Pumping Up The Volume In More Ways Than One

by Brent Brotine and Cindy McEwen
photos by Mike Tanimura

As an independent creative you can never be too loud in promoting your work, and our informal roundtable at the Globe Pub on Thursday, November 14 was to be focused on just that.

However, as a neighborhood pub, you can definitely be too loud for group conversation on certain football or rugby nights, and that’s what happened to over a dozen C3 members and guests. The food and drink were great, but the volume level was somewhere between roaring and deafening. Nevertheless, we persevered as best we could with help from George Berlin, whose good idea was to pose questions on his iPad and pass it around for people to share written answers.

So, with understandable brevity, here are two “top ten” lists we created:

How do you promote yourself?
• Networking
• Email newsletter
• Printed materials
• Postcard mailings
• Trade shows
• Asking for referrals
• Directory listings
• Professional organizations
• Social media
• Certification

What portfolio websites do you use?
• Etsy
• Handmade
• Guru
• Pinterest
• FineArtAmerica
• SmugMug
• Creative Cloud
• C3
• Brushes
• My own site

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Reflections on Creativity

Just got yelled at by Leah (OK, more like she remonstrated than yelled, especially as it was all via email) because I misspelled an important word to a client so it took three emails to get it right.

Her direct quote:
“Really? Are you multitasking?! You misspelled it AGAIN!”

I’m not like the younger people who grew up in this information age. I don’t work on my computer, listen to music, keep an eye on Facebook et al, IM friends and watch a movie all at the same time. But I do think I can still walk and chew gum (not like I ever chew gum, but you get the picture).

Actually, I’m not very interested in exploring multitasking in that “I’m-so-efficient, saving-time sense.” I’d rather spin the concept a little and think about multitasking as “am I doing all I can so that all aspects of my self are involved in whatever’s going on?” In recent years, most of the time, the answer is “no.”

But just last night I was a guest presenter to a class at DePaul that was going to Okinawa to explore the cultural, economic and political scene there. My role was to give a quick historical overview of documentary photography, explore some conceptual stances the students might take as they documented their experiences, and give some practical advice on how to come back with technically usable photos for a personal journal and a research paper. Adding another layer of complexity was that the students were not from a single major or department, but were a mix of art, poli-sci, econ, pre-law and global studies. And I needed to keep this to a little over an hour. “Sheesh!”

In terms of fulfilling student expectations and needs, I think it went over reasonably well. I’m pretty sure the students were all able to glean at least one point they could use to help them take more effective documentary photos on their trip.

More importantly for me, preparing for the presentation and then being in the classroom was really enervating. I had to reflect on my understanding and feelings about the documentary tradition in photography, hit the books (and Internet) to prepare a short PDF on some of my personal icons (Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange and W. Eugene Smith), go through my own work and decide what to show (to prove I had the chops to be discoursing on the subject), and then I got to be in front of (mostly) interested students. It was an immense amount of work, but well worth each minute.

Doing all this made me remember again what it was that I loved about photography. I told the students that there was a good photo to be taken anywhere; even in the classroom we were in that night. I believed it while saying it—and even better—believe it still today. Plus, it was peripherally (for me) about Japan, something I do have more than a passing interest in. And I got to teach, something else I enjoy. I love the passing on of knowledge or interest. It helps me keep going, knowing that something I care about won’t be gone when I am.

“Creativity as Identity” was our Chicago Creative Coalition offering during Chicago Artist Month. I was heavily involved, but was mostly going through the motions. Today, I feel like I not only can, but also want to, live my life that way again.

Check in later, and we’ll all see.
From the Board
by Karen Woodbury

The last time temperatures dipped below 30 degrees, the board members of Chicago Creative Coalition were sequestered on retreat in the bleak landscape of rural Northeastern Iowa re-crafting C3’s mission statement and planning a bold new approach to the future of the organization. The mission: “to educate, enrich, and inspire creative lives…” has been the guiding force of 2013–14 programming and events bringing to us new roundtable discussions, presentation opportunities, and enrichment through elevated discourse and programs like the Gallery Walk.

As a part of this newly adopted mission, Chicago Creative Coalition is creating an educational opportunity through the development of an internship program. The purpose of the program is to provide hands-on experience for a student, or recent graduate, interested in pursuing a career in arts administration, association management, or marketing and PR. The intern will have the unique responsibility of working closely with the board of directors on initiatives designed to bring value to our members, so items like programming, special events, and community outreach.

The board is also hoping our new intern can provide insights on cultivating new members among their peers.

This is an exciting time for Chicago Creative Coalition as we move forward in our new mission and continue to inspire, educate, and enrich creative lives. At the time of this newsletter going to press the board is making a final decision about this year’s candidate. So stay tuned for introductions!

Upcoming Programs
by George Berlin

Coming up in early 2014: an exciting skill-sharing program where we can all come to learn—or teach—something we’re great at! Short, hands-on, “speed learning” demos. Tell everyone you know!

Also, an early spring program on creativity by Steven Fischer, director of “Old School, New School”, a documentary on creativity. And we’re looking at touring a 3-D printing space, too.

And more to come—stay tuned!
An Untraditional Twist on a 15-Year Tradition

by Claudia Hine  
photos by Stan Kotecki

Led by Laura Miller, managing editor of Chicago Gallery News, more than a dozen members enjoyed a private tour of four untraditional art galleries as part of C3’s 15th Annual Gallery Walk on October 30. Moving further from the River North and West Loop locations of previous walks, this year’s event centered in the Wicker Park and Bucktown neighborhoods.

First stop was Public Works, 1539 N. Damen, an art and design gallery run by Someoddpilot, a branding agency and design studio. Design Director Helen Koh introduced us to Archizines, an exhibit curated by Elias Redstone. Instead of artwork hanging on the walls, 100 architectural zines from around the world were hanging from clips so they could be taken down, perused, and returned at will. The exhibit is said to demonstrate a residual love for printed matter in the digital age.

Our second stop was Pagoda Red, 1714 N. Damen, a retail showroom that Manager Erik Retzer said features 18th and 19th Century Chinese furniture and artwork from emerging Chinese artists. Owner Betsy Nathan treated us to wine and cheese while members explored everything from carpets and cabinets to artifacts and opium pipes.

Next up was ARC Gallery, 2156 N. Damen, a co-op for women artists celebrating its 40th anniversary. The gallery is run by its 15-18 volunteer members but offers exhibition opportunities for professional and emerging artists without gender discrimination. Here we were met by Pauline Kochanski and Iris Goldstein, whose mixed media constructions, “Bits and Pieces,” were on display. Breaking from the traditional model, all spaces at ARC Gallery are rented, and the co-op does not take a commission on sales.

We ended our tour at Firecat Projects, 2124 N. Damen, where serigraphs by Peter Mars were being shown. Gallery Director Stan Klein also operates an untraditional model, soliciting sponsorships to cover expenses for artists’ shows. Firecat also does not take a commission on sales. Kari Guhl from Chase Art Companies, sponsors of the Peter Mars show, offered insight into Mars’s work, which captures nostalgia for the 1950s and ’60s with posterized images of such iconic figures as Marilyn Monroe, John Dillinger, and Elvis Presley.

One tradition that wasn’t broken was the wine and beer break we always enjoy at the last gallery on the tour. With Halloween on the horizon, Board Secretary Karen Woodbury delighted us with delicious treats fitting the occasion—tiny cartons of “night-crawlers and worms” (black spaghetti); “brain” dip (cauliflower and guacamole); “severed finger” cookies; and more. Thank you, Karen, for your creative culinary skills, and thanks also to Firecat Projects for supplying the drinks for our group at the end of an unusual and enlightening gallery walk.

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C3 Shines During

by Brent Brotine
photos by Mike Tanimura, T. J. Hine and Bob Tolchin

During Chicago Artist Month events, C3 played a visible role with member participation in scheduled events on the weekend of Friday, October 4 through Sunday, October 6, 2013. Each event was well attended and showcased both the talents of our individual members and the presence of our organization in the artist community.

George Berlin, Robert Tolchin and Mary Wagner

Friday, October 4

On Friday at the Lydia Home on West Irving Park, C3 both unveiled an exhibition of member artwork and hosted a panel discussion on “Creativity as Identity.” The discussion between George, Robert and Mary, moderated by Steve Starr, explored how they each handle the traditional duality of doing “fine art” by preference and “commercial art” to pay the bills. Each felt they had integrated the two disciplines, but expressed different feelings over client constraints. Mary feels less creative by always having to look at her work and ask if it solves a specific problem. George likes a little bit of direction, and thinks it’s too fuzzy when clients say “do whatever you like.” Bob likes constraint because he says he’s not a mind reader, he’s a problem solver. After a stimulating presentation, C3 members, guests and the public audience socialized over wine and snacks.

Mary Wagner

Saturday, October 5

On Saturday, participants in Chicago Artists Month came to see Mary Wagner do a live presentation of her parametric drawing technique. Mary produced 2 single-figure drawings while taking questions about her pens, paper, custom designed laser-cut gears and her process in creating her art. She demonstrated first-hand how math has everything to do with art.

George Berlin

Sunday, October 6

On Sunday, Chicago Artist Month attendees were treated to the live and animated antics of George Berlin. He explained the fundamentals of animation, which included a brief excursion into physics and math, as animators have to think about distance covered over time (velocity) when doing their drawings. George put this notion into practical application on an animation app on the iPad, and allowed audience members to try it out themselves. Most were amazed by the simplicity of use and sophistication of what $5 can get you in the app world.
Heather Aitken

1 **Description:** Spiral staircase  
**Client:** Anonymous Architect, Private Residence  
**Purpose:** One of a series of images showcasing a private residence built in the arts and crafts style. To be used in self-promotion pieces by the architect.

2 **Description:** Martini Glass  
**Client:** Ogilvy + Mather  
**Purpose:** The martini glass was used in a variety of print and web applications advertising Pinnacle Vodka.

3 **Description:** Music Room  
**Client:** Anonymous Architect, Private Residence  
**Purpose:** One of a series of images showcasing a private residence built in the arts and crafts style. To be used in self-promotion pieces by the architect.

4 **Description:** iPhone  
**Client:** Infinite Peripherals  
**Purpose:** This image was used in various print and web applications for a company that markets accessories to expand the utility of iPhones.

5 **Description:** Woodford Bourbon  
**Client:** Beat Studios  
**Purpose:** Part of a series of liquor shots to be used primarily on the company website.

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312.513.1000 (cell)  
beatstudios.com
On August 15, Francine Ziev started a full-time position as a graphic designer in the marketing department of YMCA of the USA. Congratulations Francine!

1. Laura Marie Sanchez’s work “Leaves and Feathers” was one of five works selected for the juried Autumn Glass Art-works exhibit adorning Central Avenue in downtown Highland Park. Her double-sided glass panels connote nature in green, gold and red hues while paying homage to local Indian tribes, including symbols of their language. At the end of the exhibit in January, one piece will be named Best In Show and receive a $1,000 prize—so good luck Laurie!

2. Claudia and T. J. Hine took a trip down historic Route 66 to Springfield, IL, to celebrate their 17th wedding anniversary in October. They saw the beautiful State Capitol (with those infamous copper doors), they rubbed Abraham Lincoln’s nose at his tomb, and they toured the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Dana Thomas House with its 250 art glass windows. The highlight was the fantastic Lincoln museum and the Ghosts of the Library exhibit.

3. Stephen Starr vacationed in his favorite haunts in San Francisco in August hiking in the Berkeley Hills and biking in the Marin Headlands. From there, he cavorted in the ocean for three days with friends on the Monterey Bay peninsula in Aptos. Then he spent a week at Esalen in Big Sur, the storied “hippie” retreat center started in the 60s, now populated by hipsters, the grandchildren of the hippies. In Sacramento with family, he visited the Lava Cap Winery in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains and saw Jackie Green of the Black Crows in concert. The photograph was taken from the Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park in Big Sur, CA. Illustrator and Animator Extraordinaire George Berlin was selected to paint a 5 foot tall fiberglass fire hydrant as part of the public art project “The Great Chicago Fire Hydrants.” The project placed 101 hydrants around Chicago (one for each fire station) to honor firefighters starting September 11, with an auction in November to benefit the families of these fallen heroes. George’s hydrant “You’re My Hero” spent a few months outside across from Navy Pier. See them all here: www.greatchicagofirehydrants.com/ hydrant-gallery/

4. In October, Bob and Linda Tolchin loaded their van with music, snacks and cameras, and hit the road for a long-planned trip to the southeast. Taking blue highways the entire way, traveling through the Great Smoky Mountains and Blue Ridge Parkway to Charleston and Savannah, the trip was packed with history, fall colors and maybe a bit too much shrimp and grits. One of the highlights of the trip was discovering a thriving fine arts community in Asheville, NC. Joey Korom’s 4th book, Skyscraper Facades of the Gilded Age, is currently being prominently featured at the Chicago Architecture Foundation Store on Michigan Avenue. Joey has also been accepted to exhibit online with UGALLERY at www.ugallery.com.

5. Stan and Lisa Kotecki had an opportunity to stay in a friend’s timeshare in Breckenridge, Colorado. While the National Parks were closed, they still found plenty to see including the Crazy Horse Memorial begun by the late sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski and now being completed by his family. They also hiked several miles at Rifle Falls State Park to view the waterfalls. At October’s end, Nate Marks and friend Terry headed south into the Ozarks to enjoy the ambiance of Branson, Missouri. Over four days (daze) they took in the sights, saw stage shows, hiked, shopped, and ate their weight in good food. Temperatures were in the high 60s and days were sunny, making it a delightful time to visit.
C3 Talks with Cathie Van Wert

Name  Cathie Van Wert
Company  DoubleTake Design
Occupation  Creative Director, Partner
Current Project  Rush identity and website design for a new law firm
Dream Client  Mid-size company that has grown and evolved over the years, is successful, respects marketing and design, and wants a rebrand to better reflect the business they have become and a design firm to serve as their marketing department
Family/Kids/Pets  Husband, nephews, cats and chickens
Hobbies/Interests  Music (I play fiddle and sing backup), gardening, the locavore/slow food movement, camping and nature
Three Words that Best Describe Me  Creative, impatient, animal-lover
Gadget I Can’t Live Without  My iPhone
Favorite Movies  It’s a Wonderful Life, Sound of Music, The Shining
Favorite CDs/Recording Artists  Gillian Welch, Buddy and Julie Miller
Books I’m Reading Right Now  Clan of the Cave Bear, I Am Malala
Favorite Web Site  DoubleTakeDesign.com :-(
Favorite Radio Station(s)/Air Personalities  KEXP Seattle
Places I’ve Traveled  Italy, France, Mexico, would love to travel more in the US!
The One Thing Nobody Knows About Me  I am a closet mosaic artist
Three Things in my Medicine Cabinet  Cotton balls, vitamins, Band-Aids
If I Won the Lottery, I’d Buy some land in the country. My husband could set up a recording studio in one barn, we’d have an art studio in another outbuilding, a huge garden and lots of animals, and would build cabins so musicians who want to record at the studio, our friends and family could come stay with us but have their own retreat.
Favorite Way to Chill Out  Playing music around a fire with friends

Don’t miss out!
If you haven’t renewed your membership yet, please go to www.chicagocreative.org/join-c3/ and do so as soon as possible. You can pay with any major credit card, and you don’t have to be a member of PayPal to do so. Don’t miss out on any of the great events we have planned for this year!

New C3 Members
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