

## Older ways of painting get their due in series

By Alan G. Artner

November 14, 2008

*Karen Lebergott:* The artistic use of maps and mapping systems was explored in a number of Chicago exhibitions last season, though few artists employed them more successfully than Lebergott does in her works on paper at Rowland Contemporary. Simpler pieces, as much drawn in graphite as collaged, reveal the grids, aerial views or city plans that apparently underlie all the works. Then more elaborate essays superimpose layer upon layer of painted cutouts that obscure the map association, at times transforming the surfaces into abstract creations.

Each part of the overlay is less a sheet than an irregular, spindly template that the artist has brightly painted around the irregular geometric figures she has cut. So we not only look at the surface but also into it, through several layers that also have been painted and irregularly cut. Sometimes, too, individual sections buckle or peel away from others, putting "air" between the layers that allows us further penetration. Sorting all this out, especially on the largest piece that cascades from wall to floor, is a most satisfying visual experience.

But, of course, these days the visual is not enough. So there is an attempt to add more far-reaching conceptual baggage, and it seems grafted on rather than arising naturally.

*\*\*1/2 At 1118 W. Fulton Market, through Dec. 13. 312-421-6275.*

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