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## North Korea boosts nuclear ability

Pyongyang has the technology to make small warheads to fit long-range missiles, a U.S. assessment says.

BY KEN DILANIAN,  
DAVID S. CLOUD  
AND BARBARA DEMICK

WASHINGTON — A U.S. intelligence agency has concluded that North Korea has the capability to develop nuclear warheads small enough to fit on a ballistic missile, a congressman disclosed Thursday.

Although U.S. experts believe North Korea cannot hit the U.S. mainland with its missiles, a significant improvement in Pyongyang's weapons technology would be deeply disconcerting for U.S. policymakers. It would also help explain the United States' measures — including an emphasis on its ability to respond with nuclear weapons — after weeks of warlike rhetoric from Pyongyang.

Regional intelligence officials and analysts say North Korea is poised to launch as many as five missiles from its east coast, but that the planned launches did not appear to be in preparation for war. They said the launches were likely to only be part of a military exercise and would not pose a threat to the U.S. or its allies, Japan



Ng HAN GUAN Associated Press

### ON A FAST TRACK IN CHINA

Gov. Jerry Brown speaks to journalists aboard a bullet train leaving the Beijing South station. The governor would like to see China, which is enjoying an economic boom and spent \$77.6 billion on overseas investments last year, pump some of its cash into California's troubled high-speed rail project. **LATEXTRA**

## Bad business decisions

Criminal complaint in insider-trading case paints now-fired KPMG auditor and pal as brash bunglers whose downfall was inevitable

BY WALTER HAMILTON,  
ANDREA CHANG  
AND TIFFANY HSU

It's the kind of audacious but small-stakes insider trading that normally wouldn't have merited much attention.

Golfing buddies Scott London and Bryan Shaw netted just \$1.3 million, a blip in a world where Wall Street kingpins pocket hundreds of



### KPMG accountant's role

Prosecutors dispute Scott London's claim that he was not closely involved in the trades. **BUSINESS, B1**

passed insider tips to Shaw from 2010 to 2013.

London, a former auditor at KPMG, and Shaw, an Encino jeweler, kept trading even after Fidelity

## Baca to face feds in probe of jails

Was FBI informant's transfer for his safety or to neutralize him? Federal prosecutors will interview sheriff.

BY ROBERT FATURECHI

They called it Operation Pandora's Box.

Los Angeles County sheriff's officials learned in the summer of 2011 that the FBI had enlisted an inmate in the Men's Central Jail to collect information on allegedly abusive and corrupt deputies.

In an unusual move, sheriff's officials responded by moving the inmate, a convicted bank robber, to a different jail under fake names, including Robin Banks.

They assigned at least 13 deputies to watch him around the clock, according to documents reviewed by The Times. And when the operation was over, the deputies received an internal email thanking them for helping "without asking to [sic] many questions and prying into the investigation at hand."

Whether Pandora's Box was intended to protect the inmate or neutralize him as an FBI informant is a key issue in a federal investigation into brutality in the jails.

## ART

## AROUND THE GALLERIES

# 'Life' floats in a hazy frame

BY HOLLY MYERS

If painting can be said to live at the threshold between the external visual world of objects and the internal visual world of the imagination, the relative pull of either pole varies widely from artist to artist, and even within the lifetime of a single artist.

In Lisa Adams' "Second Life," her second solo exhibition with CB1 Gallery, the tug of war is palpable.

The cause of this equivocation was at least partly physiological. In the midst of her work on the 16 paintings in the show, Adams was diagnosed with a torn retina. She was unable to see for several weeks, and unable to paint for several months. The external gaze was obliged to turn in, and the work that emerged bears traces of a struggle to reconcile the two modes of seeing.

The finely wrought birds, trees, flowers and cloudscapes of earlier work have largely given way to a speculative tussle with geometric form and the layering of loose, enigmatic fragments.

As in previous work, Adams' compositions float in a flat, indeterminate space characterized by fleeting indications of a sky or a horizon line. The tone, however, is less organic than cognitive, implying a realm of painterly subconscious, with undercurrents of De Chirico, Dalí and Miró.

It is not a shift from representation to abstraction so much as the loosening of a hold on representational objects, with all their advantages and limitations, and a



CB1 Gallery

"**THE MIRE of Epiphany**," the standout of Lisa Adams' solo show, creates a captivating puzzle for viewers.

self-conscious embrace of the more nebulous terms of imaginative space.

They are, on the whole, rather awkward paintings. It is the awkwardness of investigation, however, rather than complacency or incompetence, that makes the show an engaging journey.

That there is one truly stunning painting in the group seems ample evidence that the journey is likely to bear fruit in the end. Titled "The Mire of Epiphany," it is, perhaps notably, the simplest of the lot: A flat black dot, roughly 18 inches in diameter, floats at the center of a 4-by-5-foot canvas against a beautifully rendered image of clouds and sky, with a handful of slender leafy vines hanging enigmatically to one side.

Without denying Adams' considerable skill as a representational painter — or the pleasure that skill is sure to

inspire — the work holds any potential indulgence in check with the power of that one geometric shape.

A sphere or a hole, a presence or an absence, an addition or a removal, a Baldesarian joke or a window upon the abyss — the ambiguity of the dot's implications draws both the painting and the whole experiment of a show into a taut and captivating puzzle.

**CB1 Gallery**, 207 W. 5th St., Los Angeles, (213) 806-7889, through May 12. Closed Monday and Tuesday. [www.cb1gallery.com](http://www.cb1gallery.com)

## Architecture, nature in motion

Amir Zaki makes stately, often elegant photographs



ACME

**AMIR ZAKI'S** strangely beguiling tree portraits pair with his cliff-side photographs of the coast.

that subtly undermine perceptions of coherence and stability in architecture. The Southern California life-guard towers he photographed for 2010's "Relics" have the look of recently landed alien spacecraft with impossibly frail legs.

His 2005 series "Spring through Winter" presented an oddly melancholic array of bricked-over fireplace mantels, as well as several Modernist houses that appeared to be launching themselves like hang gliders over the rim of a crumbling hillside.

In "Time Moves Still," his first solo exhibition with ACME, he's returned to the beach to photograph the discordant amalgamations

of geology, civil engineering and residential construction that line the cliff sides along the surf in the thin fog of early morning.

He pairs these works with portraits of pitifully hobbled though strangely beguiling urban trees, set against a flat, white sky. All black and white with a warm, classical sepia cast, the works are printed in various sizes and shown to advantage in a wonderfully thoughtful installation.

Zaki does digitally alter his images on occasion. (It is generally difficult to determine quite how, and there is little evidence of it in this case.) The more disorienting quality, however, may be his relentlessly inquisitive

spirit, which uncovers the peculiar, the precarious, the buoyant and the beautiful in the structures we tend to pass with little thought.

Broadening his scope here from the architecture itself to the incongruous intertwining of architecture and nature, he reveals telling strains of resistance and pliability in both.

**ACME**, 6150 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles (323) 857-5942, through April 27. Closed Sunday and Monday. [www.acmelosangeles.com](http://www.acmelosangeles.com)

## Eloquence in each stroke

Claire Anna Baker's first L.A. solo show, at Edward Cella Art + Architecture, is a strikingly sophisticated exploration of gesture in the context of painterly abstraction.

Each of the five large, ink-on-polyester paintings installed in the gallery's main space revolves around a stroke of liquid black, set against a ground of pale, softly modulated blues, oranges and pinks.

Though far too large to have been made with a single movement, each stroke is a vision of lightness and spontaneity. It fills the canvas with motion more than form or weight, with a flicker like that of a darting butterfly or a fluttering scrap of silk.

In fact, the gestures are highly deliberate and choreographed, developed through the distillation of physical movements in the studio into a kind of script. (A handful of smaller works also on view gives a sense of how Baker works these forms up from preparatory sketches.)

Baker executes her characters with the studied assurance of a Japanese calligraphy master, balancing ease and control to produce forms simultaneously casual and perfected.

Judging from the soft veneer and delicate range of tones in the backgrounds, she does not appear to have given herself a forgiving surface — one can only wonder how many attempts were abandoned to achieve these few exquisitely eloquent expressions. There is no doubt, however, that it was worth the sacrifice.

**Edward Cella Art + Architecture**, 6018 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, (323) 525-0053, through April 27. Closed Sunday and Monday. [www.edwardcella.com](http://www.edwardcella.com)

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