

T.G.I.F.F.

(Thank goodness it's First Friday.)

A selection of some of tonight's art openings and receptions

By KATE HACKMAN
Special to The Star

■ "Nate Fors: Loops," Joseph Nease Gallery, 1819 Central. (816) 421-2186

Reception: 6-9 tonight; the exhibit continues through Oct. 18.

When Joseph Nease Gallery closes its doors for a two-year hiatus at the end of this year, the art community will experience a significant loss; the gallery has consistently presented many of Kansas City's strongest and most challenging artists, Nate Fors included.

One of the few Kansas City artists ever afforded a solo show at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, and a 1999 Charlotte Street Fund Award winner, Fors abandoned paint and canvas several years ago in favor of a less conventional palette

of electric-colored leather boas, inner tubes, plastics, fabric, Christmas lights and cat toys, to name a few recurring items.

Trafficking in puns both visual and linguistic, Fors' work always contains a fair amount of wit, and the relationship of his titles to the pieces themselves are al-

ways worth a ponder. With "Loops," the artist seems to be delving into some new territory — the all-new body of work includes a fiber-optic light installation, a DVD video projection and a series of digital prints.

Whether or not one is well-versed in the language of contemporary abstraction, it is tough not to appreciate the mischievous sense of fun with which Fors scavenges tokens of consumer culture and dexterously elevates them to the status of artworks, often of considerable beauty.

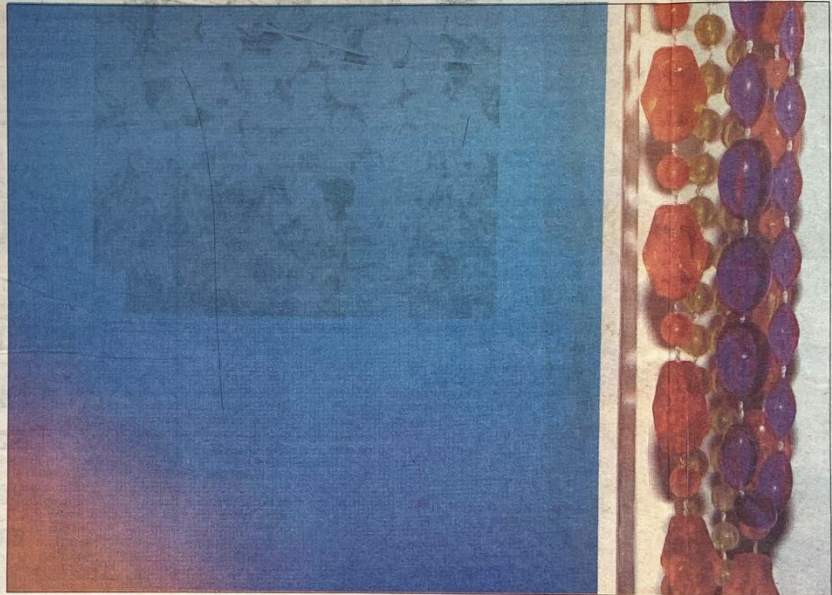


ARNE SVENSON

Arne Svenson's portraits of sock monkeys are on exhibit at Dolphin Gallery.

p.m. Saturday. The exhibit continues through Oct. 18.

Catherine Chalmers' show seems a perfect follow-up to Sam Easterson's "Where the Buffalo Roam" at Grand Arts last spring, which filled the space with taxidermed specimens and video footage shot from the



"Limpid," by Nate Fors, is part of the artist's exhibit at Joseph Nease Gallery.

NATE FORS

animal point of view.

With this latest offering, the gallery plays host to that most unseemly and yet, particularly for a New Yorker, ubiquitous of creatures: the cockroach. Presenting large scale photographs, sculpture, video and "drawings" composed of body parts dissected from dead roaches, Chalmers, who has been making art with insects to significant acclaim for several years, surely deserves some credit for her lack of squeamishness.

Her intent, however, is more ambitious, raising questions about how we as humans perceive and relate to our co-habitants on Earth and how we think

about nature in general.

What might we learn from these expert scavengers, which have proved able to endure and thrive in most any circumstance, and which clearly evade our efforts to control and destroy them? With photographic and video images depicting a range of scenarios, from fairly gruesome mock executions to roaches painstakingly disguised as more lovable bugs, Chalmers' exhibition sets a rather creepy stage for what should be a lively ensuing discussion.

■ "Barry Anderson: Ghosts," Gallery HQ, 1517 Cherry St. (816) 916-0620

Reception: 7-10 tonight; the

exhibit continues through Oct. 4.

Gallery HQ is just a bit north-east of the Crossroads, in a neighborhood that may not remain off the beaten path for long as Kansas City's young artists continue to settle unmined territory. Founded by Colby K. Smith (a recent Southern Illinois University MFA), the venue, which debuted last spring, is dedicated to presenting installation-based work — an apt complement to the typically more object-oriented galleries of the Crossroads.

Like the gallery, September's featured artist, Barry Anderson, is a fairly recent addition to the scene, having moved to Kansas

City last year to join the art faculty at UMKC. Visitors to SCP (formerly the Society for Contemporary Photography) were treated to glimpses of Anderson's video work in its 2002 "Current Works" show, including the persistently compelling "Lovers," which captured a couple on a train station platform in an awkwardly prolonged moment of parting, at once public and intensely private, where body language spoke untold volumes.

With "Ghosts" at HQ, Anderson mixes video with sculptural elements to further explore the relationship between the seen and unseen, the said and unsaid, in

This Weekend September 5, 6 & 7
 Fri: 5PM - 9PM Sat: 10AM - 9PM Sun: 11AM - 5PM

Painting Drawing Ceramics Sculpture
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