

Chicago Tribune  
**A+E**  
 ARTS+ENTERTAINMENT

# Shiny, crafty and new

Beer culture, tours mingle with fun and games, all under 1 roof

By **STEVE JOHNSON** | Chicago Tribune

"OK," the short, bearded guy with the gravelly voice said into the microphone, "we've now reached that portion of the tour where we're running out of shiny things to point at"

It was the last stop on a journey through Lagunitas' massive new brewery on the edge of the Pilsen neighborhood, a facility whose scale and ambition make you wonder if, along with malt and hops, the craft beer recipe includes performance-enhancing drugs.

My dad, my teenage son and I, plus about 20 beer-curious others, were standing on this Friday afternoon on a catwalk two stories above the brewery floor. We were higher than the towers of IPA cases and mountains of kegs ready to go out, but not quite as high as some of the gleaming malted-beverage tanks we had seen.

And we laughed because, along the way, there had indeed been many, many reflective surfaces pointed at, mostly the cooking and

Turn to **Brewery, Page 4**



Kyle Cooney hands out beer tastings this week at Lagunitas Brewery, 2607 W. 17th St., on the edge of Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood. The brewery began offering tours last spring.

## A bumper crop of new American art

Elmhurst exhibition gives unknowns time in spotlight



**LORI WAXMAN**

Artist competitions are not usually at the top of discerning museumgoers' must-see lists, but perhaps they should be. The best of them pack more surprises than your average group exhibition, and since most of the artists are little known and even less written about, viewers are happily forced to really look at the art and experience it for themselves.

"New American Paintings: Midwest Edition" at the Elmhurst Art Museum is just such a show.

A few names are familiar, at least to someone paying attention to the Chicago art scene: Lilli Carre, maker of profoundly charming and increasingly noir animations highlighted in a solo exhibition at the MCA a year and a half ago, and Elijah Burgher, whose towering



ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

"Green Hell," a work in latex house paint by Milwaukee artist Santiago Cucullu, is among the works on display in the Elmhurst Art Museum's exhibition.

drop cloths covered in magical symbols, featured in the last Whitney Biennial, continue to elude me. There are artists whose work I have followed but not yet had the chance to write about: Dan Gunn, who here fashions a wondrous drape by sewing together slivers of rainbow-hued wood; Amy Casey, whose teetering mountain of water towers and houses, highways and telephone poles is the picture M.C. Escher, Virginia Lee

Burton and Dr. Seuss never made together.

But most of the artists in "New American Paintings" whose work excited me I'd never heard of before. That includes Tom Reed of Maplewood, Mo., painter of knowingly hokey landscapes and spinner of adorable yarn mountains; Santiago Cucullu, of Milwaukee, splatterer of a

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### COMMENTARY

## Remembering mail-order giant Columbia House

By **SORAYA NADIA McDONALD**  
 The Washington Post

"They were still around?"

That was my reaction when I read Tuesday that Columbia House filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. In a world now dominated by freemium streaming, how had a company best known for its mail-order music business survived for this long?

Apparently there are at least 110,000 members who haven't figured out how to cancel their credit cards yet.

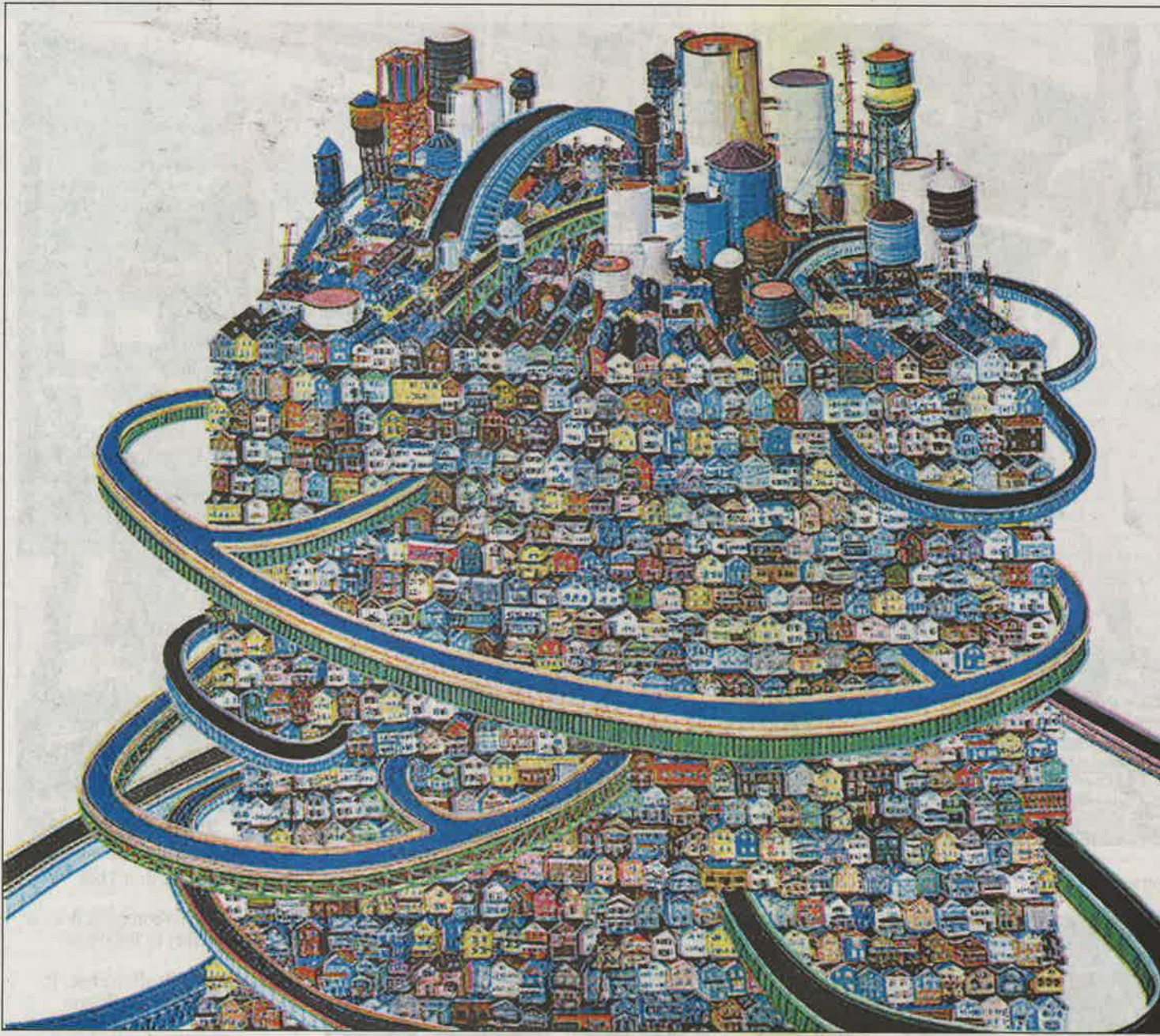
For those too young to remember a world without iPods or MP3s, Columbia House was this company that used to ship you eight CDs for a penny in order to get you hooked into its mail-order record club.

It was a great way to discover a bunch of music at once and learn about the vagaries of financial fine print, which was how the company recorded \$1.4 billion in profits at its height. After the introductory deal, Columbia House would keep sending you regular-priced CDs, and they would charge your credit card for them too.

Columbia House was responsible for me cultivating my own musical tastes outside

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# VISUAL ARTS



ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

"Rock Candy Mountain" by Cleveland artist Amy Casey is a teetering mountain of water towers and houses, highways and telephone poles.



DAVID JOHNSON/ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

Part of St. Louis artist Brandon Anschutz's installation "Suddenly Last Summer (Modernist Redux)" at the Elmhurst Art Museum.



ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

"Year of Swords, Conclude! (Neither peaceful nor monumental version)" by Chicago artist Elijah Burgher, who paints on drop cloths.

## American art: What's new?

Art, from Page 1

gloriously infantile and verdant mural; Rachel Hellmann of Terre Haute, Ind., constructor of meticulously lined and angled reliefs, part odd flea-market find, part ledger book come to life; and Robert Josiah Bingham of Kansas City, Mo., portraitist of palm trees, their jarring palettes pulled from the

constitute the entirety of the wall texts in "New American Paintings" and are on the whole worth skipping.

The 22-year-old competition, something of a rite of passage for emerging painters, normally exists only in print as a glossy catalog issued six times annually. For its first time up on the walls, Elmhurst chief curator Staci Boris — moonlighting as

ing. I don't especially care what it's called. I mostly just want to look at it.

Or watch it, as is the case with Diane Christiansen's stop-action animations. Christiansen makes magic out of nothing more than drippy yellow squiggles and blocky black squares, and magic it is: The paint-on-paper leftovers of the animation process, hung up next to the

monochrome canvases, Ferguson slices flaps into her pictures, revealing fleshy pink undersides that double as tongues and eyelids. Who knew the canvas had a back and an inside?

The question of regional style inevitably comes up whenever artists from Chicago or the greater Midwest are grouped together in an exhibition.

I'm indifferent, perhaps be-

### MUSEUMS

**Pick of the week:** Some of the finest gems in the land, worn by some of the most famous people in the land, are on display in the exhibit "Legendary Diamonds" at the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art. The exhibit will also have information on faceting gems, the origin of diamond cuts such as the table cut, and the stories behind jewels such as the Hope Diamond and the Regent Diamond. *Through Jan. 3, Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art, 220 Cottage Hill Ave., Elmhurst; 630-833-1616, lizzadromuseum.org*



PETER D'APRIX PHOTO

King Louis XIV is one of many big names whose gems are on display in the "Legendary Diamonds" exhibit at the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art.

### ARC Gallery and Educational Foundation

2156 N. Damen Ave.; 773-252-2232, [www.arcgallery.org](http://www.arcgallery.org)

**Aug. 20-29:** Karras Performance Festival: Music, art, theater and more with performers to include Emily Beisel, Bethany Younge and Alejandro Acierto, along with resident band the Mocrep ensemble. 7:30-9:30 p.m.; \$10, \$25 for festival pass; [eventbrite.com/e/karras-performance-festival-at-arc-gallery-tickets-17730777232](http://eventbrite.com/e/karras-performance-festival-at-arc-gallery-tickets-17730777232)

### Art Institute of Chicago

111 S. Michigan Ave.; 312-443-3600, [artinstituteofchicago.org](http://artinstituteofchicago.org)

**Through Oct. 4:** "Charles Ray: Sculpture, 1997-2014": On display is nearly two decades of work from one of this country's foremost senior contemporary artists.

### Elmhurst Art Museum

150 Cottage Hill Ave., Elmhurst; 630-834-0202, [elmhurstartmuseum.org](http://elmhurstartmuseum.org)

**Ongoing:** "Skycube": David Wallace Haskins captures the moving image of the sky in 3-D through his three-ton cube of steel, glass and infrared light film.

### National Museum of Mexican Art

1852 W. 19th St.; 312-738-1503, [nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org](http://nationalmuseumofmexicanart.org)

**Through Feb. 28:** "Deportable Aliens: New Work by Rodrigo Lara Zendejas": The installation looks at the politics and social issues of the Mexican repatriation raids in the 1930s.

### Re-Invent Gallery

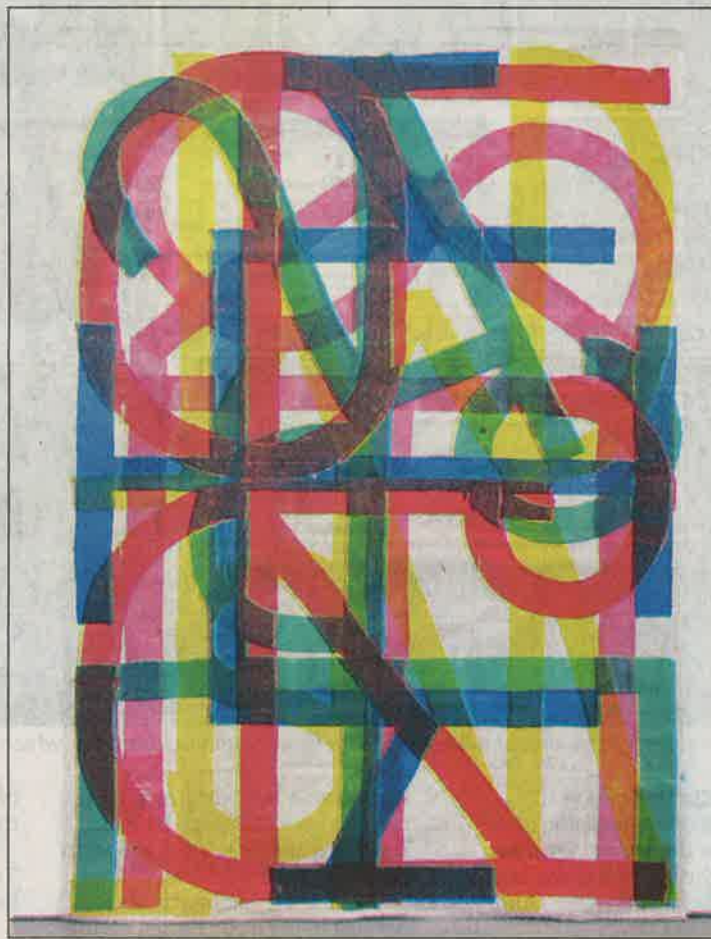
202 E. Wisconsin Ave., Lake Forest; 224-544-5961, [reinventf.com](http://reinventf.com)

**Through Sept. 5:** "Parts of Her Puzzle": Chandrika Marla's new work celebrates the



DAVID JOHNSON/ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

Part of St. Louis artist Brandon Anshultz's installation "Suddenly Last Summer (Modernist Redux)" at the Elmhurst Art Museum.



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gloriously infantile and verdant mural; Rachel Hellmann of Terre Haute, Ind., constructor of meticulously lined and angled reliefs, part odd flea-market find, part ledger book come to life; and Robert Josiah Bingaman of Kansas City, Mo., portraitist of palm trees, their jarring palettes pulled from the pages of women's mail-order catalogs.

New and riveting to me, too, were Brandon Anshultz of St. Louis, whose installation "Suddenly Last Summer (Modernist Redux)" fills McCormick House, the 1952 Mies van der Rohe-designed residence annexed to the museum, with dense kaleidoscopic blobs more precisely described as objects of paint than painted objects. And Seneca Weintraut who paints with an adjustable window screen, tangled yarn, a ratty brown hand-towel, a black trash bag, zip ties, and a whole lot more nasty junk clumped and layered and duct-taped together, as if Paul McCarthy had tried to make a Robert Rauschenberg Combine.

Weintraut also wrote one of the only artist statements I've been thrilled to read in the past 10 years, more pungent poem than the nonsense that too often passes for art writing. I'm still not sure why artists are forced to write these things, but they

constitute the entirety of the wall texts in "New American Paintings" and are on the whole worth skipping.

The 22-year-old competition, something of a rite of passage for emerging painters, normally exists only in print as a glossy catalog issued six times annually. For its first time up on the walls, Elmhurst chief curator Staci Boris — moonlighting as the 2014 Midwest contest juror — selected 40 artists from over 400 submissions originating in Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. Any painter working in the region could apply, and they did: Birth dates range from 1952 to 1990, birthplaces from Guantanamo to Duluth, Minn., styles from photorealist to scatter. The majority went to art school.

The result is a heterogeneous display of paintings and almost-paintings, sort-of-paintings and not-quite-paintings. The medium is defined broadly, which seems right with the times.

Terrence Campagna goes for walks, finds crusty sticks and weathered wood, arranges them into talismanic forms, adds stripes of paint that wouldn't be out of place in a 1970s rec room and ends up with a crackerjack geometric relief that owes something to op art and something else to eco-aesthetics.

Is it a painting? If the artist thinks it's a painting, it's a paint-

ing. I don't especially care what it's called. I mostly just want to look at it.

Or watch it, as is the case with Diane Christiansen's stop-action animations. Christiansen makes magic out of nothing more than drippy yellow squiggles and blocky black squares, and magic it is: The paint-on-paper leftovers of the animation process, hung up next to the video monitor, are as cruddy as the cartoon is enchanting.

Speaking of photorealism, which I almost never do, there are pictures here that suggest why someone might go to the considerable trouble of trying to do with the hand what a camera can do with ease. Heidi Draley McFall's larger-than-life pastel of three young women deeply involved in gestures of communication, and David J. Eichenberg's portrait of a teen with facial piercings and a slightly crossed eye prove that sometimes artistic effort can be exactly equal to emotional effect. Every knit of the girl's hoodie is there, precisely reproduced by Eichenberg in oil paint.

Speaking of bodies, with which surprisingly few of the paintings in "New American Paintings" are concerned, there's a wickedly simple pair by Linda King Ferguson that reveals the body of the painting itself. Wielding a blade like a feminist Lucio Fontana, the Italian artist known for slashing

monochrome canvases, Ferguson slices flaps into her pictures, revealing fleshy pink undersides that double as tongues and eyelids. Who knew the canvas had a back and an inside?

The question of regional style inevitably comes up whenever artists from Chicago or the greater Midwest are grouped together in an exhibition.

I'm indifferent, perhaps because although I live in Chicago, it's not the place where I was born and raised, a situation that's hardly unique. Bios today often describe an artist as being "based" in a city — annoying language, but accurate. Whatever it might mean to be from somewhere, I doubt it comes down to aesthetic style.

With no particular regional style to discern, nor any overarching themes or artistic identities, what to notice in "New American Paintings: Midwest Edition"?

The art.

"New American Paintings: Midwest Edition" runs through Aug. 23 at the Elmhurst Art Museum, 150 Cottage Hill Ave., Elmhurst, 630-834-0202, [elmhurstartmuseum.org](http://elmhurstartmuseum.org).

Lori Waxman is a special contributor to the Chicago Tribune, and a lecturer at School of the Art Institute.

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**Southern Shore Art Association Gallery**  
724 Franklin St., Michigan City,  
Ind.; 219-879-4980, [southernshoreartassociation.com](http://southernshoreartassociation.com)

Through Aug. 30: "Spaces We Call Home": A display of the interior room designs, residential gardens, landscapes and objects that reflect places where people and animals live.

**Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art**  
2320 W. Chicago Ave.;  
773-227-5522, [uima-chicago.org](http://uima-chicago.org)

Through Sept. 27: "Chicago Connection — Artists From the Post War Period": An exhibit of work from the 1950s-1960s by School of the Art Institute of Chicago students; two of these students are museum co-founders Konstantin Milonadis and Mychajlo Urban.

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