

SUMMER ARTS PREVIEW: VISUAL ART

By Kyle MacMillan – Denver Post Fine Arts Critic

Some of this summer's most notable artistic offerings will take place not in traditional museums and galleries, but in and around the happenings of the Democratic National Convention in late August.

The Denver Office of Cultural Affairs has put together a festival titled "Dialog:City," which will bring together a mix of internationally renowned artists and designers to create participatory, site-specific works in neighborhoods across the city.

Among the participants will be DJ Spooky, a hip-hop producer and MC with a flair for the experimental; Ann Hamilton, a world-renowned artist who represented the United States at the 1999 Venice Biennale; and Krzysztof Wodiczko, who has realized more than 70 public projections internationally in the past decade.

The event has come under fire in recent weeks from host committee officials worried that fundraising for "Dialog:City" is harming efforts to raise money for the convention and local artists wondering why they weren't included in the project.

Despite this controversy, Erin Trapp, director of the Office of Cultural Affairs, said planning is moving ahead for the event, which she believes adds an important interactive component to the activities surrounding the convention.

"Each of the exhibitions, she said, "is designed to present and encourage conversation" about



ILLUSTRATION BY JIM CARR, THE DENVER POST

topics and ideas — historical and contemporary — in ways that are nonpartisan, accessible and exciting to everyone from schoolchildren to adults." Here's a look at 10 other noteworthy shows taking place this summer in Colorado:

"Dale Chisman: Recent Paintings, Rule Gallery. Through June 28. This veteran Denver abstractionist remains as active and inspired as ever, taking his painting in another bold direction in this latest body of work. (303-777-9473 or rulegallery.com)



ABOVE: SUSANNE KÜHN, *KATJA - MELANCHOLIE (KATJA - MELANCHOLY)* (DETAIL), 2007, DIPTYCH, PIGMENT, DISPERSION AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 86 1/5 X 126 INCHES. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

"Artists in Residence: Anderson Ranch," Foothills Art Center. Through July 6. Though still little-known in Denver, the artist in residency program at the Anderson Ranch Arts Center near Aspen is among the most respected such offerings in the country. Twenty participants and staff members are showcased in this show.

"Bedroom Paintings," The Laboratory of Art and Ideas at Belmar, Lakewood. Through Aug. 31. The term "bedroom paintings" has been applied to the works of David Reed to describe their ability to provoke immediate visual pleasure. This show looks at his works and those of six other artists that share a similar quality.

Susanne Kühn, MCA DENVER. Tuesday through Sept. 21. The German artist draws on myriad influences from past and present in her postmodern paintings. In this latest body of work, she switches her attention from the landscape to architecture, drawing extensively from the old masters. (303-298-7554 or mcadenver.org)

"Changing Identity: Recent Works by Women Artists from Vietnam," Center for Visual Art. June 5-Aug. 2. This touring exhibition offers American viewers the first in-depth look at the virtually unknown work of contemporary women artists in Vietnam.

"Landscapes from the Age of Impressionism," Denver Art Museum. June 13-Sept. 7. Right on the heels of a previous impressionist exhibition, the museum

offers a different take on the popular movement, this time focusing on landscapes. Most of the usual suspects are included, as well as some of the French impressionists' forbears, such as Gustave Courbet, and their American contemporaries.

"Tsehai Johnson: Disorderly" and "Andy Miller: Prosthetics and Vinyl," Plus Gallery. July 19-Aug. 23. Two of Denver's most original and inventive sculptors take their art into some potentially exciting new realms in these side-by-side solo exhibitions.

"Pablo Picasso Etchings 1966-1971," Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. July 19-Sept. 14. Exhibitions featuring the art of Picasso remain a rarity along the Front Range. This show features 40 etchings from late in the artistic giant's long career.

Phil Collins, Aspen Art Museum. Aug. 15-Oct. 26. Collins (a British sculptor, not the pop singer) travels the world, engaging subcultures within local communities to create performance-based video works. As an artist-in-residence, he plans to collaborate with area writers and actors to create an Aspen-centric "soap opera," which will show at the exhibition.