

Chicago gets ready for Lollapalooza

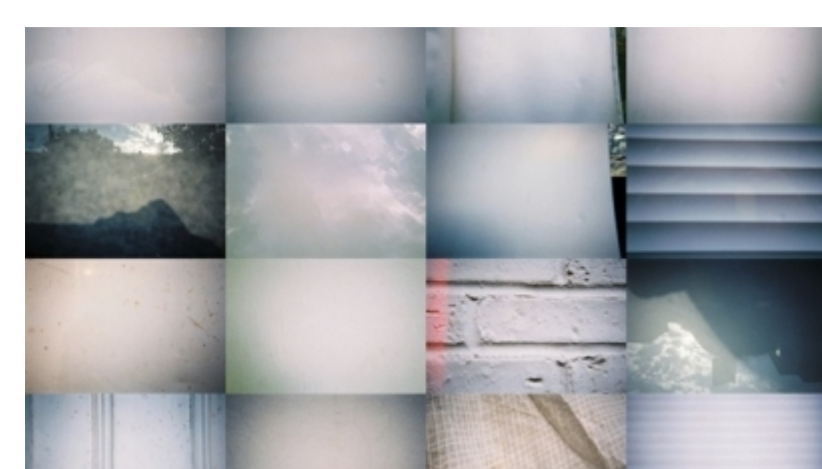
Hawks' Sharp signs 5-year extension

Budweiser dresses up can to boost sales

Home > Arts & Entertainment > Arts

## Julius Caesar: Small, but mighty

Recommend Tweet 5 Share Comments 0



By Sean Francis, Special to the Tribune  
4:57 p.m. CDT, August 3, 2011

The name calls to mind the grandeur and high drama of the Roman Empire: Julius Caesar.

So visitors to this unique gallery on Chicago's West Side may be surprised by the modesty

of what they find: a single high-ceilinged room with the usual white walls; comfortable capacity for around a dozen. There's ambition here, however. And conquests over materials if not people or territory. It's a fascinating forum for the otherworldly power of art.

What kind? Every kind — from paintings in oil to videos on a loop, from sculptures in nontraditional media to outsized photographs. (Sometimes the walls themselves are the canvas, as in an impressive recent exhibit by the veteran artist and SAIC professor Frank Piatek, who mapped a dizzying genealogy of spiritualism in art onto the white.) Shows open on the first Sunday of each month and are always surprising — even, occasionally, to the four School of the Art Institute graduates who supervise the space.

**Topics**  
Arts  
Photography  
Garfield Park  
See more topics »

ADS BY GOOGLE

**The Art Institutes**  
Have an Appetite for Cooking? Find a Full Menu of Degrees & Programs!  
www.artinstitutes.edu

**The Cleaning Authority**  
Life's Too Short to Clean Your Own Home! Visit us for a Free Estimate.  
TheCleaningAuthority.com

**Wholesale Overstock Art**  
Oil Painting Reproductions Up to 70% Off - Free Shipping  
www.overstockArt.com

going. It's gratifying, and also exciting."

Each of the four directors is allotted one show a year (one of the founders, Colby Shaft, recently left the enterprise). This month's offering, which opened Sunday and will run through Aug. 28, features **Florida** native and recent School of the Art Institute graduate Holly Murkerson, who in her solo debut manages with a mere three pieces to confabulate an atmosphere of cosmic enigma. (Well, four if you count the paint she applied to the walls — "glacial tint, wave crest, glow, and creamy orange" — a calming color scheme, which serves as well in its transitions to illuminate her controlling metaphor of liminality in landscape.) One color photograph printed in two sizes magnifies into quasi-abstract the detritus of art-making on her studio floor, while a red oak writing table she built herself and topped with blue mirror board and a stack of gridded glass greets those who enter the space.

Together these make up "Landlocked Blue," an installation that in its engagement with concepts of positioning and orientation can scarcely be experienced except in person. In conjunction with her poetic artist's statement, and a droll non-map girded round by such cartographical terms as "meridian" and "longitude" alongside "torrid zone" and "nadir," it's an auspicious setting for the thoughtful 29-year old.

Meanwhile, people still outside may well be wondering if they've arrived at the right destination. The brick building housing Julius Caesar and a number of studios was once a tool and die factory, then a tortilla bakery. Today there's no sign, other than art students and a critic smoking on the lawn in the stretch of shade out front, that there might be art afoot.

When you ask, "Who typically comes," of Diego Leclery and Hans Peter Sundquist, the other two remaining artist/proprietors, they reply "Artists, students, faculty and very nice, curious people from the neighborhood" (East **Garfield Park**).

"Yeah, we don't really get the collector trolley over here," DeGiulio jokingly confides. Indeed, the gallery is seldom involved in business transactions — but on those rare occasions that it is, the percentage paid to the makers of the work is substantially larger than the norm. Money is a perpetual concern, of course — but a new fundraising venture detailed on the Julius Caesar website and a robust esprit de corps ought to keep things rolling for a while. (The gallery has been around since March 2008.) Even its current intern, SAIC grad Betsy O'Brien, seems pleased with whatever task she's given: from projecting a new budget to plucking up tenacious weeds along the busted-up sidewalk.

The gallery's name has a simple story. "Well, we were sitting around and opening books at random to see what popped up," recounts Zuckerman-Hartung, "when someone just shouted out 'Julius Caesar!' And we all instantly agreed — for the first time and probably the last," she laughs.

And why do you think that struck a chord?

She casts what appears to be a fond glance at her fellow gallerists, then says, "Because we knew it would have to come to an end some day when one of us killed another one!"

Beware the **Ides of March**, indeed. In the meantime, half-collaboration and half-conspiracy, Julius Caesar continues to reign.

Openings are 4-7 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month. Normal gallery hours are 1-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. 3311 W. Carroll St., free; 312-725-6084, [juliuscaesararchica.com](http://juliuscaesararchica.com), [hollymurkerson.com](http://hollymurkerson.com)

[ctc-arts@tribune.com](mailto:ctc-arts@tribune.com)

Twitter @ChiTribEnt

Copyright © 2011, Chicago Tribune



Recommend Tweet 5 Share 12 Comments 0

« Previous Story More Arts: The latest art news from the Chicago Tribune Next Story »

'Killing Season' yields public art 2 contrasting figurative exhibitions

RECOMMENDED FOR YOU FROM AROUND THE WEB

**Marion "The Barbarian" Barber Signs With The Bears** (*The #4thPhase Blog*)  
**Ex-dentist gets 8 years for fatal DUI** (*Chicago Tribune*)  
**World's 'Most Dangerous Bird' escapes from exhibit at Denver Zoo** (*Chicago Tribune*)  
**Reality Show Being Shot In Chicago Now CASTING** (*Ed Or Alive*)  
**Kelly's Kudos-Printworks Gallery** (*Kelly's Show & Tell*)

**10 best colleges for the money** (*Bankrate.com*)  
**50% unemployment, 90% stock market drop, 100% inflation. See the Evidence** (*Newsmax.com*)  
**THE MOST TOURISTIC PLACE IN AMERICA** (*Travel Journal*)  
**Marrying for richer rather than poorer** (*Bankrate.com*)  
**Laila Ali's Fight Against Heart Disease** (*Lifescrpt.com*)

[what's this]

ADS BY GOOGLE

**The Art Institutes**  
Specializing In Design, Media Arts, & Fashion Programs.  
www.artinstitutes.edu

**Wholesale Overstock Art**  
Oil Painting Reproductions Up to 70% Off - Free Shipping  
www.overstockArt.com

**Ask an Art Dealer Online**  
7 Art Dealers are Online. Art Appraisal Today: 35  
Appraisals.JustAnswer.com/Art

Comments (0) Add comments | Discussion FAQ

Currently there are no comments. Be the first to comment!

To our readers: Registration is required before your comments can be posted. Constructive and respectful comments related to the topic of the story are welcome; abusive, crass or vulgar comments are not. Comments containing vulgar words will be filtered out. Please make sure your language is civil and your comment furthers the conversation. Personal attacks on others who comment are not appropriate. Hateful, racist or threatening comments are not allowed. This is not a spot for free advertising or spam. We encourage you to help us uphold these standards by reporting abuse where appropriate. Ignoring the standards will result in your comment being removed. Repeat offenders will be banned. If warranted, we will take down entire comment boards.

### ALSO ON CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



Photos in the news Mugs in the news Who's getting promoted Celebrity sightings Your travel photos

SERVICES CONNECT HELP CLASSIFIED SHOP ARCHIVES

Subscribe Manage subscription Subscription payment Mobile E-edition Newsletters/alerts Text alerts ChicagoPOINTS Online marketing Social-media contests News in Education  
Editorial contacts Company contacts Send news tips Comments/feedback Tribune events Twitter Facebook RSS  
Advertising solutions Self-service advertising Special ad sections Site FAQs Accuracy Reprints About Tribune  
Buy an ad Apartments Cars Commercial real estate Garage sales Homes for sale Jobs Mortgages Obituaries Pets for sale Public records  
Coupons Fan Shop Wine Club Tribune Store Photo store  
Photos Video Events/listings Columns Readers Share Blogs Databases Topic galleries

Terms of Service | Privacy | About Our Ads | Feedback | Chicago Tribune, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611

A Tribune Newspaper website