

March 28, 2020
Chicago, Illinois

Greetings from my home office to yours,

As owner of one of the longest standing contemporary art galleries in Chicago, I have seen our creative landscape change numerous times. And, as my continued use of an AOL account that was established, we first opened will attest to, I still long for "The Way We Were." Even before we were all recently thrust into this newest of new normals, I was nostalgic for a time when art was primarily viewed in person, a slow consideration of gallery or museum exhibitions that could be returned to again and again. This was a time when the shared dialogue between the artist, curator, critic, collector, educator, student and the community at large was absolutely integral to the process.

In other times of crises and upheaval over our 28 years in existence, I have noted the one element seemingly most crucial in our art world: live connection to the visual and those who translate it. When looking back at CSG's history certain exhibitions were mounted right before unpredictable world events and the art involved eventually offered solace to those who began to look away from breaking news. Three days prior to 9/11, we installed a survey exhibition of works that all were focused on humor. *Amused*, which included a full range of media by over 50 artists, was extended for several months and I distinctly remember when I began hearing laughter coming from the main gallery. During the financial crash of 2008, I remember speaking with collectors who were relieved to see that, though the stock market had tanked, their art collection had generally maintained its value and could be considered "portable wealth" that could be handed down to future generations.

Fast forward to today's challenges.

I value an experience of art that employs a deft hand and *must* be encountered in person. As we move through the coming months of the social distancing, I feel the need to operate, endorse and discover new authentic ways to connect with these objects in real time to support our artists. This has been my singular goal for over 28 years, and even my "tech-adverse-old-school" tendency can be open to change.

Our artists are working closely with me and our amazing gallery staff (especially Director Britton Bertran and Assistant Director Kelly Long Jimenez) to create new programming like the following:

- Feature exhibitions in Online Viewing Rooms (OVRs)
- Artist-lead virtual tours and discussions of their current exhibitions.
- Critical essays and educational outreach presented by arts professionals, historians and critics
- Live streaming studio visits with our artists all over the globe.
- First glimpse opportunities to encounter new bodies of works coming into view in our artists' studios
- Invitations to participate in ongoing commissioned series

We hope that this type of additional programming will offer our audience a level of connection equal to, or possibly even greater than, a regular visit to our physical space. Keep your eyes peeled for project announcements as we roll them out via our website, social media outlets and other sites such as Artsy.

More to come to connect our community when we all very much need it.

Carrie