

# NEWCITY CHICAGO

pick one



## SERVICE STATIONS

- chicago home
- classifieds
- newsletter signup

## CITY GUIDE

- events calendar
- bars & clubs
- restaurants
- specials
- best of chicago

## EDITORIAL

- food and drink
- film and video
- music and clubs
- stage
- sports
- words
- art
- features

## ART

### Eye Exam Night Moves

#### Jason Foumberg

The opening night of the Fall art season always feels slightly like a pre-Halloween trick-or-treating to various galleries. At each stop we cruise the art that, like a parade of costumes, are the distillation of either the current trends or the most retro nod to the past (ironic or otherwise), and as always the best costume contains the least clothes. On opening night we look for whatever can deliver the most originality in the quickest of glances, for won't we be engaging people more than art, and digesting wine more than meaning? In the spirit of the evening, spend much, if not all, of your time socializing, but go back on Saturday or during the week, for there's much that warrants a closer look.

The age of overindulgence rolls on with several shows by artists who love to pack their canvases with crowds of people and things, often to the point of inanity. Chris Uphues returns with a roar of symbols and signs, like the apocalypse in cartoon-land, at Bucket Rider gallery. "The Screaming Skull" greets us with a flaming death's head, the token symbol of the year, in chorus with Uphues's signature cartoon friends, seeking to obliterate the viewer with cuteness. Caleb Weintraub's large-scale paintings are overwhelmingly annoying. Weintraub's style is to create a collage in paint of strange situations in a realistic manner. (Cherubs rioting and shooting Uzis from the sky? It probably couldn't really happen but it looks real enough in Weintraub's hand). Weintraub is courting the surreal but ends up empty-handed. These debuted in a few separate galleries at the Bridge Art Fair last Spring and now show at Peter Miller Gallery. Currently residing at Three Walls, Chris Millar's sculptural wall works display the same intensity of detail as Weintraub but somehow gets it right. Culling imagery from pop culture as well as original drawings made into rubber stamps, the works seethe with humor. At Western Exhibitions, Geoffrey Todd Smith displays a new series of drawings in his obsessive-compulsive style. We love our artists when they don't take their meds.

CLICK HERE TO BROWSE NEWCITY'S GUIDE TO CHICAGO'S BARS & CLUBS.

Get on the **NEWCITY** List  
Free Email Newsletter  
Special Event Invites

CLICK TO BROWSE OVER 2,000 CHICAGO EVENTS!

On the darker side of life, Dieter Mammel's watercolors of small, quiet scenes invoke distant memories of a lost past. Their stillness can be awkward and their melancholy almost pleasurable. Mammel shows at Melanee Cooper. The gothic and the gloomy take shape in Ida Applebroog's paintings at rowlandcontemporary. Figures disappear behind the masks of their own skin, often with glowing eyes left as the only indicator of life. Applebroog, a winner of the "Genius" award, will also exhibit some rarely seen early work.

The new season will also see a debut of several new art spaces, several of which will be spotlighted in Newcity in the coming weeks. Three Walls, the independent, not-for-profit residence program, which hosts artists from around the world and exhibits their art, will double in size and dedicate half their efforts to Chicago-based artists at Three Walls SOLO. The program was created for emerging and professional artists in need of a career-boosting solo show. The premier exhibit is by Cayetano Ferrer, a manipulator of the built environment who seeks to find equilibrium among the ambush of signs in our lives.

Three Walls has never been about turning a profit or seeking approval from the commercial sphere. Given that, director Shannon Stratton believes that the first Three Walls space isn't exempt from falling into a pattern of her personal taste in art. So for the SOLO space, she asked sixteen people who had involvement with non-profit spaces in Chicago to jury the program. From this, Stratton hopes that a true picture about important art practices in the Chicago art world emerges, which could include all of the city's strengths, from labor-intensive painting to neo-conceptualism. The point, however, was to create a safe place for artists to experiment, where the work will not fall on deaf ears, and if some sort of failure results, all can be forgiven. After four years directing and curating the residency program, Stratton decided that "Three Walls should serve the community better." The result is an intimate but reputable place that will surely become another Chicago pillar.

*Chris Uphues shows at Bucket Rider, 835 West Washington, (312)421-6993, through October 13. Caleb Weintraub shows at Peter Miller Gallery, 118 North Peoria, (312)951-1700. Chris Millar shows at Three Walls, 119 North Peoria, #2A, (312)432-3972, through October 6. Geoffrey Todd Smith shows at Western Exhibitions, 1821 West Hubbard, (312) 307-4685, through October 6. Ida Applebroog shows at rowlandcontemporary, 1118 West Fulton Market, (312)421-6275, through October 27. Dieter Mammel shows at Melanee Cooper, 740 North Franklin, (312)202-9305. Cayetano Ferrer shows at Three Walls SOLO, 119 North Peoria, #2D, through October 13.*

(2007-09-04)