C3 Members Wrap Up Holiday Art Sales

by Brent Brotine and Michael Tanimura
photos T. J. Hine and Michael Tanimura

A baker’s dozen of C3ers helped make the holidays merrier for discriminating gift buyers at our Arts On Elston group holiday art show on the weekend of November 21–23. Our artists came well-stocked with small works perfect for holiday giving, plus larger works priced to move. And move they did—our artists enjoyed numerous sales, including new C3 member and first-time group show participant George Obregon III. Our welcoming exhibit space included a main area with informal seating, opening up to five separate rooms and a wine-and-food area. Live folk music was provided by George Berlin on bass, and Benjamin Hersey on tenor resonator guitar. Additional entertainment was provided by George’s interactive on-screen virtual painting, which drew plenty of participation from visitors and artists alike.

Since the holidays are also a time for help the less fortunate, we collected art supplies for the young budding artists who live at or are served by the LYDIA Home. Our thanks to everyone who contributed—and it’s a worthy cause for your year-round support.
Showing Up for Creativity

Chicago Creative Coalition participated in Chicago Artists Month during October by putting together a “pop-up gallery” at Six Corners in Old Irving Park. Eighteen members brought their art to the storefront at 4007 N. Milwaukee and collectively created a show that included an opening reception, participatory digital “light painting,” food, wine and sale of art for some. The efforts of people putting their work on display, procuring the space and hanging the show reminds me that creativity has a lot to do with “showing up.”

Our world is consumed with creating digital connections. We build better websites, apps, and faster connections, but often forget—when you put your body in a place and participate, you are part of a profound act of creativity. We were made to connect with others through our senses. The joy of viewing fine art with our eyes, tasting good food and wine, encountering other people face to face—this is at the heart of living a creative life.

I have an ongoing tongue-in-cheek expression with my niece who lives in Denver and readily takes advantage of the mountains for snowboarding. “What a lovely Instagram” we say to one another when a mountain peak comes into view or a sunset caps the end of a day. Both of us are acclimated to pulling out our phones when there is something to look at.

I forget that I am in the presence of a grand mountain, formed thousands of years ago by shifting tectonic plates. I am inside my digital world thinking how I will work my hardest to shoot like a professional photographer and how many people will like it. These aspirations are fine, except for those moments I forget my body is on a mountain—standing, seeing, smelling—a full on bodily experience of being alive.

Recently, I read “Deep Dark Down” by Héctor Tobar who had unprecedented access to the stories of the 33 Chilean miners who were trapped deep inside a copper-gold mine for 69 days in 2010. When I heard of the book, I remembered vividly the way the world pondered the fate of these men. It was their connection to one another that kept up their courage and helped them find hope within to wait for rescue.

People’s lives are enriched and inspired when they show up to experience connection with other creative people. We get vivid experiences that feed passion to connect more deeply with our work and our play. Chicago Creative Coalition is creating opportunities each month to connect. Showing up may be a profound act of creativity for you. Join us for the adventure!
From the Board
by Mary Badinger

Phew! What a busy month, October. Was it purely coincidence that October was Chicago Artist’s Month? Nope. Gallery Walk in Pilsen, Pop-Up Exhibit in Portage Park, and Networking event with IWOC. Each opportunity was well-received, though we had plenty of space for more participation. Hint, hint.

The Board kept things jumping, building our Arts on Elston pop-up event before we were even finished packing up from the last. And at the time of this writing, we are getting ready for our close-up with our participation in the WTTW on-air pledge drive. If you caught us on TV, we hope you liked our bright purple C3 T-shirts!

Then there’s the business of the board; reviewing and updating our bylaws, launching an internship program, tweaking our website, cajoling for outstanding dues and planning some inspiring programs for the coming year.

Please plan to attend as many of the upcoming programs this new year as you can. While you’re at it bring a colleague or friend and introduce them to C3. Cheers!

Programs by George

The new year is going to be an exciting one with programs that take us to new places, help bring creativity to the next generation, and let you strut your stuff!

We’re starting off 2015 by turning you all inside-out with two programs on presenting and improv. In January, Catherine Johns, former radio personality and now entrepreneur coach, will give us some great advice and insight on speaking in front of others from her many years as a broadcaster. Then in February, we get some fresh ideas on how to stay on your toes for pitches, meetings, and innovation at “Break out of your shell—Improvis for Business” with Mark Carter and improv partners who will help us bust down the walls with performance exercises and ways to use them for business and creativity.

Moving into springtime, we’ll be inviting the young’uns around for a fun program on design, creativity, programming, and inventing called “Go Bananas!” that will be held at a local cafe/playspace. We’ll be leading a hands-on workshop that brings together a simple, fun visual programming language with a nifty controller that turns almost ANYTHING into a touch surface. Fun stuff for curious kids (that the grown-ups will really enjoy, too)!

Consider it a head start on our 2034 Membership drive.

Then, in April we bring it all back together with a big show-and-tell! Fun, follies, stories, brews, and showing what we’ve all made so far this year at earlier programs and in our art and business. We’ll all meet at a local libations dispensary to tell our tales and gear up for what’s next.

Creative Practice

Stretching Our Boundaries for Chicago Artists Month
by Brent Brotine
photos Stan Kotecki

For the 2014 Chicago Artists Month, C3 brought members a new, well-received benefit: our Member Art Show where participants could sell their work commission-free. C3 provided the venue with PayPal credit card acceptance, and 18 members took us up on our offer and exhibited some of their best works.

The show was titled Boundaries of Identity: Crossing Over, designed to help members dissolve the silos that restrict identity and cross over into a variety of media. Our artists took this to heart, showcasing works that spanned the full gamut of creative expression.

Our participating artists were Heather Aitken, Carolyn Aronson, George Berlin, Barbara Counterman, T. J. Hine, Kathleen Kears, Kaitlyn Keely, Joey Korom, Stan Kotecki, Nate Marks, Cindy McEwen, Marina Samovsky, Laura Marie Sanchez, Stephen Starr, David Tanimura, Michael Tanimura, Robert Tolchin and Mary Wagner—representing a broad cross-section of C3 membership.

Special thanks to George Berlin, Michael Tanimura, and Stan Kotecki for planning and coordinating our special interactive event that helped bring in an audience—Create your own Light Painting Portraits, and Projection Mapping. Participants were able to visit the C3 site after the show and download their portraits. In addition, we held a drawing for a FREE C3 membership—our lucky winner was glass artist Karen Ovington.

We also want to thank our sponsors, gallery owner Marc Sussman, 6 Corners Shopping District, Arts Alive Chicago, and our former-member-now-Chicago-power-broker Alderman John Arena.
Gallery Walk Heads South on Halsted

by Brent Brotine
photos Cindy McEwen, Kaitlyn Keely

Our 16th annual Gallery Walk on Saturday, October 11th took one dozen C3 members and guests into a new territory for us—the Pilsen East neighborhood. Yet the century-old buildings around 18th and South Halsted have housed artists and artisans for decades, primarily through the philanthropy and development of Chicago’s Podmajersky family.

Now in its 44th year, the Pilsen East Artists’ Open House is the longest-running event of its kind. So it was high time for C3 to make a visit to the more than 30 galleries, studios and art-related spaces opening up their doors, in combination with our own annual event.

Which, in many cases, lead into combined working/living spaces—a characteristic of the community that adds its own charm, if not surprise of being in the artist’s own kitchen and living room. Thankfully, the artists who welcomed us into their quarters were all dressed and ready for the occasion.

With all the venues so close together, we were able to hit nearly all the galleries. Some of the standouts included:

- **Xavier Nuez Gallery** at 1932 S. Halsted, with intriguing photographs of the city at night using long exposures and colored lights (www.nuez.com).
- **Bryan Sperry Studio** also at 1932 S. Halsted, with out-there sculptures made of mannequins with attached mechanical body parts (www.sperryart.com).
- **studio OH!** at 1837 S. Halsted, showcasing modern and contemporary art (www.art-studio-oh.com).
- **Amy Swab Studio** at 1743 S. Halsted, featuring pet portraits and pop art (www.aswabstudio.com).
- **Lynn Tsan** at 1749 S. Halsted, with graphic collages and light boxes (www.lynntsan.com).
- And the **NYCH Gallery** at 643 W. 18th St. where Phillip Scott Sinclair displays paintings, drawings, sculpture and more (www.nychgallery.com).

After the walk, we discussed the art over Mexican specialties at restaurant DeColores at 1626 S. Halsted, where there are also plenty of curated works by Pilsen artists on its walls for sale.

For those C3ers who weren’t able to make it, not to fret. The Chicago Arts District hosts a monthly event, the 2nd Fridays Gallery Night, where you can also walk around and get up close and personal with the art and artists. Information is online at chicagoartsdistrict.org.

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Like what you see?

**Ink** Printed digitally on Xerox 700.

**Paper** This newsletter is printed on Mohawk Options 80# text, 100% PC white. A 100% PCW paper with an exclusive Inxwell process to give the color of ink more pop without having to print on a coated paper.

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Jessica Oldani and Judy Strauss

Internal Revenue Service in obtaining licensing and registrations. Jessica talked about the potential legal issues that can develop from the start, and the value of using proper oral and written communications. She covered the importance of record keeping, and what business owners must do to keep in compliance.

Next, Judy Strauss, enrolled agent with Strauss Tax Service (www.strausstax.com), talked about tax issues for the various business structures. She stressed how entrepreneurs need to start planning for retirement right off the bat, and use tax strategies to make certain they are minimizing what they owe while staying in compliance with IRS guidelines.

Judy took us through the income that must be reported to the IRS, the capital equipment purchases that have to be considered, and the rules whether or not a home office can be placed in service for business purposes. She handed out a helpful checklist of expenses that small business owners should track come tax time, and which records are essential to keep.

The program closed with a discussion of trademark and copyright issues: the rights we have as creators plus the ways we can claim and protect them. A candid question and answer session followed, and out attendees all left the meeting just a little wiser about their pocketbooks.

Mixing It Up With IWOC

by Brent Brotine
photo Michael Tanimura

Continuing our joint meetings with like-minded creative associations, a hardy group of C3ers met an equally brave group from Independent Writers of Chicago on one of Fall’s rainiest and coldest evenings, Tuesday, October 14. This informal get together at Marcello’s Father & Son restaurant could have had better weather, but once inside the conversation and food were both ideal.

Independent Writers of Chicago (IWOC) is the largest organization of professional freelance writers in the Midwest. Their members are experienced writers and editors serving clients worldwide in a wide array of business, professional, technical, journalistic, and creative areas.

While IWOC’s regular meetings, like ours, don’t normally feature spinach dip, a pizza buffet and bakery goodies, they do provide great networking and C3 members are invited to attend their events. Information on their meetings is online at www.iwoc.org.
Our Lady of Perpetual...
Statement

These sculptures began years ago, with a book on folk art from the library that I now can’t find.

One of the pictures in the book was of a front yard grotto, a shrine to the Virgin Mary, with an actual bathtub, up-ended and partly buried in the ground, as her niche.

I just loved that and started buying dolly bath tubs and silver leafing them. It’s hard to find doll bathtubs that are just right; I like the claw foot tubs best.

I knew I wanted to make some sort of miniature grotto, but waited until my husband had a three hour commute—each way. More of the dishes and laundry fell to me than ever before, so I made Our Lady of Perpetual Dishes as my sincere plea for help.

People smile when they see these sculptures, as intended, but know that they arose from this sincere expression of how I felt.

Next came Our Lady of Perpetual Laundry, which is made atop an overturned 4 gallon laundry tub—that’s my actual brand that I buy and the size that I buy.

Then came “Dinner,” where I first switched from the doll bath-tub for a different look. I used a sardine tin as her niche (or nicho, in Spanish, I think of them as nichos.)

Friends told me, you have to make Our Lady of Perpetual Homework. I resisted for a while, but finally did make it, collecting used pencil stubs for it.

“Driving” is of course, about the endless driving of children to their activities.

Finally, Our Lady of Perpetual Housework evolved. She’s on a special ironing tool not everyone recognizes without its fabric covering—it’s a mini-ironing board for ironing sleeves.

This one is a two level piece. On the top level, Our Lady is surrounded by mops, brooms, wash buckets, dirty dishes and mice. Her nicho is the lid of a sardine can and she stands atop a piece of kitchen counter.

On the lower level, there are some tools and supplies for gardening, plus flowers and a skeleton. What does the skeleton symbolize? That the work doesn’t end until you’re dead. That one’s a little darker than the rest.

I use found objects in my work. They are sometimes literally found on the ground, and other times I know what I’m looking for and I go and get it. With those objects, I often like to transform them first into a metal; usually silver or bronze. Taking a common object, like the baby shower decoration plastic baby and casting it in silver transforms your experience of it. It’s familiar, yet strangely, not.

Larger objects, I’ve taken to silver leafing, to keep the cost down. But the goal of transformation is the same.
Joy Panos Stauber of Stauber Design Studio has had two client projects selected for inclusion in Graphic Design USA’s American Graphic Design Awards—the In the Books and We Believe in Books annuals produced for Milwaukee-based 800-CEO-Read.

Heather Aitken and her husband John ventured from Beat Studios, their River North advertising production company, to photograph the wilds of Africa this summer. With assignments in Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Senegal, they braved close encounters with elephants!

Nate Marks has launched a new Internet business, Nate Marks Art, where he will be offering his original designs on products ranging from framed prints, mugs and T-shirts to greeting cards, iPhone cases and iPad covers. You can find all the details at www.natemarks.com.

Marilyn Jones reports Consolidated Printing has added new capabilities: roll to roll labels, upgraded wide format UV-LED equipment, and in-house perfect binding for books.

Mary Badinger and husband David spent two weeks in Ireland becoming officially certified Whiskey Tasters and Guinness Pourers—as well as attending the 2014 Arts & Spirituality Ireland Conference in Dublin, and climbing the Cliffs of Moher during hurricane Gonzalez.

New C3 Members

Tom Kepler
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George Obregon
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Karen Ovington
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How to join C3

The easiest access to a C3 membership application is through our website: www.chicagocreative.org/join-c3/. Pay online through PayPal or contact membership@chicagocreative.org for a membership application to fill out and mail with a check to: Chicago Creative Coalition, P.O. Box 578477, Chicago, IL 60657-8477, Attn: Membership Director.

E-mail questions to: C3@ChicagoCreative.org or to the Membership Director: membership@chicagocreative.org
Company  Stauber Design Studio Inc. (stauberdesign.com)

Occupation  President, Creative Director, Designer

Current project  Thankful for a great range of clients and projects: brand systems, print communications, and new website design direction for 800-CEO-READ; a very cool interactive presentation (an antidote to PowerPoint!) for Radius Global Market Research; planning for the next issue of a magazine for DePaul University; designing jackets for some business books; and we just launched a new website for UK-based Tom Peters Company.

Dream client  On a company level, brands that have an authentic and distinctive product or service. On an individual level, people who are interested in trying new approaches and understand that a well-crafted, evolving brand language contributes to their success.

What you like most about your work  At the end of the day, I like the whole process of creation—it can be both messy and exciting at the same time.

Family/Kids/Pets  Husband Jim. We met a couple decades ago when I was a student at SAIC and we were both working at the Children’s Museum. Son Joseph, the world’s tallest 5th grader. Silver tabby, Betsy. And my son is slowly chipping away at my resistance to having a dog.

Hobbies/Interests  Getting away from the digital life—to hang out in person, work on our 1927 bungalow, and attend lots of 5th grade basketball games!

Favorite recording artists  Lately when working, I’ve been listening to Volcano Choir, Brian Eno, classical guitar, jazz, and choral. For dance breaks with my son, stuff like Lady Gaga, Daft Punk, and Tom Tom Club.

Three words that best describe me  Curious. Can-do. Irreverent.

Book I’m reading right now  99U’s Manage Your Day-to-Day, a great book about work. And an ever-growing stack of books next to my bed by Pema Chodron and Margaret Atwood.

Gadget I can’t live without  A single cup pour-over coffee brewer.

Favorite website  Amazon.com (I don’t enjoy spending time shopping.)

My fantasy is  A spa day. Will move from fantasy to reality soon! After year-end deadlines.

Favorite restaurant  Our kitchen.

Favorite food  For celebrations, I make an amazing Alice Waters chocolate cake recipe, then add dark chocolate ganache and raspberries.

Favorite TV show  Breaking Bad—addictive and beautifully-done visually. For hilarious, brain-free entertainment, I love shows like Ramsey’s Kitchen Nightmares.

My inspiration comes from  Walking, talking, books, music, films, collaborating, making things, trying things to see what happens. Having a child also helps remind me to have a “beginner’s mind”—to try things, not be constrained by preconceptions, have fun, etc.

Places I’ve traveled  A friend recently moved back to Sweden and I’d love to go there and to Greece. (I’m part Swedish and half Greek.)

The one thing nobody knows about me  Most people don’t know that I use my middle name. My legal first name is Anastasia. I always find this funny My son and his friends.

Favorite way to chill out  To have a day with no plans at all.

If I won the lottery, I’d  spend summers traveling, help friends and family, do volunteer marketing and design work, and support charities we care about.