

BART Gallery Pt. 1: Take the Train to Oakland's Art Boom



Illustration by Carolyn Porras. carolynporrasart.com

By **Sarah Hotchkiss**

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Want to escape the crush of First Fridays and still spend some quality time with the Oakland art scene? Whether you dwell in 94704 or 94110, a web of art spaces, from commercial galleries to nomadic projects, is just a BART ride away. So top up your Clipper card, hop on a train and take a ride to bask in the rich visual culture on the bright side of the Bay.

12th St BART



Works by Rhonda Holberton, 2014; Courtesy Pro Arts, Oakland

Pro Arts

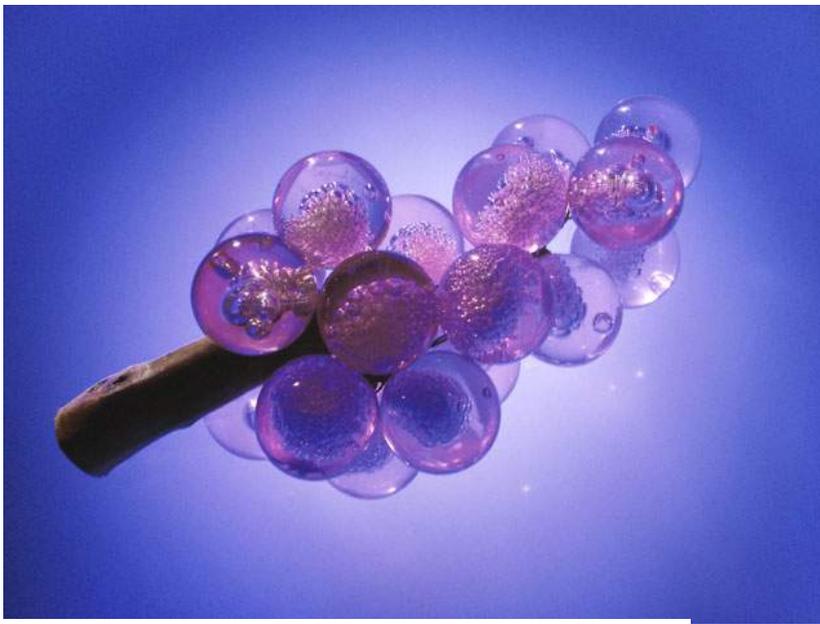
150 Frank H Ogawa Plaza
proartsgallery.org

This nonprofit space looking out on Frank H. Ogawa Plaza is an important launching pad for some of the most exciting up-and-coming Bay Area artists, especially via their **2 x 2 Solos** series, exhibitions not to be missed. Pro Arts provides not just exposure, but artist services (organized open studios weekends and opportunity listings) and conducts an education program, offering over 700 art classes to local youth each year. In January, Pro Arts hosts **2015 Re-Create Art Contest**, Oakland's annual recycled art competition for grade-school artists.

Shadow Office

308 15th Street
shadowoffice.org

Run by the collaborative group Shipping + Receiving (a quartet of “interdisciplinary artists, writers, designers, food and drink people”), Shadow Office is a hybrid storefront space. In an all-too familiar story, the organizers were evicted from their former live-work warehouse, their building slated for demolition and future condo development. What is now Shadow Office opened up at just the right time, bringing with it the opportunity to put on experimental programming. “There is a lot of good energy on the block and we’re stoked to be part of it,” wrote Torrey Cummings last year. Their eclectic offerings have thus far included a pig roast, a ceramics sale, a free cat petting zoo and an exhibition of nautical-themed embroidery pieces.



Tamra Seal, *Bubbles*; Courtesy City Limits Gallery, Oakland

City Limits

300 Jefferson Street
citylimitsgallery.com

This bright artist-run space perched on the edge of Jack London Square is an energetic and youthful gallery. With a brand-new flat files program and a fluid approach to exhibition making, the community around the gallery is a vibrant and optimistic one. Showcasing sculpture, painting, installations, video and photographic works, each visit to City Limits is a completely different experience. This is one of those outlier spaces most lively on opening nights or First Fridays, but co-directors Evan Reiser and Stephanie Rohlfs maintain regular Saturday hours for the weekend gallery goer.

19th St BART

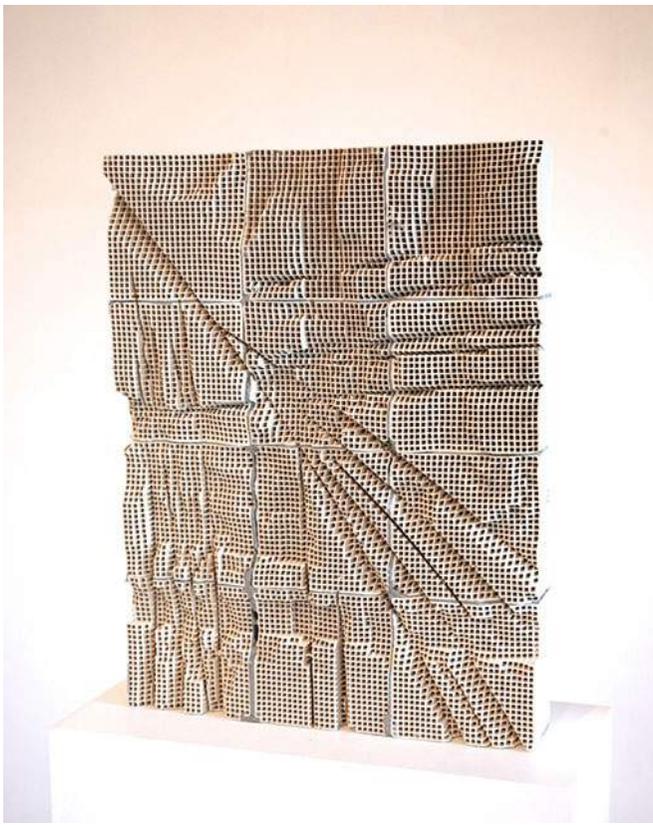


Rachel Yurkovich, Still from *Five-Second Rule*; Courtesy Aggregate Space

Aggregate Space

801 W Grand Avenue
[aggregate.space.com](http://aggregate.space)

This sleek warehouse gallery space is run by co-founders Conrad M. Meyers II and S D Willis with a writing residency directed by Steffi Drewes. Its street entrance does little to prepare visitors for what's inside: 15-foot ceilings, a fabrication shop, darkroom and screening lounge replete with theater seating. Dedicated to showcasing emerging local artists across media, Aggregate Space hosts exhibitions, artist talks, chapbook releases and film screenings, maintaining a full schedule of programming with the help of curatorial interns. They'll start the year with a juried video show, **Cringe**, featuring work by 9 artists selected from over 100 submissions.



Randy Colosky, *Slab #3*, 2014; Courtesy of Chandra Cerrito Contemporary, Oakland

Chandra Cerrito Contemporary

480 23rd Street
chandracerittocontemporary.com

Chandra Cerrito Contemporary has come a long way from its humble 2007 beginnings on the mezzanine of Mercury 20 Gallery's former Grand Avenue space. Actually, only two short blocks, but the current accommodations are a tad roomier. From Randy Colosky's engineered ceramics to Amy M. Ho's illusory architectural spaces, the gallery doesn't shy away from thought-provoking installations. In fact, Chandra Cerrito represents an impressive number of sculptors at a time when 2D works are a safer bet for sales. Stop by for the ambitious shows and to peruse the Collectors Editions, affordable "limited edition and serial small works by gallery artists."



Judith Scott, *Untitled*, 2003; Photo courtesy of Creative Growth Art Center, Oakland

Creative Growth Art Center

355 24th Street
creativegrowth.org

Serving artists with developmental disabilities, Creative Growth provides not only resources and services to their community of talented artists, but a gallery space showcasing seven well-considered exhibitions a year. The art center just celebrated its 40th year as the “oldest and largest” organization of its kind. For anyone seeking a break from the mundane, a visit to Creative Growth provides a refreshing jolt of the unexpected: colliding colors, material experimentation, energy harnessed into exciting mark making. Serving “approximately 150 clients from around the Bay Area,” Creative Growth is a must-stop on any gallery tour.

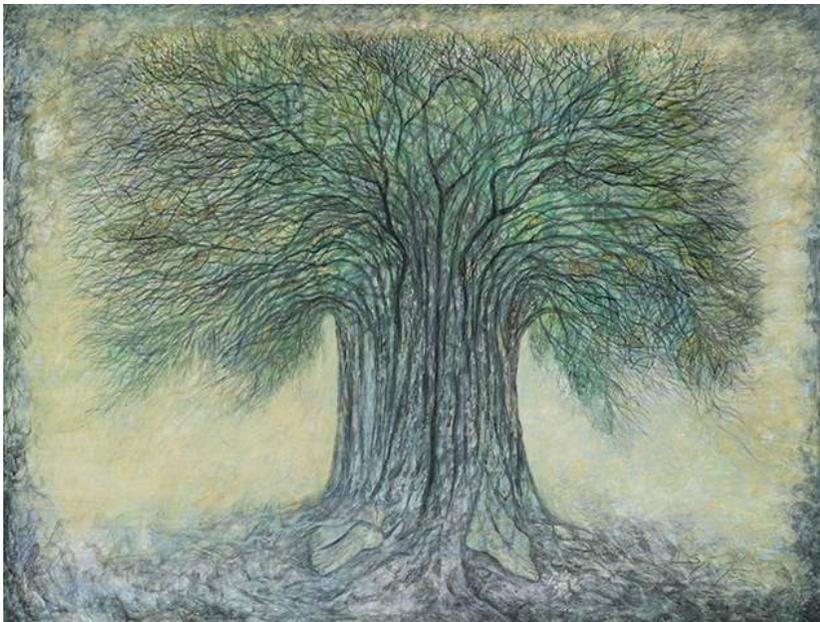


Jennie Ottinger, *White and Tan Head*, 2014; Courtesy Johansson Projects

Johansson Projects

2300 Telegraph Avenue
johanssonprojects.com

At the corner of Telegraph and 23rd, Johansson Projects' elegant archways provide portals for sunlight-suffused exhibitions. Always eminently professional, this commercial space puts on shows of both well-known Bay Area artists (Michael Arcega, Alicia McCarthy) and recent MFA grads whose careers are on the rise (Margo Wolowiec, Jenny Sharaf). The 2015 season opens with an exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Jennie Ottinger on January 10, **Letters to the Predator**.



Sylvia Fein, *Together For Ever*, 2013; Photo by Nick Pishvanov, courtesy of the artist and Krowwork, Oakland

Krowwork

480 23rd Street (side street entrance)

krowwork.com

Krowwork just turned five years old, a remarkable fact alone. Director Jasmine Moorhead originally focused on contemporary video and photographic work, but now brings all media into her expansive gallery space. Krowwork's programming is especially unique in its retrospectives of under-recognized artists (including Sylvia Fein and Jack Wright) whose lives are richly intertwined with the history of Northern California art. The gallery's rigorous academic approach produces exhibitions that are neither staid nor didactic, but deeply informative and engaging. Also, it *must* be noted that Krowwork is a palindrome.

Editor's Note: We corrected this post after being informed that Aggregate Space was actually closer to the 19th Street BART Station.