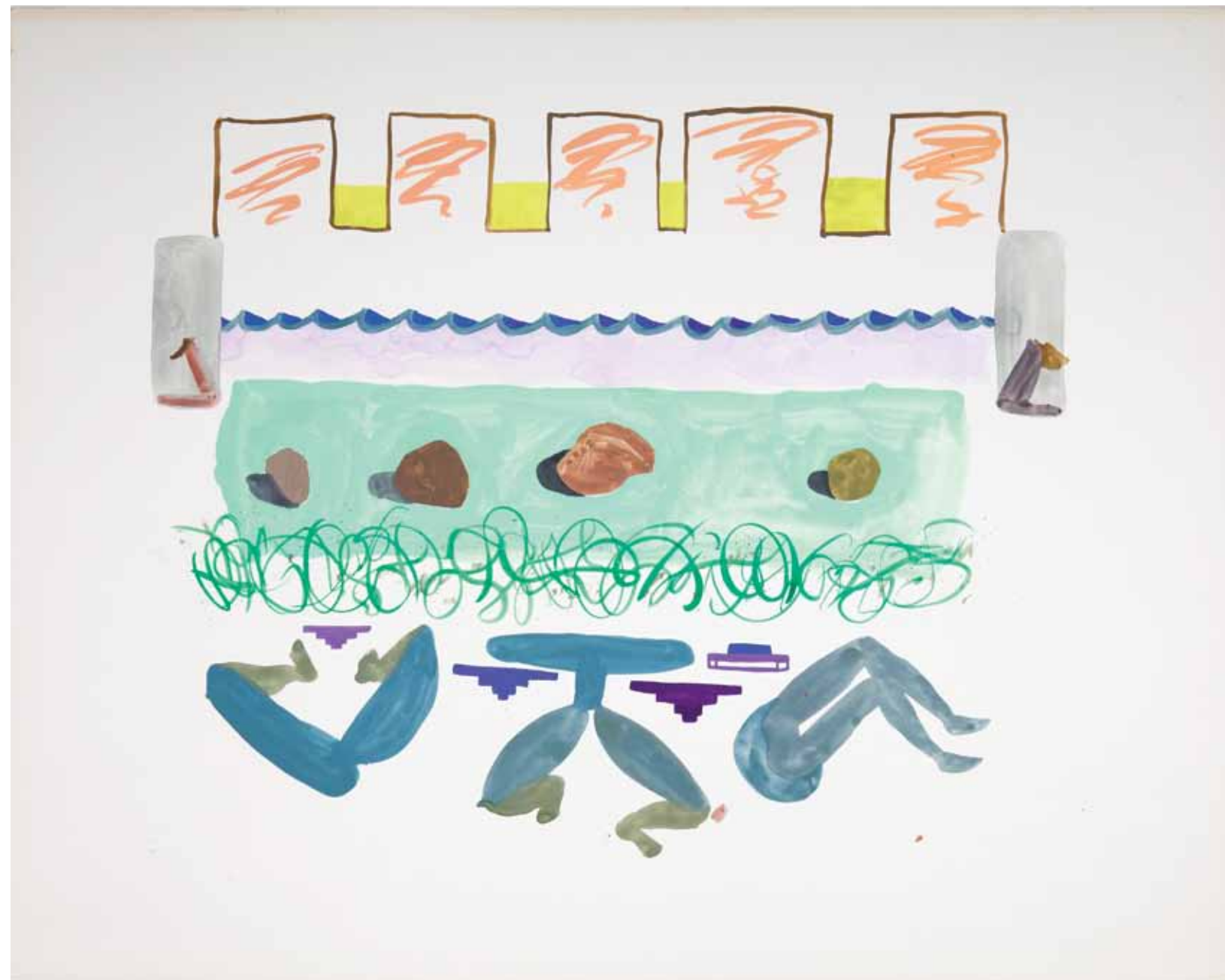
learned of Ramon Navarro's story, I thought that *Navarro's Problem* was indeed a complex calculus of gay visibility: the wish to remain invisible as well as the struggle to be recognized and afforded basic civil rights.

While my description is no doubt an oversimplification of the politics of visibility in and around gay culture, it seems to me that your work *Navarro's Problem* is not. Indeed, it retains the serious play of hide and seek that I mentioned earlier and bespeaks a kind of woundedness marking the flesh of the world in a way that is attendant to any effort to see and be seen. So perhaps the lines on the faces you draw are also scars, proudly held up to show what it means to live and be seen in a society whose unjust laws attempt to make one invisible.

Yours,
Zach

—Zachary Cahill

Carmen Price



28 *Untitled*, 2011 | Gouache on paper | 11 in x 15 in | Courtesy of the artist

Before one turns to electricity, as the light diminishes at the end of each day, objects flatten into the darkness, becoming indistinguishable from their surroundings. A sphere becomes a circle as one's foot becomes a plane of ever-lost light. At such times human sight is especially fallible and the mind must compensate, filling in what is not seen with a recollection of daytime's landscape. Implicit in these exercises is an assumption that objects stay the same. Yet there will always be a witching hour of doubt: when day bleeds into night, just as sleep and wakefulness blend together via imperceptible and even sensual borders. Carmen Price makes work from that space.

His work is always full of light, but the contents described upon each page seem broadcasted from an intuitive twilight. His images appear trapped, as though netted from the unconscious, frozen and rearranged in a petri dish. Price paints between the second and third dimension; the objects he transposes are not quite two-dimensional. Each thick slice of paper captures an intersection of variant planes; most of the objects caught in that intersection become flat afterimages, slivers of themselves. In *Wet Garden*, only a suggestion of the rocks' dimensionality survives Price's surgical transcription; each stone casts a conspicuous shadow. Waves in the background also maintain some evocation of depth, but

everything else on the picture plane lies flat, embedded in the paper. Each of the three pairs of legs indicates a different frame of origin. The first is shown from a bird's-eye view; the second is seen from the same ground. The last pair of feet hangs twisted from yet another axis. Price's complex interface captures a delicate space where various perspectives coexist, tethered by an intuitive, gelatinous harmony. Looking at *Wet Garden* is like looking at a page of letters in a foreign language, straining to grasp the order in their combinations. But this work was made intuitively, in a state of mind that defies the synthesis of language.

Price's intuitive readiness ties him to the Chicago Imagists and the Surrealists before them. He has worked with Phil Hanson, Michiko Itatani, Barbara Rossi, and Karl Wirsum, among others. Through their shepherding, he was nourished by idiot savants, lunatics, and rebels. He belongs to a group of artists unafraid to dabble in murky, subconscious truths, realms of thought beyond express control. This is what twilight is: an admission of vulnerability. Price paints the portrait of this state of mind again and again, and in doing so recalls the glorious cracks and fissures so easily marginalized by systemic monoliths of reason.

-Caroline Picard

Rebecca Shore



29 *09*, 2010 | Oil on canvas | 30 in x 45 in | Collection of Emmy Kondo and Daniel Rosenthal

In Rebecca Shore's untitled painting, visual information from all corners of culture is organized into a chaotic precision. Inspired by a variety of sources—Egyptian stele, crazy quilts, Audubon illustrations, topiary, and medieval Siene painting—Shore is also influenced by her relationship (as student, colleague, and friend) to many of the Chicago Imagists. Some of their winking humor, radical manipulation of popular culture, and deliberate commitment to deskilled handicraft, vernacular, folk, and self-taught art pulse through her work.

Shore's meticulously rendered, deftly balanced silhouettes include animals, figures, and flora and fauna (a spouting whale, a human leg, a pressed leaf) and traverse the historical timeline (a cauldron, the Batman signal, an 8-bit alien). Shore accumulates, and to some extent archives, these silhouettes. She also problematizes the extreme specificity of their outlines by representing them only as silhouettes, which strips away additional information and standardizes each form.

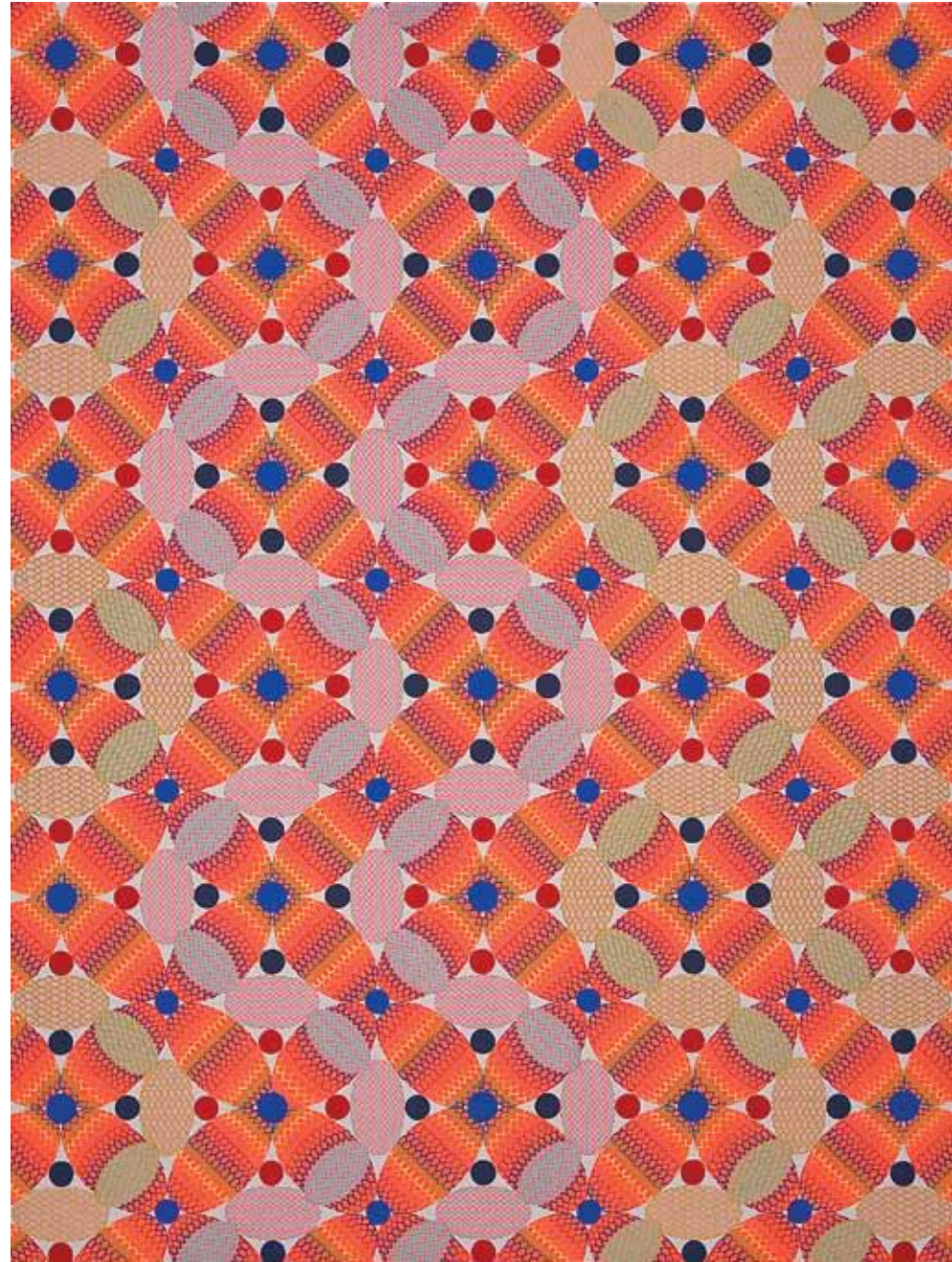
The negative space around a form—twisting into its own unique shapes and patterns—is often of equal importance as the form itself. In addition, a form's meaning is challenged by its adjacency to other forms in the composition. Sometimes juxtapositions build relationships; at other times, dissimilarity or competitiveness of forms is an intentional cultivation of dissonance.

Shore's linkage of vivid imagery and lyrical fragments that lack obvious connection calls to mind the literary device of parataxis.

It is a fitting trope, given the legibility of Shore's work and the freedom she gives viewers to draw their own connections among the grammar and syntax of her vocabulary of forms.

-Thea Liberty Nichols

Geoffrey Todd Smith



30 *Feel Harder*, 2012 | Acrylic, gouache, and ink on panel | 24 in x 18 in | Courtesy of Western Exhibitions

Though skill is a defining characteristic of the paintings by Chicago Imagists, the term *craft* would never have been used to describe their intentions. To this day, artists who focus on craft are still fighting against prejudices when it comes to its incorporation into “fine art” dialogue. Embracing craft and decorativeness is an area that has not yet been thoroughly mined for its contemporary value, a venture that Geoffrey Todd Smith has

taken on in a particularly unself-conscious manner.

Drawing from many of the same sources as the Imagists—graphics, advertisements, adolescence, and rock and roll—Smith carefully veils his references with his pattern-based aesthetic. The artist’s unique ability to conjure up a viewer’s memories through abstraction, to reference stories about favorite album covers or

childhood relics without actually telling them, is what keeps the viewing experience in play long after the material novelty has drawn one in.

Carrying on the very best of the Imagist spirit, Smith makes work true to his day. At no other point in time could an artist mash up a generation’s worth of girly gel pen doodling, science fiction,

androgynous rock, domestic decorativeness, and social media into carefully crafted, geometric abstraction. Much like Ray Yoshida, Smith is able to infuse all of these fragmented parts of life into enigmatic paintings that take full advantage of the intellectual and aesthetic potential in the vernacular.

–Robin Dluzen

Joe Tallarico



31 *Millie Moohlah Moves In*, 2012 | Hand-drawn and digital animation, 5:00 minutes | Courtesy of the artist

Joe Tallarico’s obsession with the traditionally nontraditional has led him to various ventures related to comics. He is not only the author of his own comics but also an avid historian, collector, and teacher. As the longtime comics editor for *Lumpen* magazine, a member of the Chicago-based jam comic crew Trubble Club, a key player in the building of comics holdings in the Art Institute of Chicago’s Ryerson and Burnham Libraries,

and a participant in several exhibitions focusing on comics at cultural institutions nationwide, Tallarico has undoubtedly made many contributions to underground and contemporary comic culture.

Tallarico’s work mixes myriad inspirations. With his vast knowledge of Minimalism, abstraction, and design, he inserts his art directly into ongoing dialogues

about why comics are a valid and integral part of America’s rich artistic and cultural history. A collaboration with animator Sara Jean Cough, Tallarico’s *Millie Moohlah Moves In* includes over 150 original drawings, digitally colored and animated to create a seamless metamorphosis of color and form that can be seen from the Fullerton ‘L’ station. Although Tallarico believes that viewers should create their own

relationship with his art, most of his work is an externalization of his personal experiences with unavoidable and extreme human metamorphosis over time.

–Chad Kouri

Selina Trepp



The Painter, 2011 | Chromogenic print | 19.5 in x 27.7 in | Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Rafacz Gallery

Selina Trepp's photographic series *The Relatives* presents viewers with an absurdist cast of characters (each portrayed by the artist herself) whose bodies are partly painted, partly flesh and blood, partly reflection—and wholly image. The photographs' titles seem to offer clues about the characters' personalities and possible occupations without ever revealing who they are. Indeed, the composite nature of each figure seems to affirm postmodern notions of identity as a construction that is by nature fragmented and illusory.

In many ways, the series is the product of Trepp's efforts to

come to terms with her familial and artistic legacies. Her mother, the artist Judith Trepp, is an abstract painter, as was her late grandmother Rhoda Sklar Platt. For Selina Trepp, the charting of an independent artistic course apart from her maternal forebears seemed to require her to avoid making paintings altogether.

Although *The Relatives* is a series of photographs, not paintings, its existence is rooted in the act of painting and in the idea that painting is a form of knowledge production. Trepp wanted to push her practice in new directions and explore what it means to grow up in a family of artists.

Her initial efforts took the form of self-portraits painted on a sheet of glass positioned before a video camera. The glass acted as a one-way mirror on which Trepp traced her reflection, with the camera documenting the entire process. She then used the still-wet paint on glass as her palette, quickly adding it to a sheet of paper. From there strange new faces evolved. Some were purely imaginary; others were based on real people, like the head and shoulders of the figure in *The Painter* (based on the artist's grandmother).

By incorporating painting—or better yet, by ingesting or

gestating it—into an already established image-making practice, Trepp, like numerous generations of artists before her, found a way to revive the art form and make it new. Her "return to painting" reflects her personal history and aesthetic context without precisely mirroring them.

—Claudine Isé

Each Sunday the members of Trubble Club—like-minded artists who meet up to encourage and enjoy their communal weirdness and ingenuity—rendezvous in secret to draw together. One person makes an initial panel that is passed around to the other members of the club. Whoever is interested creates the next panel in the story. This continues, round-robin style, until the page is done. Sometimes

pages can take years to complete, sometimes a couple of weeks. The drawing styles of the club members vary widely, though it is often hard to tell that different hands have drawn the panels. Some members are professional artists with their own individual practices; others are not. But all are serious about the process of collective authorship. Quotation, mimicry, appropriation, and outright stealing have long been

acknowledged as the essential elements of great works of art, and comic art is a collaborative genre at its core.

The work of Trubble Club is distributed on its blog, in anthologies sold at independent bookstores or comic conventions, and in newspapers handed out for free. For this exhibition, the group created a site-specific sculpture and reading library in which the

friends and inspirations of Trubble Club can come together in conversation, reveling in bizarre, disturbing, and scatological fantasies.

—Abigail Satinsky

Trubble Club



Sketch for Trubble Corpse, 2012 | Acrylic on MDF (planned) | Variable | Courtesy of the artists

Zack Wirsum



Good at Scarves, 2010 | Acrylic and canvas on panel | 18 in x 24 in | Courtesy of Jean Albano Gallery

Somewhere in Chicago, Zack Wirsum—the son of Lori Gunn and Imagist Karl Wirsum—is scrawling an obsessively perfect line. A small detail of a larger sketch, this line will eventually find life in a form or shape undulating within a systematic network of color. Frenetic and organic, Wirsum's compositions result in a balance between

abstraction and representation, functioning as urban landscapes and personal narratives. His paintings are an extension of his relationship with the city. Layer upon layer, each line and stroke of color is vibrant and methodical, mirroring the brilliance of Chicago's grid.

A serious part of Wirsum's practice, poetic wordplay continues the metaphorical dig and conceptual narrative found between the lines of his paintings. Named after a hypothetical debut single by the artist's fictional group Future Boyfriends, *Good at Scarves* exemplifies the duality of his practice. The painting—featuring

Wirsum's signature obsessive lines, neon palette, and acumen for detail—demonstrates the balance between abstraction, wit, and representation.

—Robyn Farrell

Contributors

Britton Bertran is a Chicago-based independent curator, an instructor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the Arts Administration and Policy Department, and the educational programs manager at Urban Gateways, a non-profit art education organization.

Dana Boutin is an arts journalist working in Chicago whose work has been featured in *Newcity* and at the Hyde Park Art Center and the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Lucas Bucholtz has a background in philosophy and received an MA in art history from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Zachary Cahill is an interdisciplinary artist whose writings have appeared in the *Journal of Visual Culture*, *Rethinking Marxism*, and *Artforum.com*, among other publications.

Elizabeth Chodos is a creative writer, independent curator, and associate director of Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency; she was formerly executive director of threewalls, where she now serves on the board of directors.

Jessica Cochran is a Chicago-based curator, instructor, and writer; she is currently the curator of exhibitions and programs at the Center for Book and Paper Arts at Columbia College.

James Connolly is a new media artist, writer, and curator living and working in Chicago; he received a BFA with emphasis in art history, theory, and criticism from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Mia DiMeo writes for *ArtSlant* and received an MA in new arts journalism from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Robin Dluzen is a Chicago-based artist and writer, and the former editor-in-chief of *Chicago Art Magazine*, whose writing can be

found in such publications as *art ltd.* and *i4design* magazines, the *Chicago Reader*, and the *New American Paintings* blog.

Bryce Dwyer is a writer and arts organizer in Chicago.

Robyn Farrell is a writer and curator who keeps an eye and ear open to all the strange and beautiful things that make Chicago tick.

Jason Foumberg is a Chicago-based writer and editor who contributes art criticism to *Newcity*, *Frieze*, *Modern Painters*, *Photograph*, and *Sculpture* magazines.

Laura Fox works for the Qatar Museums Authority and serves on the executive board at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art; she is an arts advocate and hopes her writing—for publications including *Newcity*, the *Chicago Reader*, *Proximity* magazine, and *Harper's Bazaar Art*—mirrors that passion.

Jenny Gheith is assistant curator of painting and sculpture at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, prior to which she was a curatorial assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Dahlia Tulett-Gross is an independent curator.

Dan Gunn is a Chicago-based artist, writer, and educator who is also currently a part of the "Fielding Practice" art gabfest with *Bad at Sports* for the *Art21* blog.

Claudine Isé is the editor of the *Art21* blog and a freelance writer based in Chicago.

Paige K. Johnston is a curator and publisher, currently working as the manager of Special Collections for the John M. Flaxman Library at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Chad Kouri is an artist, designer, and cofounder of Chicago's only art and design incubator, The Post Family.

Joel Kuennen is an editor of *ArtSlant.com* and an arts writer living in Chicago.

Karsten Lund is a writer and curator in Chicago, where he also works as a curatorial assistant at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Thea Liberty Nichols is an arts administrator, writer and curator.

Erin Nixon is a curator, writer, and the former codirector of Noble & Superior Projects.

Caroline Picard is the founding editor of the *Green Lantern Press* and writes regularly for the *Bad at Sports* and *Art21* blogs, as well as *art ltd.* and *Proximity* magazines.

Abraham Ritchie holds a degree in art history and a master's degree in new arts journalism; he is also a former editor of *ArtSlant* and *Flavorpill*.

Abigail Satinsky is the program director at threewalls and a member of InCUBATE, a research group dedicated to art economies.

Anthony Stepter is a Chicago-based organizer and educator.

Monica Westin is a Chicago-based writer, critic, and PhD student in rhetoric.

Artists

Carl Baratta received his BFA in painting with a minor in art history from Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia. He spent a year as a student at Temple University Rome and received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he currently teaches painting and drawing. His artwork has been exhibited in various galleries in Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Dallas, Austin, Maine, Santa Fe, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Detroit, and he has shown internationally in Tokyo and Rome. His work was featured in a group show at the 2011 Venice Biennale. His most recent solo exhibition was at Lloyd Dobler Gallery, Chicago, in March 2012. In addition to various reviews in Chicago newspapers, his work has been published in *Bailliwik: An Artist Collective* for the past five years.

Marc Bell was born in London, Ontario, Canada. *Hot Potatoe* [sic], a monograph of his recent art and comics work, was published by Drawn and Quarterly in fall 2009. He is represented by the Adam Baumgold Gallery, New York.

Born into a small midwestern existence, **Eric Cain** grew into a certain presumptive bravado and reluctant utopianism. He embraces oddities from everywhere, humbuggery and legerdemain, and an aesthetic of the operational. He is learning that things do not have to add up in order to count.

Lilli Carré is an interdisciplinary artist currently living in Chicago. She primarily works in the forms of experimental animation, film, and comics. Her animated films have been shown in festivals throughout the United States and abroad, and she is cofounder of the Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation. She is the author of *The Lagoon, Nine Ways to Disappear, Tales of Woodsman Pete*, and the forthcoming collection *Heads or Tails*.

Justin Cooper graduated with an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2005 after receiving his BFA from the University of Colorado in 2003 and studying at the Sorbonne, Paris, in 2002. Cooper has performed and exhibited in cities worldwide including New York, Hong Kong, Berlin, Rio de Janeiro, Philadelphia, London, Los Angeles, and Chicago. His work has been reviewed in publications such as *Artforum* and *Art in America*. His third solo exhibition will be held at moniquemeloche in fall 2012.

Rob Doran was born in Sterling, Illinois. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California..

Richard Hull's psychologically intense abstract paintings, drawings, and prints are in the collections of several museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago. He joined the legendary Phyllis Kind Gallery before graduating from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1979 and had numerous shows in both her New York and Chicago locations. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Western Exhibitions in Chicago and at Wake Forest University in North Carolina, a mini-survey at the Rockford Art Museum, and the group show *Someone Else's Dream*, curated by John McKinnon at the Hyde Park Art Center. Hull lives and works in Chicago.

Steven Husby lives and works in Chicago. He received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Recent solo exhibitions include *RUBICON* at Julius Caesar and *we speak the way we breathe* at Peregrine Program.

David Ingenthron was born and raised in Oakland, California. He is currently learning the gravity of place. In Chicago, he embraced the figure as a movement and a gesture. He earned an MA in teaching from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in 2011. He has exhibited at 65GRAND and Roots and Culture, both in Chicago; Proof Gallery, Boston; and Lucky Tackle, Oakland. He has been featured in *Artforum*, *Time Out Chicago*, and *Newcity*.

Eric Lebofsky was born in the Bronx, New York, in 1977. He is a visual artist and a saxophonist, singer, and composer. Lebofsky's solo shows include Sears-Peyton Gallery in New York, Western Exhibitions in Chicago, and Miller Block Gallery in Boston, and he has been included in group shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and at Gavin Brown's Enterprise and Participant, Inc., both in New York. His artist books are in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Since 2005 he has performed with the musical group Avagami, whose debut album was released by Lens Records in 2007. Lebofsky received his BA from Columbia University in New York and his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He teaches in the Department of Painting and Drawing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and lives and works in Chicago.

David Leggett was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1980. He received his BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design in 2003 and his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2007. He also attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2010. His work is influenced by relationships, both personal and cultural, and he utilizes popular culture and imagery in his art. His work has been shown throughout the

United States and internationally. He received the visual artist award from 3Arts in 2009.

Amy Lockhart is a filmmaker, animator, and artist whose artwork and award-winning films have been exhibited and screened internationally. Lockhart studied at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and has been a resident artist at Calgary's Quickdraw Animation Society, Struts Gallery, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the California Institute of the Arts. Her work has received international acclaim and has been collected by public and private art institutions and film festivals across the globe. Lockhart received a fellowship from the National Film Board of Canada and support from the Canada Council for the Arts. She is currently working on a feature-length animated film, *The Dizzler*.

Eric May is a Chicago-based artist and chef. His practices cross disciplines between visual, performative, and culinary arts. At its core, this range of practices examines ecologies, not only environmental and biological but also social, focusing in particular on issues surrounding food and its sources.

Ellen Nielsen is an interdisciplinary artist whose works include sculpture, photography, performance, and video. She received her BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2008 and her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of

Chicago in 2011. Characterized by absurd humor and uncanny visual transformations, Nielsen's work explores the conventions of kitsch, femininity, and artificial nature. She lives and works in Chicago.

Born in Canada in 1977, **Anders Oinonen** currently lives and works in Toronto. He graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design in 2001 and received his MFA from the University of Waterloo in 2004. His work has been exhibited at LES Gallery, Vancouver; Deitch Projects, New York; Max Wigram Gallery, London; and Greener Pastures Contemporary, Toronto. Most recently his work was shown at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto, and at Royal/T, Los Angeles. His work can be found in the collections of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and the Canada Council Art Bank. He is represented by Bryan Miller Gallery, Houston, and Cooper Cole Gallery, Toronto.

John Parot's work—vibrant paintings and collages that poetically investigate gay urban living—has been shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Jack Hanley Gallery in San Francisco, Locust Projects in Miami, and Light & Sie in Dallas. His work has been published in *BUTT magazine*, *Artcritical*, *Beautiful/Decay*, the *Art21* blog, the *New Yorker*, *Time Out Chicago*, *Artnet magazine*, *NYFA Quarterly*, and *Art on Paper*. His 2007 show at Western Exhibitions was named one of the top five shows of the year by *Newcity*. He received his MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, and he currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

Carmen Price's work creates new relationships between familiar visual elements to express joy in contemporary culture. His celebratory drawings use personal

symbolism and a strong faith in the accidental to form occasionally narrative and often confusing scenes. Originally from Kansas City, Price currently lives and works in Chicago.

Benjamin Seamons received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and his MFA from the University of Tennessee. Originally from Chicago, he currently lives and works in Knoxville, Tennessee, with his wife, Kate.

Rebecca Shore received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1981. She has lived and worked in Chicago since 1978 and has taught in the Department of Painting and Drawing at SAIC since 1996. Her meticulous paintings and drawings have always been characterized by an abiding interest in pattern, system, and issues of signification. Shore was also profoundly influenced by Chicago Imagism, whose artists were her teachers and friends. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at the Elmhurst Art Museum; the Herron Gallery at the Herron School of Art and Design, Indianapolis; and the Chicago Cultural Center.

Geoffrey Todd Smith's intensely patterned and intricate painting/drawing hybrids have been featured in solo shows at Luis De Jesus Gallery in Los Angeles, Main Gallery in Las Vegas, and Western Exhibitions in Chicago. His work is in the collections of Hallmark Cards, Inc., in Kansas City, the Jager-Collection in Amsterdam, the South Bend Museum of Art in Indiana, and Harper College in Illinois and has been published in *art ltd.*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and *Chicago* magazine, which called him one of the "rising stars we should be collecting now." Smith lives and works in Chicago.

Joe Tallarico makes paintings, comics, and drawings in his home studio in Chicago, Illinois. He enjoys studying the histories of both art and comics and exploring how the two are incorporated. Avocations include gardening, junk collecting, and table tennis.

Born in 1973 in Zurich, Switzerland, **Selina Trepp** is a Chicago-based multimedia artist who works in photography, painting, film, and installation. Her work investigates identity and the limits of image making. She is also one half of the audiovisual performance project Spectralina, with her husband, musician Dan Bitney.

Trouble Club is a collective of Chicago-based cartoonists and artists that has been meeting weekly for the past four years. One night nearly every week, club members, along with other artists and cartoonists passing through the city, make collaborative "jam" comics.

Zack Wirsum received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He has exhibited at the Chicago Cultural Center, Elmhurst College, and Jean Albano Gallery.

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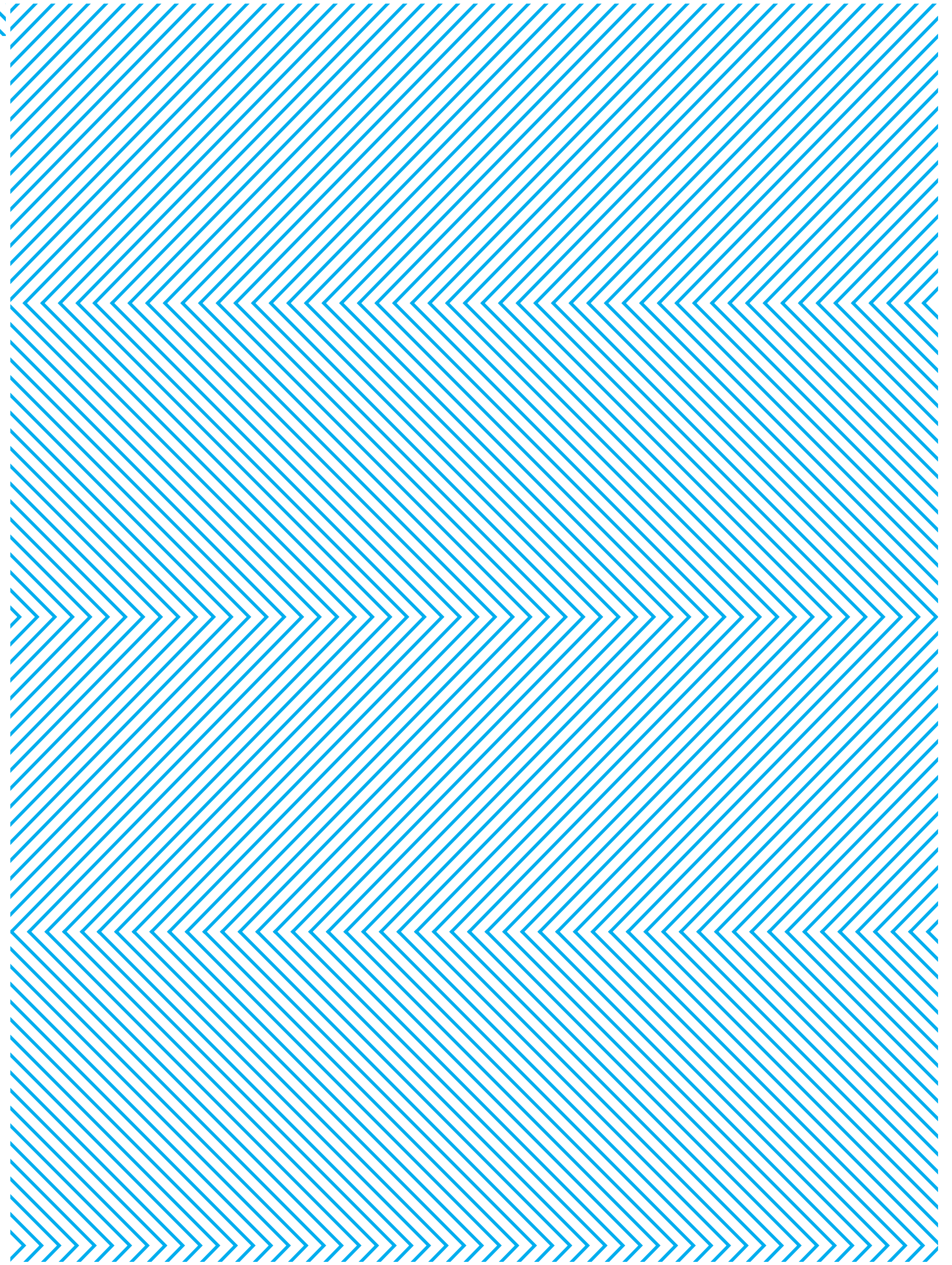
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Events

Opening Reception

Friday, September 14, 5-7:30pm

Sept
14

This opening event will feature E-Dogz Mobile Culinary Community Center, a mobile kitchen project that celebrates the preservation and advancement of street food in the city of Chicago. Through collaborative cooking practices, Chef Eric May and his guest chefs develop new recipes that reflect the contemporary food landscape and promote deeper understandings of what we eat, where it comes from, who is making it, and the maker's story about the food that they are sharing.

Performance: Avagami

Wednesday, September 26, 6-8pm

Sept
26

AVAGAMI was formed in 2005 by drummer/composer Matt Espy (Dead Rider, former The Reputation and Atombombpocketknife,) and Eric Lebofsky, a visual artist, saxophonist, and composer. Affect drives their musical invention, which is energetic, dark, improvisational, and humorous. Avagami has performed at Chicago fixtures such as the Empty Bottle, the Hideout, and Schubas, and at many galleries and alternative art spaces. Their debut album *Metagami* was released by Lens Records in 2007.

Performance: Richard Hull & Ken Vandermark quintet

Wednesday, October 10, 6-8pm

Oct
10

KEN VANDERMARK AND RICHARD HULL have been collaborating on audio/ visual performances for over ten years. Hull, using video projections, incorporates collaged photographs of paintings and drawings along with images of real incidents into the musical performances of Vandermark and his ensemble of jazz musicians. This exchange between structure and spontaneity— intention and improvisation— mirrors the individual working methods of them both.

Film Screening: Ray Yoshida and Karl Wirsum

Wednesday, October 24, 6-8pm

Oct
24

FILM SCREENING featuring documentary portraits of H.C. Westermann (Selection of HC Westermann family films), Karl Wirsum ("A Movie About Karl Wirsum," 1971) and Ray Yoshida ("The Individuality of the Inanimate Object: The Collection of Ray Yoshida," 1990); and a musical sculpto-pictorama by multimedia artist Red Grooms ("Tappy Toes," 1968). All films recently transferred and restored by Nolo Digital Film Chicago and PostWorks New York, with the participation of The Filmmakers' Cooperative and the estate of George Seton Coggeshall. Presented in conjunction with Chicago-based Pentimenti Productions, producers of the forthcoming feature documentary *Hairy Who & The Chicago Imagists*. A short excerpt from their work-in-progress film rounds out the program. Director Leslie Buchbinder in person.

Performance: Spectralina

Wednesday, November 7, 6-8pm

Nov
07

SPECTRALINA is the audio-visual performance project of Dan Bitney and Selina Trepp, collaborators, lovers and magicians. Working with songstructure, as well as in an improvised format, the goal of Spectralina is to create an image-sound relationship that treats each medium as equal, resulting in performances in which projection and sounds come together as visual music.

All events are free and
open to the public.