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# Galleries Gone Wild

## Provocative Shows Dominate Downtown's Summer Art Scene

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Downtown's art galleries were busy this spring. There were dozens of openings and high-profile shows, not to mention the monthly Gallery Row art walk.

Highlights included the March 11 grand opening of Gallery Row's graffiti-showroom

### HANGING AROUND

Crewest, and the reopening of the galleries *Dangerous Curve* and *G727* (formerly Gallery 727) in their old spaces. Another buzz worthy event was the highly successful April 22 MUSE art walk organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

All of that activity, however, is just a precursor to the Downtown Los Angeles gallery scene's summer line-up, which includes more openings, more art walks and more provocative shows. What follows is a smattering of the exhibits currently up and coming soon to Chinatown and Gallery Row art spaces.

### A Virtual Artwalk

Since it is summer, it seems only fitting to stroll from one gallery to the next. So a good place to begin our virtual artwalk is at **Art Murmur**'s Sixth Street space. Currently, the gallery houses *Metrosapes*, a group exhibit of contemporary urban landscapes. What does that mean exactly? Perhaps David Knudsen's "Freeway Blast II" or Leandra Hinrichs' "101 at Hollywood Bowl" will answer that question. Although Knudsen's image is a digital print and Hinrichs' is rendered in acrylic on canvas, both depict nighttime freeway scenes filled with the omnipresent artificial lights of modern city life.

Art Murmur's next show, tentatively titled *Dream World*, will feature work by contemporary surrealists.

*Metrosapes* is on view through Aug. 3 at Art Murmur Gallery, 129 E. Sixth St., (213)

623-2332 or artmurmur.com.

As we are not beholden to physical distance in this virtual art walk, let's jaunt over to the newly reopened **Bank Gallery** on Fourth Street. Formerly housed on Main Street, the gallery's new digs are on the lobby level of the Banco Popular Building. The space boasts high ceilings and stark white walls intermittently punctuated by historic columns. Inside the gallery's main space is Los Angeles-based artist Osman Khan's single black monolith, which at first glance appears to be just that. However, gallery owner Lorraine Molina explains that viewers who use a digital device will be able to see the object's hidden messages. Through the lens of a cell phone or digital camera, the monolith reveals an ongoing text stream that at one point reads, "What is it that you see?" Fittingly, the show is titled *Unviewed*.

"It is a commentary on the tech-savvy world," Molina explained. "The artist is commenting on how people are glued to their cell phones. Now we carry some sort of device with us all the time."

The gallery's next show, *Sprawl*, a group exhibit comprised of drawings, photographs and sculpture dealing with the effects of urbanism, will run from July 15 through Aug. 19.

*Unviewed* runs through July 10 at Bank, 125 W. Fourth St., No. 103, (213) 621-4055 or bank-art.com.

A short trip over to **INMO Gallery** on Fifth Street opens the door to a very different experience. Gallery director Inmo Yuon has been working over the last year to transform his space in the 1923 Rosslyn Hotel annex from a '60s-style lobby and coffee shop, complete with dropped ceilings and a built-in Formica counter, to a modern exhibit space. The renovation has revealed the space's original high ceilings covered in murals, but the

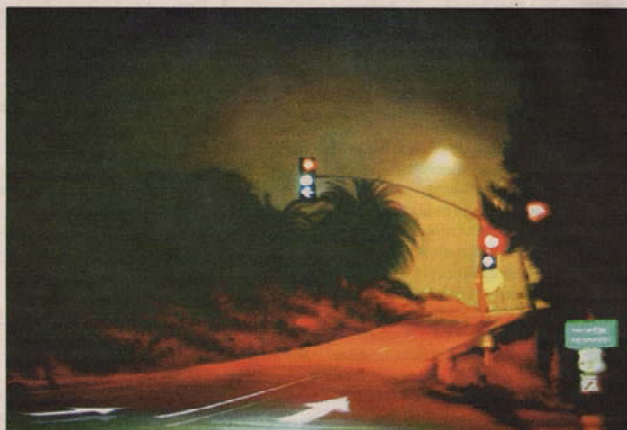


photo by Leandra Hinrichs

*Metrosapes*, an exhibit of contemporary urban landscapes, is on view at Art Murmur through Aug. 3.

counter remains, complete with fixed faux-leather chairs. Currently, the gallery holds *Conspicuous Absence*, large-scale works by Ain Cocks, in which he erased himself from childhood photographs. Although the photos are perfectly manipulated and not a trace of the original subject remains, the images give an eerie sense that something is missing.

INMO's upcoming show, opening Sept. 3, will feature work by Columbian artist Carlos Blanco.

*Conspicuous Absence* runs through July 4 at INMO Gallery, 114 W. Fifth St., (213) 626-5225 or inmogallery.net.

Gallery Row is just one component of Downtown's diverse art scene, and another outcropping of galleries is centered around Chinatown's Chung King Road. A trip to the **Happy Lion** gallery is more of a sneak peek into a woman's bedroom, thanks to L.A.-based artist Kristian Burford's installation *Rebecca*. After traversing a long, dark hallway, viewers peer through a crack in the door, which reveals a semi-nude female figure haphazardly sprawled on a bed in the midst of a disheveled room. There is an intricate story about how Rebecca ended up in this peculiar condition, but a trip to the gallery is required for all of the details.

Post-*Rebecca*, the gallery will offer a yet-unnamed show by abstract artist Brian Wells. *Rebecca* is on view through June 17 at Happy Lion, 963 Chung King Rd., (213) 625-1360 or thehappylion.com.

Just in case you were wondering what last season's movers and shakers were up to, here is an update. **Crewest** gallery's current show, *Monsters, Shapes and Men's Mistakes*, on view through June 20, features sculptural work by three artists. Erick Rodriguez creates fantastical pieces inspired by monsters, while Dave Kawano adds sculptural bases to graffiti art and Philip Ramirez displays his bronze sculptures.

Next month the gallery will host the L.A.-themed group show *L.A. Reprazent!* The July 8 through Aug. 6 exhibit will showcase original photography, painting and clothing by artists including Gustavo Alberto, Garcia Vaca, Chris Haston and Logan Hicks.

*Crewest*, 110 Winston St., (213) 627-8272 or crewest.com.

**Dangerous Curve** continues to host live performance events, including an eve-

ning of experimental electronics titled "CTRL+ALT+REPEAT," featuring Damion Romero, Hans Fjellestad and Clay Chaplin on June 24. Also on the bill is the U.S. premiere of Canadian composer Andre Cormier's "Scrubbing." On July 4, a retrospective of work by Brett Goldstein opens with a traditional Fourth of July celebration.

*Dangerous Curve*, 1020 E. Fourth Pl., (213) 617-8483 or dangerouscurve.org.



photo courtesy of Crewest

Dave Kawano's Buddha is part of the show *Monsters, Shapes and Men's Mistakes*, on view at Crewest through June 20.

The galleries aren't behind all the action, however, and the **Gallery Row Organization** plays a role in most Gallery Row-wide efforts. Some of the upcoming ventures include WLAPalooza, presented by the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles on June 22; the Downtown Art Walk on July 13; and the Decade of Art, a GRO fundraiser at the 1920s Art Deco Oviatt penthouse on Aug. 24.

For more information visit galleryrow.org. Contact Lea Lion at lea@downtownnews.com.



photo by Robert Wodemeyer

*Rebecca*, a voyeuristic installation by Los Angeles artist Kristian Burford, is at Chinatown's Happy Lion gallery through June 17.