

# KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

## The New York Times

*Christopher Chiappa's Latest Obsession: The Amazing Egg*

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Christopher Chiappa surrounded by nature's perfect symbol.  
Courtesy of the artist and Elisabeth Bernstein/Kate Werble Gallery, New York

Fried eggs sliding down the walls, spreading in the corners, sprawling across the floor. No, you haven't walked into some restaurant kitchen run amok or a twisted rendition of Dr. Seuss. This is "Livestrong," an installation by Christopher Chiappa, his third solo show at Kate Werble Gallery on Vandam Street, which opens Saturday.

How does one start making this many eggs is the question," Mr. Chiappa said. "I get obsessed with different objects and symbols. So obviously a fried egg is a potent object and symbol for me."

Mr. Chiappa made the fried eggs — 7,000 to be exact — over about a year. Individually, they represent the craftsmanship of an artist working in plaster. In the aggregate, they amount to an exhibition both whimsical and ominous; silly and sober — precisely the complicated metaphor Mr. Chiappa was aiming for.

If you just have the egg, it's this one thing — optimistic, positive, forward-moving," Mr. Chiappa said. "It's like a feeling of future."

"The fried egg is the opposite," he continued. "It's the idea that this sort of perfect object — this object of all potential — has been sacrificed."

Ms. Werble described the show — which runs through Jan. 9 — as an "infestation": cheerful on the surface, with "something spreading underneath."

"It's dead," she added. "It's a fried egg. If you want to get into it, it's the end of life."

Mr. Chiappa, 44, who lives and works in Long Island City, Queens, said he tends to gravitate toward extremes in an effort to explore how an excess of something beautiful can become oppressive.

"I kind of take anything and turn it into a nightmare," he said. "I grew up Catholic, and I think I need somehow for the art to be painful — like real pain, not like hand-on-the-forehead, woe-is-me pain. I feel like artists have this real need to feel terrible.