



September preview: Works run gamut from sly to serene



Lucy Raven, Room Tone (Courtesy of Lucy Raven)

By [John Motley](#) | For [The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)

[Print](#)



[Email the author](#)

on August 31, 2013 at 5:00 AM, updated August 31, 2013 at 5:12 AM

While the main draws of [Portland Institute for Contemporary Art's](#) annual Time-Based Art Festival are the "time-based" performances -- which range from dance and experimental theater to emerging, hybridized genres -- TBA's visual art program, helmed by curator Kristan Kennedy, should not be overlooked. Titled "... community declared itself a medium," this year's exhibitions directly address a shift in contemporary artistic practice, in which many artists have forsaken the role of solitary, studio-bound creative work for social organization of every stripe. All summer, artist-in-residence Anna Craycroft has organized public seminars that consider language and communication. Experimental sound artist Lucy Raven's "Room Tone" is an interactive audio installation performed by visitors to the gallery, while Portlander Alex Mackin Dolan's puzzle sculptures are meant to be solved -- or at least reassembled -- by those



More ways to connect



Follow [@OregonianArts](#) on Twitter



The Oregonian's Photo Essays on Facebook

who encounter them. Through all these hands-on approaches to art-making, it's easy to see why contemporary artists have grown so extroverted lately: Inclusivity and collaboration break down the elitist walls that keep many people from engaging with art in the first place. *Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, 415 S.W. 10th Ave., Suite 300; free.*

Upfor Contemporary Art: In September, Upfor Contemporary Art opens its doors with an exciting inaugural exhibition, presenting Los Angeles artist Frances Stark's feature-length animation "My Best Thing." Stark's film, which debuted at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011, uses a text-to-speech animation program, the now-defunct Xtranormal, to bring a series of Web chats to cartoonish life. As the online dialogues veer from the lascivious to highbrow topics including art history and politics, it becomes an opportunity to meditate on whether the "connectivity" of our digital lives fosters anonymity or intimacy. Upfor founder Theo Downes-LeGuin says he'd like the gallery's programming to address technology's impact on everything from culture to human psychology. Stark's "My Best Thing" is a perfect way to start that conversation. *929 N.W. Flanders St., through Sept. 28.*

Portland Art Museum: The museum opens two big shows of local import this month. "The Question of Hope: Robert Adams in Western Oregon," which opens Sept. 7, gathers the characteristically wonderful black-and-white landscape photography of Adams, who has made Astoria his home since 1997. On Sept. 21, the museum's third iteration of the Contemporary Northwest Art Awards opens, featuring work by Portlander Karl Burkheimer; Anne Appleby of Montana; Abbie Miller of Wyoming; and Washingtonians Isaac Layman, Nicholas Nyland and Trimpin. This year, curator Bonnie Laing-Malcolmson is joined by guest adviser Apsara DiQuinzio, the Berkeley Art Museum's curator of modern and contemporary art. Hopefully, that outside perspective will ensure this year's show avoids regional clichés. *1219 S.W. Park Ave., 503-226-2811, \$15 admission.*

Fourteen30 Contemporary: Since Jesse Sugarmann's last show at Fourteen30, the excellent "Works and Days," the Ditch Projects co-founder who lives in Bakersfield, Calif., hasn't lost touch with his auto obsessions. Last year, he received a grant from Creative Capital to produce "We Build Excitement," an experimental video meditation on the dying American auto industry, shot on site at one of its many cemeteries: a decommissioned Pontiac dealership in Michigan. While that ambitious project remains in progress, expect more car-themed video work and sculpture from this highly anticipated solo show. *1501 S.W. Market St., 503-236-1430, through Oct. 13.*

Elizabeth Leach Gallery: Painter Michael Lazarus, who moved to Portland from New York three years ago, has spent the better part of his career creating dizzyingly complex graphic tableaux in which symbolic figures -- snakes and skulls, for instance -- surface with the regularity of a recurring dream. This solo show



[View full size](#)

[See All Events »](#)

[Submit Your Events »](#)

Active Discussions

- 1 Greenpeace protester prepared to dangle for days to protest Shell**
(801 comments)
- 2 Chris Christie to legal marijuana smokers: Enjoy it while you can because he'll enforce federal ban**
(366 comments)
- 3 Portland Thorns settle for scoreless draw at Houston Dash: Live chat recap**
(3192 comments)
- 4 Portland Thorns earn 2-2 comeback draw with Washington Spirit: Live chat recap**
(4086 comments)
- 5 Full time -- Portland Thorns 4, Boston Breakers 1: Live chat recap**
(5542 comments)

[See more comments »](#)

finds the artist working with the readymade texts of commercial signage, turning that loaded language into works as slight and evocative as Zen koans. *Elizabeth Leach Gallery, 417 N.W. Ninth Ave., 503-224-0521, through Sept.21.*

Michael Lazarus; ON, 2012; acrylic paint, and found material on wood; 29 x 31"

Image courtesy of the artist and Elizabeth Leach Gallery

Adams and Ollman: After one year on the scene, Adams and Ollman earned "rookie of the year" kudos for its consistently high-quality programs. This month's group exhibition shows no sign of a sophomore slump, gathering work by the late Indian tantric painter Acharya Vyakul; Philadelphia artist Chris Corales, who creates minimal works on paper; and one-time Portlander Chris Johanson, whose work is on display in "Within the River of Time Is My Mind" at the MOCA Pacific Design Center in West Hollywood, Calif. *811 E. Burnside, #213, through Sept.29.*

-- John Motley

Related Stories



Art on Broadway and Painters Showcase members' works both featured in August



Portland Art Museum names new curator of modern and contemporary art

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

© 2015 Oregon Live LLC. All rights reserved ([About Us](#)).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Oregon Live LLC.

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site. [Contact interactivity management](#).