

University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to present *Selina Trepp: Unprofessional Practices* from July 17 through October 3, 2026. All events are free and open to the public.

Unprofessional Practices features stop-motion animation installations, paintings, collaborative performances, and a takeaway zine by Chicago-based artist Selina Trepp. Together, the works demonstrate her concern with “ecology, economy, and improvisation” and her ethic of “I work with what I have.” Trepp has not purchased new materials since 2012. Instead, she repurposes and recycles them in surprising ways, always responding and adapting. The exhibition title, *Unprofessional Practices*, quoted from one of Trepp’s drawings, alludes to the artist’s experimental processes and long-standing commitment to questioning hierarchies and power structures.

Trepp’s stop-motion animations are created through analogue methods: she makes paintings, sculptures, and drawings; improvises their movements; and photographs each shift. The artist thinks about the animations as music, citing their “affect, textures, rhythm, speed, tone, and how they make us feel.” *Reality’s Truth* (2025), projected at a large scale and accompanied by a custom-designed bench, condenses 18 months of painting on a mirror and manipulating sculptural elements into a three-minute video. The density of action encourages viewers to watch multiple times and gain new perspectives. Trepp was thinking about love, living in divisive times, and seeing the same things but not understanding them similarly. She asks, “What are reality and truth to each of us, as we are looking at different parts of the same picture simultaneously?”

Painting has been a significant part of Trepp’s life and practice. Her mother, Judith Trepp, is an active painter, and her grandmother, Rhoda Platt, painted throughout her life (and studied with Hans Hoffman and started artist collectives in New York City). Trepp’s recent works represent, in the artist’s words, her “communication with family history, art history, and the legacy of women.” In 2022, Trepp expanded the idea of working with what she has when she received the contents of her mother’s summer studio. She has since incorporated both her mother’s raw materials and finished paintings, as well as one of her grandmother’s unfinished paintings, into her own works. Rather than painting over the existing works, Trepp made pieces in conversation with them. For example, in *Love* (2024), Trepp retained her mother’s austere gray and black abstraction but added her own vibrant floral elements in reference to the garden-filled Provincetown landscape surrounding her mother’s studio. *Cat* (2026), which features portions of the original blue and yellow background and a curving blue line, intuitively became a portrait of Trepp’s black cat painted from memory. For *Enough of the right things* (2026), Trepp shifted the painting’s orientation and tried to replicate her grandmother’s technique of using little dots and layers, forging connections through substances, processes, and generations.

The exhibition is the center point of multiple public programs. Two improvised collaborative musical performances will respond in real time to Trepp’s animations: Normal Community High School’s Experimental Ensemble will perform with *Reality’s Truth* on September 12, and Yea Big and Friends will perform with *I Work with What I Have* on October 2. Additional programming includes a lecture by Selina Trepp, stop-motion animation workshops led by University Galleries’ team, independent drawing hours, and curator-led tours throughout the duration of the exhibition.

Selina Trepp: Unprofessional Practices is curated by Kendra Paitz, director and chief curator, and supported by University Galleries’ grants from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Illinois Arts Council Agency, and Alice and Fannie Fell Trust. Additional support is provided by the Lori Baum and Aaron Henkelman University Galleries Community Fund.

Artist biography

Selina Trepp’s work concerns itself with ecology, economy, and improvisation and how these concepts come together in practice. Finding a balance between the intuitive and conceptual is a goal. “If in doubt, be radical” is the best advice she ever received. Trepp works across mediums, combining performance, installation, painting, and sculpture to create intricate setups and analog processes that result in animations and installations. Trepp’s pieces live in the world: she installs them in public spaces and projects them in storefronts, plazas, and lobbies, as

well as in galleries and museums. Her goal is for the work to create a mutual experience in which people can connect.

In addition to her studio-based work, Trepp is active in the experimental music scene. In this context she sings and plays the videolah, her midi-controlled video synthesizer, creating projected animations in real time as visual music. She performs with a varying cast of collaborators and as one half of Spectralina, her long running audio-visual collaboration with Dan Bitney.

Trepp's stop-motion animation *We Walk Together* is permanently on view at O'Hare Airport's International Arrivals Terminal. *Woven*, her site-specific hand-drawn animation responding to music composed by Dan Bitney, was projected on the 2.5-acre façade of Chicago's Merchandise Mart in 2021. Trepp's work has also been screened, exhibited, or performed at the Gene Siskel Film Center; Los Angeles Filmforum; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Centro Cultural, São Paulo; Centre culturel suisse, Paris; and Migros Museum of Contemporary Art, Zurich, among many others.

Events and programming

All events and exhibitions are free and open to the public.

- **All-ages stop-motion animation workshops**

Participants can attend one or more sessions. All materials, equipment, and instructions are provided.

Registration is required.

- Saturday, July 18, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. [Registration link.](#)
- Wednesday, July 22, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. [Registration link.](#)
- Friday, July 31, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. [Registration link.](#)
- Saturday, August 15, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. [Registration link.](#)
- Saturday, September 26, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. [Registration link.](#)

- **Reception**

Friday, August 14, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

- **Independent drawing hours**

Spend time looking closely at artworks in the exhibition and drawing at your own pace. Materials are provided.

- Friday, August 28, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
- Friday, September 18, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 3, from noon to 4:00 p.m.

- **Drop-in poetry writing**

Spend time writing poetry in response to artworks on view. Materials provided, including poetry templates.

- Friday, September 4, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.
- Friday, September 25, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

- **Collaborative performance by Normal Community High School's Experimental Ensemble**

Saturday, September 12 at 1:00 p.m. at University Galleries

- **Artist lecture by Selina Trepp**

Date and time will be announced.

- **Collaborative performance by Yea Big and Friends with a reception following**

Friday, October 2. Time and location will be announced.

- Field trip program, curator-led tours, and workshops available by appointment throughout the exhibition. Stipends are available for K-12 schools or community organizations to offset the costs of transportation. Please contact University Galleries at galleries@ilstu.edu or (309) 438-5487 to schedule an appointment.

University Galleries, a unit in the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, is located at 11 Uptown Circle, Suite 103, at the corner of Beaufort and Broadway streets. Parking is available in the Uptown Station parking deck located directly above University Galleries—the first hour is free, as well as any time after 5:01 p.m.

You can find [University Galleries](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#), and sign up to receive email updates through the [newsletter](#). Please contact gallery@IllinoisState.edu or call (309) 438-5487 if you need to arrange an accommodation to participate in any events related to these exhibitions.