

# Arts & Reviews

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## GALLERIES

## An unfinished look at the cycle of life

By Cate McQuaid

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

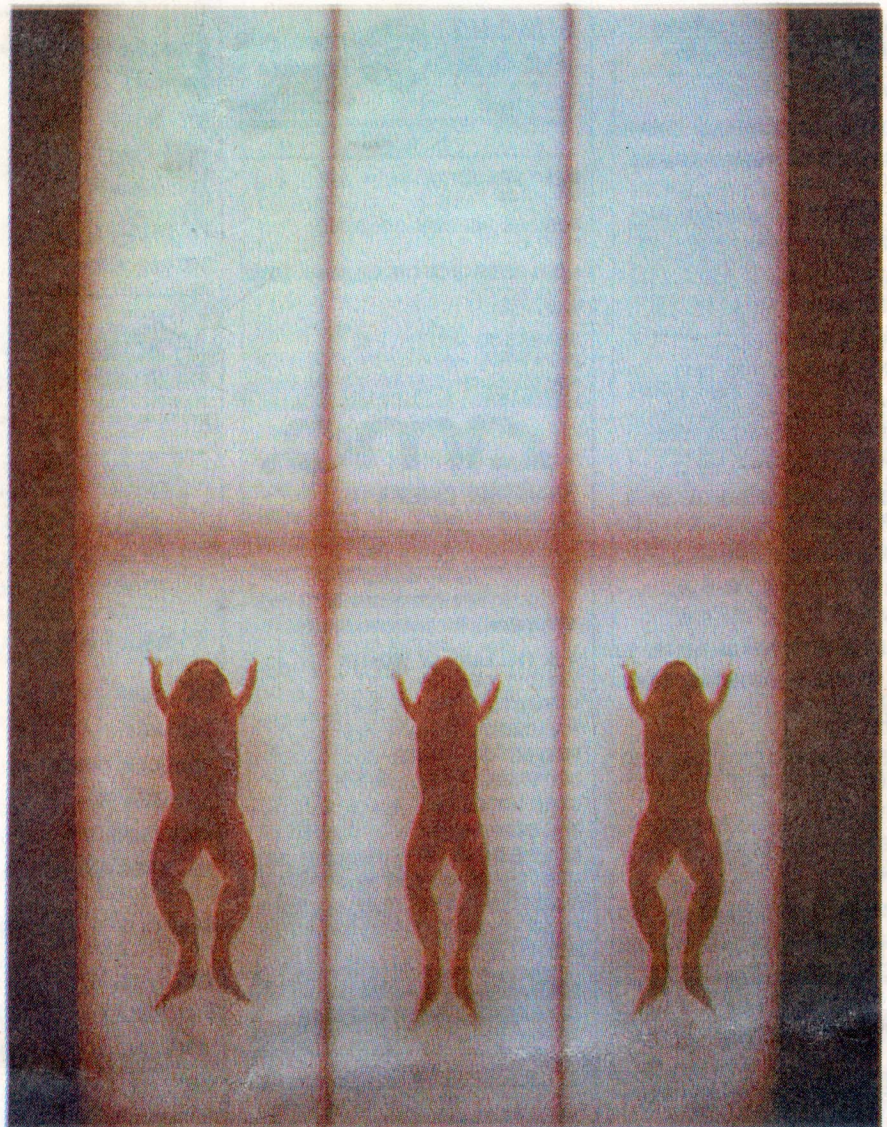
"Aging," Brian Knep's beautiful if unfinished show at the Judi Rotenberg Gallery, doesn't really address growing old, mortality, or physical decline. Instead he turns the wheel of the life cycle into visual poetry; there's no end and no beginning. The new-media artist has been developing this work during a two-year residence at Harvard Medical School, making videos of the life cycles of frogs.

His videos are run by computers, which subtly alter the image so you never see the same thing twice. "Frog Time" shows the little fellow morphing from giant-headed tadpole to frog and back as he ceaselessly swims across a grid. It's absorbing and frustrating to watch; the rush from infancy to adulthood and back fascinates, but the constant swimming through the grid is tedious, like the frog's version of a rat race. "Frog Path," a series of photos, has a stronger narrative arc — actually, two — but our intrepid hero is still as hapless as the rest of us.

Knep is known for his interactive work, and nothing in this show is yet interactive. The video "Frog Triplets," in which three morphing frogs appear side by side, as in the lanes of a swimming pool, is a work in progress that he hopes to make interactive; that would be intriguing. As it is, the constant evolution and devolution of his frogs is bittersweet as they race for the finish line.

**Brian Knep: Aging and  
Carmin Karasic: Handheld Histories  
as Hyper-Monuments**

At: Judi Rotenberg Gallery, 130 Newbury St.,  
through Saturday. 617-437-1518,  
judirotenberg.com



During a two-year residence at Harvard Medical School, Brian Knep shot videos of frogs that morph from tadpole to maturity and back in a kind of evolution and devolution. Above: "Frog Triplets."