

# Ukrainian Community Press Releases

## HOHOL/GOGOL: FROM THE TRADITIONAL TO THE BIZARRE

- by A. Sawaryn

Cynthia Karalla (Installation of live mourners) In a darkened "chapel" upstairs, one could hear the sounds of chanting and praying. The eerie candlelit atmosphere of the room was accented by a "crucifix" that turned out to be a leather jacket with the arms outstretched, and "icon" paintings of women with bared breasts and their faces "x'd" out. A "bride", a "Hasidic Jew" and one other performer wrapped in white bandages alternatively staged "prayer" scenes at the altars. Sacrilegious? Perhaps. But Gogol was, after all, known for his "evil" art.

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CHELSEA CLINTON NEWS

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### 'Formal Destiny — Automatic Hand'

## New AlleyCat for Chelsea

BY N. F. KARLINS

The newest gallery in Chelsea can be found at 112 1/2 W. 17th St. by pushing back a black iron gate and passing briefly through an alley. On your right is a one-story clapboard-sided building with the pitched roof of an old stable.



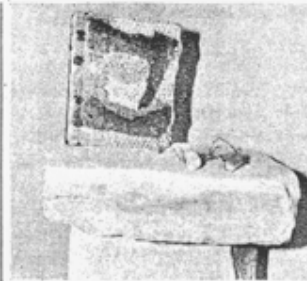
Inside, the AlleyCat Gallery is exhibiting the work of six young artists in an inaugural show entitled "Formal Destiny — Automatic

Hand," which will be on view through Feb. 22.

The AlleyCat's two, white-walled rooms are pleasant — small, but not crowded. The gallery is less impersonal and more homey than other art establishments, but nothing is added to the viewing pleasure by the sand and pages of books that are strewn on the floor for this show.

There are some interesting pieces amid the collages and assemblages on display. Jim Richard Wilson mixes classical reproductions, contemporary photographs and readable snippets from the Times to create flat collages overlaid with swipes of white paint that suggest aging plaster. The news clips give the viewer a pathway into his concerns. *Of Sex and Trauma*, which refers to a book by Alberto Moravia, incorporates photos of a vamping nude, another of foliage, and a list of Moravia's writings as listed in his obit in the Times.

Cynthia Karalla is a book artist, offering her *Comprachioes in the Raw* in editions of 100. Her books contain thoughts on the nature of creativity, personal poems, and prints in color and black and white. Each edition has a dif-



Cynthia Karalla's  
*'Comprachioes in the Raw'*

ferent collaged cover and is bound with copper wire. A pair of copper reading glasses with colored stones for lenses comes with each book. The glasses are amusing, small sculptures, even though the conceit of using them to peruse the books is stale.

Val Coda, who also creates assemblages, delights in combining the aged and broken. In *Creative Starvation*, a worn-out moccasin becomes a poignant reminder of its wearer. Coupled with an old pencil, a toy motorcycle, a piece of a jigsaw puzzle, feathers, shells and a sepia postcard of a shack-like store called *The First and Last Chance*, his has-been shoe becomes even more compelling.

Joel Best makes good use of tin-types that he attaches to books or canvas with wax overlays and string. The small figures, sometimes touched with color, are surrounded by areas of emptiness. Isolated and held fast by wax and many wrappings of string, they still project themselves as very real presences, captured by the past. This is very evocative work.

Anthony Scibelli contributes photographs in which he superimposes people on top of natural forms and then natural forms on top of the people. While all are technically well done, his

black-and-white works, like one that shows a yogi twisted like a tree, allow his imagination greater play than those in color.

Anthony's brother Steve Scibelli takes a very different tack, combining found photographs, some from muscle-building and soft porn magazines, with paper patterned with everything from intense paisleys to what looks like pastel wallpaper roses. His attention to line and deft balancing of color never fail to entertain.

In *Action Figures Sold Separately*, Steve Scibelli is attempting and achieving something more pointed. A black-and-white film still of a man with a gun is rained on by red hearts. Facing him is a big-breasted nude from a porn mag. To the right, a figure made of bits of armor and a see-through nightie scampers away, these other aspects of the female figure having been banished by the man with a gun. This compelling mixture of paisley, black-and-white photo, bright red hearts, and other colors points to a sure formal sense and the ability to shape a narrative.

While the Brothers Winslow organize the next show for their new gallery, Brad will be working at his own art as well. Sprinkled about are some of his small collages and drawings. The abstract colored pencil pieces on black paper are especially interesting and another reason to visit this unique, low-key venue for apartment-sized works of art.

The gallery is open weekends 1-6:30 and weekdays except Thursday from 4:30 to 7. Call 691-2647 for an appointment. ☎

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