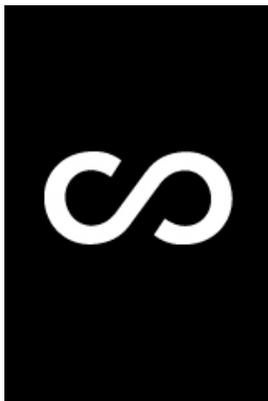


## SCENE & HERD

RECENT   ARCHIVE

- Sarah Lehrer-Graiw er and Jeff Hassay on the Ball of Artists
- Linda Yablonsky on Antony and the Johnsons at Radio City Music Hall
- Paul Galvez at Francesco Vezzoli's *24 h Museum*
- Andrew Berardini at Art Los Angeles Contemporary and the PST festival
- Piper Marshall on *The Last Word* at the Guggenheim
- Claudia La Rocco around the Association of Performing Arts Presenters conference



NEWS   PICKS   FILM

### Newest Headlines

- Wide White Space Wins 2012 Art Cologne Prize
- Gianfranco Pardi (1933–2012)
- Steven Holl to Design New Building for Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
- Henry Urbach Named Director of Glass House
- Mike Kelley (1954–2012)
- Dorothea Tanning (1910–2012)
- Lewis Biggs to Curate 2014 Folkestone Triennial
- Prado Finds Earliest Copy of *Mona Lisa*
- Massimiliano Gioni Named Curator of the 55th Venice Biennale

## Show and Tell

NEW YORK   03.31.08



Left: Hans-Ulrich Obrist, director of exhibitions and programs at the Serpentine, with artist Olafur Eliasson. Right: Stuart Shave director Jimi Lee with dealer Stuart Shave. (Except where noted, all photos: David Velasco)

Thursday morning, on the elevator ride up to the eleventh floor of midtown's Merchandise Mart tower for the preview of Volta NY, one prominent art dealer offered her appraisal of Pulse, another of the nine satellite fairs orbiting this year's Armory Show. "It's too pretty," she claimed. "Not enough grit."

Fairs can't get a break these days. Either they're untamable, Babylonian beasts or pat, familiar beats—cynical snapshots of the market or traveling circus museums. At least they seem to be making money, dire forecasts of a correction appearing, on the surface at least, to be premature. "This is the best Armory Show ever!" enthused Darren Flook, of London gallery Hotel, at one of the week's many dinners.

Many dealers expressed similar ardency at Volta, the Basel-based fair whose inaugural New York edition was organized by Amanda Coulson and Christian Viveros-Fauné. The fair, which mandated that each gallery exhibit the work of only one artist or collective, was easy enough to navigate. This didn't necessarily ensure better art, but at least there was a measure of civility to the affair. At Copenhagen's V1 Gallery, former photojournalist Peter Funch presented uncanny color photographs of pedestrians taken at various New York street corners—a bit like Bill Cunningham's photo essays interpreted by Philip-Lorca diCorcia. Around the bend, art collective International Festival was throwing a party (replete with confetti, smoke machine, and an open bar) at Fruit and Flower Deli. Are there any occasions left for sobriety? Deli co-owner Rodrigo Mallea Lira produced another of the artists' works, a receipt for three thousand dollars, equivalent to one month's rent at their Stanton Street location. "The artists are paying our rent for a year. It's about the love between an artist and their dealer," he noted. "You can buy the receipt for six thousand dollars."



Left: Kavi Gupta Gallery's Kristen VanDeventer with photographer Melanie Schiff. Right: Volta curator Christian Viveros-Fauné. (Photos: Brian Sholis)

Further downtown at Pulse, the art may indeed have been pretty, but the fair's new digs at Pier 40 were gloomy at best—spacious, true, but about as inviting as a parking garage. Still, a few welcome faces flecked the crowd. Photographer Paul Mpagi Sepuya held court at Envoy, standing kitty-corner from his new video project *Subject-Object proof #2*, and described his favorite fair attendee thus far: a cross-dressing Russian billionaire carrying a stuffed poodle escorted by an ex-KGB officer in full uniform. Dealer Edward Winkleman later clarified that the former was one of Pulse's sponsors, Malgorzata Romanska—"perhaps the best performance-art piece in a decade . . . if it is one." At Winkleman, Yevgeniy Fiks had a winsome installation featuring a series of earnest letters from various corporations responding to the artist's donation of a book, Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, to their corporate libraries. (From Wendy's, on declining the gift: "We . . . appreciate your thoughtfulness and have included a coupon for you to enjoy during your next visit . . .")

Over at USM Modular Furniture in SoHo, DAP was hosting the launch of Hans-Ulrich Obrist's series of slim artist-interview transcripts. Delayed by traffic, we missed architect Enrique Walker interviewing Obrist but arrived just in time to catch the start of Obrist's talk with artist Paul Chan. Thankfully, late was also fashionable; waves of curators (including MoMA's Barbara London, Roxana Marcoci, and Klaus Biesenbach) followed in our wake. Björk was already there, looking at home with socked feet propped up on the seat in front of her (the only empty chair in the house). Chan's an unassuming but articulate speaker, leaping handily from Hegel to Adorno to Valéry. Pointing to Henry Darger, Chan argued that "escape is a legitimate form of engagement" and then, a bit later, spoke against the "terrible connectedness" of our times. The talk's message, such that there was one, seemed to be: "Get lost." Sound advice, given the weekend's seemingly inexorable busyness. Afterward, artist Olafur Eliasson leaped up to give a surprise toast to Obrist. "I just want to thank Hans for all of his dedication to . . ." A champagne cork popped prematurely. Eliasson quickly finished, the other corks followed suit, and the party commenced.



Left: Artist Matthew Buckingham. Right: Performa director RoseLee Goldberg with curator Okwui Enwezor.

Sometimes the fairs sound less like cafeteria politics than street fighting. "If anyone asks me about the market, I'm going to head-butt them," boasted David Kordansky at an intimate dinner hosted by London galleries Stuart Shave and the Approach in an austere Chelsea loft. Food was small dishes prepared by the apartment's owner, a young disciple of celebrity chef Mark Hix: seafood-and-mashed-potato stew, pumpkin risotto. Plenty of artists and dealers were present: Collier Schorr, David Altmejd, and Ricky Swallow joined 303 Gallery's Lisa Spellman, Mari Spirito, and Barbara Corti, along with curator Clarissa Dalrymple, art consultant Rob Teeters, and others. Anticipating a busy weekend, I retired early.

Friday was all gray skies and blusters, a far cry from spring. Following a turbulent jaunt on a water taxi—during which Creative Time presented a film by Matthew Buckingham—I walked over to Harris Lieberman to catch the beginning of Thomas Zipp's opening. Zipp wasn't around, apparently off recuperating from the setup of his giant, canted wooden missiles before the dinner in his honor at Tribeca's Blau Gans. Around the corner at Maccarone, a massive crowd navigated Nate Lowman and Dan Colen's installation, a sprawling slacker paradise. Apparently, the artists hadn't quite finished the work. Lowman pointed to a long chain of chrome wheels: "Those are supposed to be standing, but we didn't want to kill anyone. It's not like we're Richard Serra or Christo." The show itself is something of a reprise of Lowman's manic installation at Peres Projects during the Athens Biennial last September. As is often the case, though, it wasn't all about the art. "I'm here to party!" hollered a young gallery lackey, while the Champs' golden tune "Tequila" blared from one of the works: a cream 1972 Jaguar XJ6 with California plates zealously cluttered with videos, wires, and ephemera. They're less Warhol's children than Richard Prince's, retooling the joke paintings into ebullient joke installations.

It seemed as though every dealer in town was there. Buried deep in the West Village, Maccarone is essentially international waters. Javier Peres was present, of course, but so were Tim Blum, David Zwirner, Anton Kern, Andrew Kreps, Jeffrey Deitch, Carol Greene, Gagosian's Sam Orlofsky, Gladstone's Maxime Falkenstein, and Massimo De Carlo—to name a few. An astute friend noted that the dealers simply smell Peres's involvement and think money. Soon the Rubell clan arrived, followed by Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, and the scene began to skew toward the absurd.



Left: Marianne Boesky's Annie Rana and Elisabeth Ivers at the Dark Fair. Right: Swiss Institute director Gianni Jetzer with assistant curator Piper Marshall and Ray.

Looking to augment the absurd with a taste of the surreal, I set off with a few friends to the Swiss Institute for the inaugural Dark Fair. Institute director Gianni Jetzer played bouncer, holding back a swarm of devoted art fans wrapping well around the block. Since most forms of electric and natural light were prohibited, the gallery upstairs was decked out with candles and black light, giving it the vibe of one of those caliginous chill-out rooms obligatory at raves in the '90s. A massage circle wouldn't have seemed out of place. Instead, wandering the aisles, I found Spencer Sweeney dressed up as a ghost selling forty-dollar dildo candles at Gavin Brown's "booth" and two Sue de Beer zoetropes (props from her video *The Quickening*) going for a few grand each at Marianne Boesky. Something for everyone, a friend enthused.

Afterward, we departed for the Rusty Knot, the freshly minted nautical-themed lounge featuring windows facing the Hudson—and the West Side Highway—where Lowman and Colen's dinner was winding down to the afterparty. The revelry continued on to Agathe Snow's capacious third-floor walk-up on the Lower East Side. Amid the derelict, beautiful space, Snow and the usual suspects lounged on the floor and danced ecstatically, while a small stereo played a song lifted from an old Kenneth Anger film. Strangely, there was no furniture—or belongings of any kind, really—to get in the way. A friend noted that the building had been sold to developers and that Snow and the other tenants were being evicted: the latest victims of the neighborhood's gentrification. Although I'd never been there before, I was flooded with a sudden, momentary mourning for the party, for a scene I never knew.

— David Velasco



Left: Fruit and Flower Deli director Rodrigo Mallea Lira. Right: Artist Nate Lowman.



Left: Dealer Ed Winkleman. Right: The Approach's Jake Miller and Emma Robertson.



Left: MM's Mathias Augustyniak and Michael Amzalag. Right: Dealer Yossi Milo.



Left: Artist Peter Funch. Right: Janice w with Dan Colen and Harriet.



Left: Artist Paul Mpagi Sepuya. Right: Artists Martha Friedman and Heather Row e.



Left: Dealer Kenny Schachter. Right: Voges + Partner's Susanne Schock and Friedrich Vater.



Left: Artist Megan Marrin with A-Ron Bondaroff. Right: I-20 director Paul Judelson.



Left: Critic Anthony Haden-Guest. Right: *Bidoun* editor in chief Lisa Farjam.



Left: Artist Cathy de Monchaux. Right: Artist Alex Dodge.



Left: Curator Francesco Stocchi with artist Jorge Peris. Right: Janice with Dash Snow and Secret.

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