

LVL3

1542 N Milwaukee Ave, third floor (312-469-0333, l3gallery.com). Sun 1–4pm. **"Infinite Jamz."** Biff Bolen, Patrick Costello, Chris Duncan and Mac Katter, 2012 ACRE residents, explore color and light through painting and other media. Through Dec 16.

Roots & Culture Contemporary Art Center

1034 N Milwaukee Ave (773-235-8874, rootsandculturecac.org). Sat noon–6pm.

* **"Where'd I Leave the Thing Itself."** Lilli Carré and Alexander Stewart (codirectors of Chicago's Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation) experiment with chance, movement and stillness in a collaborative animation, slide projection and works on paper. Through Dec 29.

Events

FREE The 23rd Annual International Small Print Show and Holiday Sale Chicago Printmakers Collaborative, 4642 N Western Ave (773-293-2070, chicagoprintmakers.com). Thu 6–Sat 8, Tue 11, Wed 12, noon–5pm. The CPC sells prints by more than 60 artists including Sanya Glisic, Dan Grzeca and Amos Paul Kennedy Jr. alongside artist-made cards, books, T-shirts and other affordable gifts.

* **FREE At the Threshold** Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, 5550 S Greenwood Ave (773-702-0200, smartmuseum.uchicago.edu). Thu 6, 5–8pm. Hornswaggler Arts' pop-up bar fuels this monthly event, which the Smart dubs "part social hour, part participatory art project." Cash bar. Must be 21+ to drink.

* **FREE The Market** ShopColumbia, Columbia College, 623 S Wabash Ave, first floor (312-369-8616, shopcolumbia.com). Thu 6, 5–8pm; Fri 7, Sat 8, 11am–5pm. ShopColumbia fills the first floor of 623 S Wabash Ave with this sale of art and more created by Columbia College students and alumni.

* **FREE Spudnik Press Holiday Art Sale and Potluck Yeti Party** Spudnik Press, 1821 W Hubbard St, suite 302 (312-563-0302, spudnikpress.com). Thu 6, 6–10pm. Spudnik Press members and other local artists sell their work as the print studio hosts a public potluck celebrating its recent expansion.

FREE ARTBAR Hyde Park Art Center, 5020 S Cornell Ave (773-324-5520, hydeparkart.org). Fri 7, 5:30–8pm. The HPAC's new party for creative adults features live music and workshops in ceramics, screenprinting and darkroom photography.

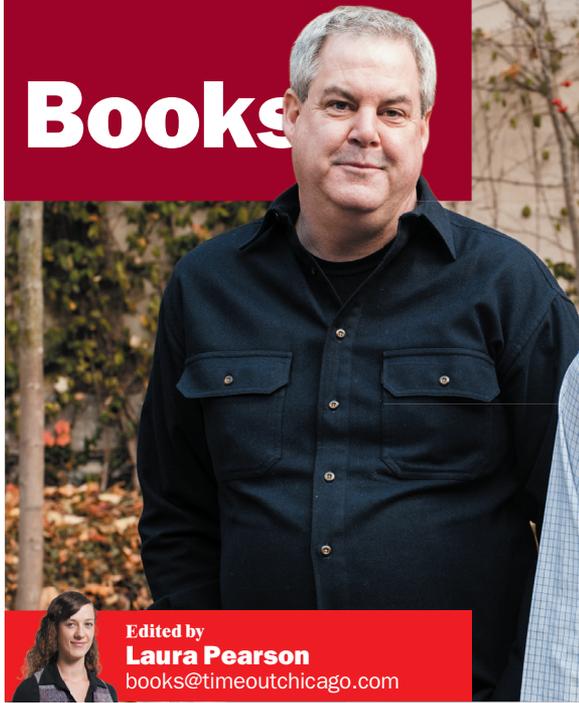
* **FREE Artist Talk: Goshka Macuga** Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, 5550 S Greenwood Ave (773-702-0200, smartmuseum.uchicago.edu). Sat 8 at 2pm. Macuga, whose solo show opens at the Museum of Contemporary Art Dec 15, discusses her work with MCA senior curator Dieter Roelstraete. A reception with hot chocolate follows. The Polish artist's vast, photo-based tapestry *Of what is, that it is; of what is not, that it is not*, 2 is on view at the Smart through Jan 13.

Culture Catalysts: Paul Cowan Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E Chicago Ave (312-280-2660, mcachicago.org). Tue 11 at 6pm. Free for Illinois residents, otherwise free with museum admission. Cowan speaks about the paintings, sculptures and installations in his ongoing "Chicago Works" exhibition.

* **Artist Talk: Vito Acconci** Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S Michigan Ave (312-443-3630, scaic.org). Wed 12, 6–7pm. \$20, SCA members \$15. Though Acconci's practice began to focus on architecture and design in 1988, he's still best known for his seminal 1970s performance art.

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Books



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NO LITTLE PLANS
Morris and Stauter have four books in the works for 2013.



Reach for the stars

A new indie press brings forgotten Chicago lit to light.
By Jonathan Fullmer

At a time when mega book publishers are merging and digital books are shaking up the industry, launching a new independent publishing venture may seem risky. But Jason Stauter and Ian Morris, founders of Chicago's Fifth Star Press (and its publisher and editor, respectively), are optimistic. "It's as if we're at the bottom of the sea where it's very still," Morris says, "and up there all hell's breaking loose."

Surviving isn't easy, though. Like many indie presses, Fifth Star relies on a small staff of mostly unpaid volunteers to help curb costs. Fortunately, Stauter and Morris bring decades of expertise to Fifth Star, which emphasizes contemporary and reissued works of fiction and poetry. After Morris received his M.F.A. in fiction from the University of Arkansas, he spent 13 years editing for *TriQuarterly* at Northwestern, which is where he met Stauter, then the production coordinator for Northwestern University Press and now business manager for Columbia College Chicago Press.

In 2010 Stauter approached the then skeptical Morris about starting Fifth Star, so named, in a nod to the city flag, to represent Chicago's imminent

"artistic or cultural breakthrough." They spent that summer researching titles and establishing nonprofit status. "It seemed like we were pretty busy," Stauter recalls, "but it took [more than] two years before our first book came out." It was Winnetka poet Susan Hahn's first novel, *The Six Granddaughters of Cecil Slaughter*, largely a critical success.

Now Fifth Star is reprinting lost or forgotten homegrown classics in a series called *Twentieth Century Chicago*. The first volume was released last week: MacKinlay Kantor's debut novel *Diversey*, which Stauter discovered scouring old issues of *The Chicagoan* magazine. Originally published in 1928, it follows Marshall "Marry" Javlyn, a young reporter from Iowa determined to make it big in the Windy City newspaper industry. He's quickly swept into the violent, romantic, sex- and gin-drenched world of Prohibition-era Chicago.

Although Morris admits Kantor's novel relies on "melodrama and coincidence," *Diversey* is an engaging read. But where has this gem been hiding? Kantor authored dozens of books, adapted one of his novels into the Academy Award-winning film *The*

Best Years of Our Lives and received the Pulitzer Prize for his 1955 novel *Andersonville* (the Civil War-era prison, not the North Side neighborhood Kantor called home). Yet, "[He] could not have done more and had less of a legacy," Morris says. Like many writers at the time, Kantor primarily penned for money. "When you're writing for *Boys' Life* magazine, you're bringing in a paycheck but not necessarily a reputation for greatness."

One wonders how many lost Chicago works are out there. "Initially, we're not having trouble finding them," Stauter says. Next up in the reprint series is a collection by novelist and storywriter Henry Blake Fuller, a chronicler of early Chicago and queer lit pioneer, edited by local historian Paul Durica.

With four titles slated for print in 2013, including publications by Illinois poet laureate Kevin Stein and poet/memoirist Kathleen Rooney, Fifth Star's cofounders are buoyant. Stauter hopes to make a living doing what he loves most: making books. And after reviewing their preliminary releases, "It's exactly what I hoped it would be," Morris says. "So if that would continue forever, I'd be very happy."

Fifth Star celebrates the launch of Diversey Thursday 6 at City Lit Books. See Listings.

PHOTO: NICOLE RADIA