

Phyllis Bramson and Judith Geichman at Carrie Secrist Gallery 2

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Chicago-based artists Phyllis Bramson and Judith Geichman will be featured in a dual exhibition opening March 20-April 24, 2010, at the [Carrie Secrist Gallery](#) in Chicago's West Loop. Together boasting an extensive list of experiences, a long teaching career, countless solo and group exhibitions throughout the U.S and abroad, grants, fellowships, and other honors. These two longtime friends combine their different painting approaches into a compelling exhibition filled with abundant coloration, whimsical figures, and a richness of delicate yet powerful abstraction.

The similarities between these two artists are many. Both were educated at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, (SAIC). Both have taught painting and drawing at the college level for some time. Bramson retired from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2007, and now advises MFA painting students at SAIC, and where Geichman currently teaches. Both Bramson and Geichman are interested in several common sources for their work, including Chinoiserie, Toile de Jou, Chinese Scholar Rocks, Rococo, abstraction and elements of bricolage. Both have invested in painting as a large part of their lives, and the twists and turns of their practice has been like riding over unknown terrain. Bramson says, "that a rigorous studio practice might be viewed as a (better) lived life". Carrie Secrist had a particular desire to exhibit these two artists together, that may be due to their long time feisty determination to continue to move their work forward.



Judith Geichman "Floating World"



Phyllis Bramson "The Reluctant Bride"

Yet for all their similarities, these two artist friends have important differences in the substance of their work. Despite outright figuration in her paintings, Bramson claims to plot narrative moves which involve abstraction as the backbone and engine that drives (her) compositions. Geichman's work on the other hand is outwardly about abstraction, although when she paints, figural traces can be discerned. These artists can be seen as two opposite bookends.

Some of the pivotal aspects of Bramson's art include eroticism, Orientalism (which she acknowledges is now considered a controversial term), and a form of random "touring". Though she asserts that modernism is very important to her, and calls herself a "Surface Surrealist" - there is also the undeniable influence of the Chicago tradition of figure painting, particularly Henry Darger and Seymour Chwast. Geichman's work is abstract on the face of it, with more than a nod to the "New York School" of painting, (Morris Louis, Frankenthaler, and Pollock in particular). But it is an abstraction with a deep strain of eidetic figural referents.

This approach to figural content that occurs as if by provoked accident, may be likened to Leonardo Da Vinci's idea of seeing forms in a wall stain, or reading an open Rorschach configuration, or tea leaves, or cloud forms within the physical phenomenon of paint, where visual form morphs in a dance with the projective imagination.

For more information about this exciting exhibition, visit [Carrie Secrist Gallery](#), website at [www.secrsitgallery.com](#) or call 312.491.0917. The gallery is located at 835 W. Washington Blvd, hours are Tuesday-Friday, 10:30-6pm, and Saturdays, 11m-5pm.



Judith Geichman "Mirage Menagerie"