



**ART**

**Ida Applebroog: *Photogenetics***

**when:** Saturdays through 10.27 (11am-5pm)

**where:** Rowland Contemporary (1118 W Fulton Market Ave, 312.421.6275) [map](#)

**price:** ★ FREE

New York-based artist Ida Applebroog's first Chicago exhibition in over two decades assembles an astounding collection of haunting, often difficult works that embrace many mediums and technologies. This show includes rarely seen artists' books from the late '70s, in which Applebroog utilizes a comic-strip storytelling style, and a new series of images presented in stages. Eerie mixed-media portraits incorporate inkjet prints of slapdash clay figures, manipulating the images in a painterly, layered manner. (AM)



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felt anything like it"*



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IDA APPLEBROOG



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**Saturdays**

**Ends Saturday, October 27**

IDA APPLEBROOG, "Photogenetics," multimedia. That the likeness of a person may be simultaneously hideous and gorgeous is demonstrated to powerful effect by "Photogenetics," an exhibit of new work by Ida Applebroog. In her first solo show in Chicago since the 1980s, she proves to be a profound and sensitive artist who more than merits her international fame; here the absolute command of an innovative, demanding technique in the service of a haunting expressiveness all but overwhelms. The key to this triumph would seem to be a deep involvement with her subjects and her commitment to a painstaking process; only after a series of stages--which include clay modeling, photography, print-screening and painting--do their mixed media portraits come into aesthetic being. They are labor-intensive, yet also strangely ethereal; and though verging on the grotesque, even ghoulish, they move through their emotional acuity and humanity. Applebroog's way with eyes and mouths is particularly striking; in one of the two "Brians" on display, a railroad-track scar bisects the brows of one who sees feelingly, while the smile of her "Monalisa" is a squashed strawberry. Emerging from a charged tension between transparency and painterly texture that evinces complex skill, these pictures reward repeated, lingering looks. (Sean Francis)

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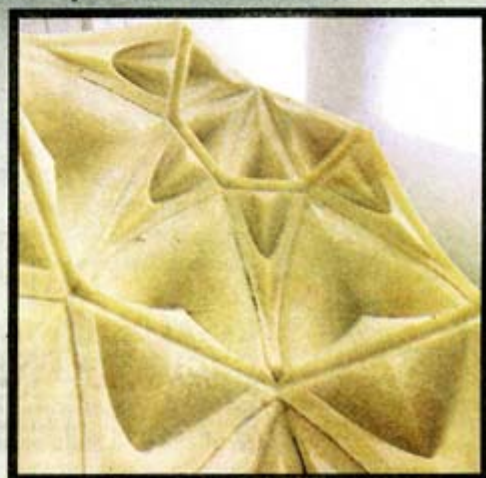
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**T**his weekend marks the opening of the fall art season in Chicago. Galleries in River North, the West Loop, Wicker Park and elsewhere are unveiling new work, and roomfuls of sumptuous, striking, sexy art await your curious eyes. About 70 galleries around town are having shows, so if you want to take part, it helps to have a plan. Tribune art critic **ALAN ARTNER** offers his picks for what to see. We skip the merely fashionable in favor of the truly interesting, and group them by neighborhood with your feet in mind. **PAGE 22**



**IDA APPLEBROOG**  
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**ART: FALL ART REVIEW**

## Open season

**Shows boast rich variety of new work -- and now is your chance to see it**

By Alan G. Artner

Tribune art critic

September 7, 2007



The first day of autumn is more than two weeks away, but the fall season in art galleries begins this weekend with about 70 openings. Most of the shows are devoted to contemporary art, and those for young and emerging artists are usually the only ones considered when tastemakers talk about the "scene" in Chicago.

But on the first weekend of each September, all kinds of exhibitions open, so I've recommended a number that attempts to give some idea of the range and quality of what's available. Range was easy, as my review columns are assembled weekly by taking into account media, age and locale of the artists as well as time periods. Exposure solely to contemporary art is not enough to make a cultured viewer. You need to know something about where art has been, and any scene worth being a part of treats more than just the epoch in which we live.

The issue of quality was harder. Where there now are six times the number of galleries in Chicago than when I began writing in 1973, excellence has not increased accordingly. In fact, several galleries recognized beyond the city are better known for attitude and hipness quotient than actual exhibition programs. Potential visitors less concerned with art than an evening's DJ can find such like-minded galleries on their own.

As with Chicago's art museums, many of the more interesting exhibitions come later in the season, but our purpose today is to draw attention to the start of everything, so here (according to gallery district) is a preliminary flourish:

### River North

Gary Justis, "Plush": One of the finer Midwestern sculptors of the 1980s returns with upholstered works inspired by childhood memories and cartoon imagery; Alfadena Gallery, 434 W. Ontario St., through Oct. 6. 312-944-4340.

Jungjin Lee, "Wind": Large-format photographic prints on handmade rice paper producing objects of great tactility that

might be mistaken for charcoal drawings; Andrew Bae, 300 W. Superior St., through Oct. 6. 312-335-8601.

Jackie Tileston, "Adventure of the Semionauts": Paintings that reflect the artist's multicultural upbringing through the combination of a number of Western and Eastern styles; Zg, 300 W. Superior St., through Oct. 13. 312-654-9900.

Gordon Powell, "Constructions": Wood sculptures from an artist who long has upheld the "other," less well-recognized tradition of abstract art in Chicago; Perimeter, 210 W. Superior St., through Oct. 15. 312-266-9473.

Zana Briski, "Brothel": The Academy-Award winning filmmaker presents a selection of photographs from years of work in Calcutta's red-light district; Daiter Contemporary, 311 W. Superior St., through Oct. 27. 312-787-3350.

Nicholas Sistler, "Circumstantial Evidence": Paintings, brilliant in color and small in compass, of room interiors with elements derived from film noir; Printworks, 311 W. Superior St., through Oct. 27. 312-664-9407.

#### West Loop

"Lithic Obsessions: Ancient Stone": About 75 examples of Asian, African and American artifacts (tools to fetish objects) from 300,000 B.C. to the 19th Century; Douglas Dawson, 400 N. Morgan St., through Sept. 29. 312-226-7975.

Jacob Hashimoto, "Plumes and the Landscape Omnibus": Cascades of colored paper, bamboo and string that draw on the handmade tradition of kite making; Rhona Hoffman, 118 N. Peoria St., through Oct. 13. 312-455-1990.

Heather Marshall, "Olio Tableaux": The Chicago artist's first solo exhibition, of generally small, representational panel paintings occasionally filled with minute detail; Linda Warren, 1052 W. Fulton Market, through Oct. 13. 312-432-9500.

Caleb Weintraub, "We Must Go and Tell the King": Outrageous figurative canvases by a New Jersey native who is concerned with overstimulation and desensitization; Peter Miller, 118 N. Peoria St., through Oct. 13. 312-951-1700.

Ida Applebroog, "Photogenics": Recent digital prints and mixed-media by a New York artist who has not shown her idiosyncratic figuration here in decades; rowlandcontemporary, 1118 W. Fulton Market, through Oct. 27. 312-421-6275.

Howardena Pindell, "In My Lifetime": Work on social issues from more than 30 years includes paintings, prints and drawings, sometimes incorporating photographs; G.R.N'Namdi, 110 N. Peoria St., through Nov. 3. 312-563-9240.

#### Elsewhere

"Haseeb Ahmed: The Common Sense": The Ohio native converts the gallery into a mosque, with a lecture and prayers Fridays at 1:30 p.m.; Around the Coyote, 1935 1/2 W. North Ave., Saturday through Sept. 29. 773-342-6777.

Zoe Crosher, "LA-LIKE": The first solo exhibition in Chicago for a Los Angeles photographer who strives to capture singular qualities of West Coast light; 65GRAND, 1378 W. Grand Ave., through Oct. 6. 312-719-4325.

Paul Kelpé Paintings and Works on Paper, 1925-1935: Recently discovered pieces by one of the key figures of Constructivist abstraction in America. Valerie Carberry, 875 N. Michigan Ave, Ste. 2510, Saturday through Oct. 27. 312-397-9990.

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## 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.

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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)

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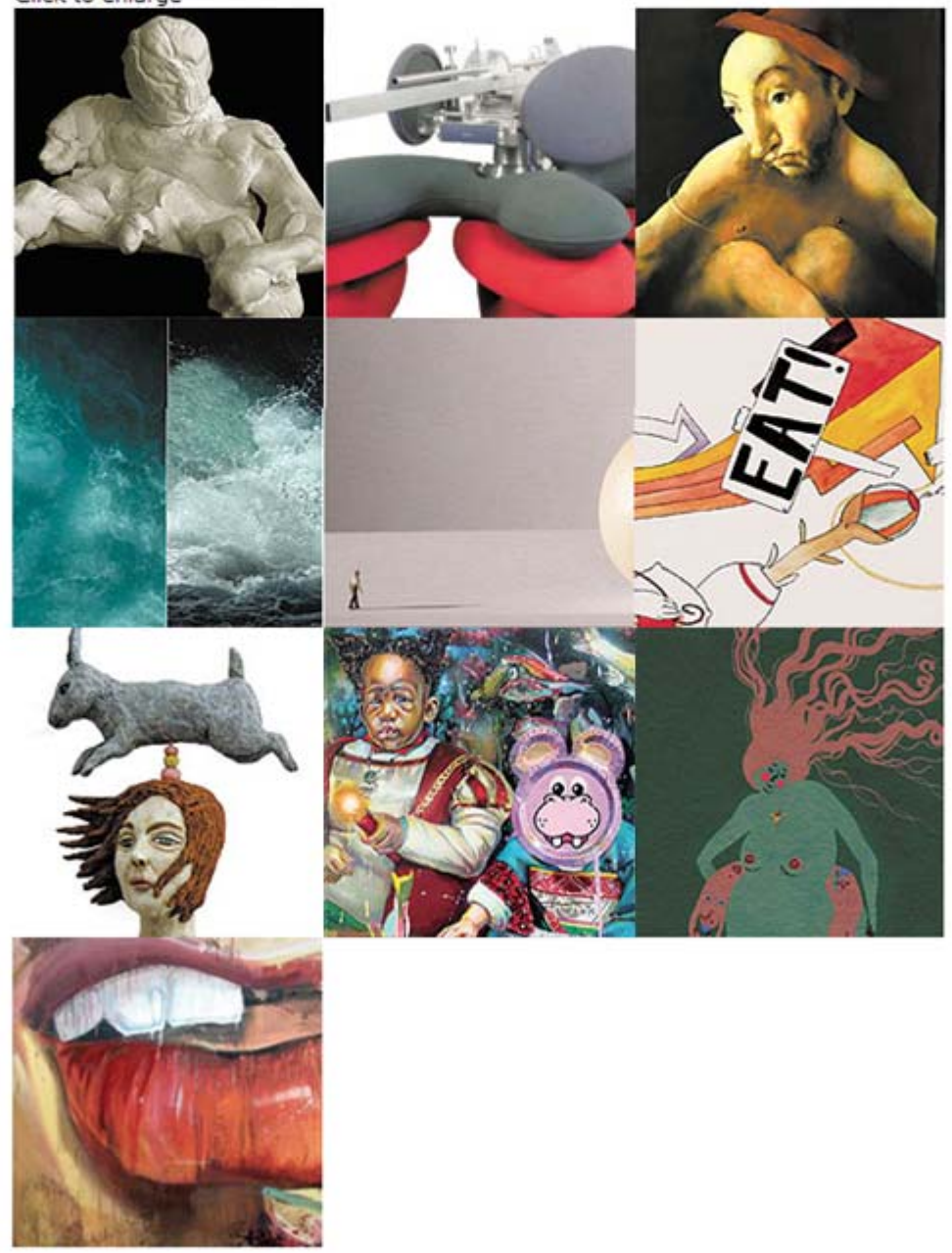
 

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