

# Chicago Tribune

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## Memento Mori

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Links for International Promotion of the Arts (LIPA) is an organization dedicated to presenting "socially aware art and discourse." It was created five years ago in Washington, D.C., but last spring relocated to Chicago and opened a gallery behind the Intercontinental Hotel in a building that is entered off the lower level of Illinois Street. This does not make it as easy to find, though the present group exhibition merits a search.

Called "Memento Mori," the show brings together eight artists who reflect on the genocide of Armenians, Jews, Cambodians and Bosnian Muslims. Unlike most "concerned" artworks, however, these indicate aesthetic impulses that have also been acted upon, and it is for that more than for any message that the works deserve a look.

The paintings of Arthur Lerner, for example, grew from a series on prehistoric mummies in South America, though their skulls, skeletons and hanging men equally relate to more current events.

One smaller piece, of a falling figure, was directly inspired by the events of Sept. 11, but could as well be an illustration to Milton's "Paradise Lost" or Dante's "The Divine Comedy." In form, color and feeling for light, all these pictures are special.