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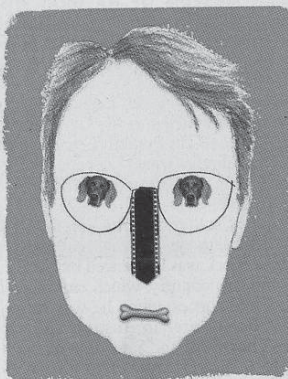


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CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK PUPPY LOVE

Beyond celebrating the world's leading Weimaraner wrangler, "William Wegman: Funney/Strange," at the Brooklyn Museum, is sneaky/great, conferring historical gravitas on a doyen



of phlegmatic clownery. Wegman, born in 1943, emerged around 1970 as a canny and droll post-minimalist with drawings, staged photographs, and videos that solemnly play out arbitrary premises. (A spotted hand lifts a slice of *cotto* salami from a plate on a spotted table.) His first dog, the sainted Man Ray (1970-82), collaborated in wide-ranging philosophical investigations. (What thought enables proper endurance of a cascade of flour? Man Ray's body language hazards "This, too, shall pass.") Over the past two decades, Wegman has made paintings that tease images from random marks or extrude imaginary worlds from collaged postcards—enlisting his unconscious like another sort of equable animal companion. His work traverses most of what inventive art has been about in our time with the hardly aware grace of a sleepwalker who dreams of Fred Astaire.

—Peter Schjeldahl

Futuristic fantasies of streamlined practicality aside, no other artist so thoroughly addresses the intersection of consumerism and community. Through April 29. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

170 Central Park W., at 77th St. (212-873-3400)—"Slavery in New York." Through March 26. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 6.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER

22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—Jessica Stockholder's installation "Of Standing Float Roots in Thin Air" is almost too well balanced. Through May 1. ♦ "Jessica Rankin: The Measure of Every Pause." Through May 1. ♦ "Wolfgang Tillmans: Freedom from the Known." Through May 29. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, noon to 6.)

UKRAINIAN MUSEUM

222 E. 6th St. (212-228-0110)—"The Tree of Life, the Sun, the Goddess: Symbolic Motifs in Ukrainian Folk Art." Through Sept. 30. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11:30 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Galleries are usually open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; please call the gallery for exact hours.

EMMET GOWIN

Although Gowin's new photographs are grounded in familiar subjects—the uncommon beauty of the natural world and of his wife, Edith—they are unlike any he's shown before. Several are unique, gold-toned prints on handmade paper, and they share an almost childlike sense of wonder in the marvellous variety of life. A dizzying profusion of tropical leaves and flying insects animate many of Gowin's images, sometimes gathered around backlit silhouettes of Edith and an antic cast of cutouts. The tangled time-lapse records of moths' flight patterns unravel like gossamer stitchery around her glowing head. Gowin's notes make clear that this paradise could be forever lost, but here, at least, it's found. Through April 1. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)

DAVID HAMMONS

A spare but informative survey spanning the years 1987 to 2004 showcases Hammons's visual puns. Zipper tabs in a mesh-covered jar are "flies," and a trio of old-fashioned microphones is titled "Which Mike Would You Like to Be Like?" The artist's long-standing interest in basketball as a symbolic art also appears, in a hoop and backboard made from a scrap-metal ring mounted on a car windshield, and a whitewashed chunk of tree trunk lying on the floor, a wire circle embedded in its side. The wall above this ghetto-surrealist artifact is marked with cloudy, round impressions made by a bounced ball, and beside the tree, like a guard, stands a tall African urn made of warm-toned reddish clay. Through April 1. (Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. 212-517-8677.)

KORI NEWKIRK

The L.A.-based artist's hanging sculpture "Glint," a cityscape made of artificial hair strung with pony beads, has been drawing notice as one of the few decorative pieces in the Whitney Biennial. Viewers intrigued by his use of that medium can see two more examples at the Project. A large open-ended box formed from undulating sheets of plastic beads is suspended from the ceiling in one room; its dreamy, chlorinated blues conjure a back-yard swimming pool in deep summer. Down the hall, a smaller wall hanging depicts a tree against sky, and three photographs further address themes of Edenic suburbia, racial identity, and social aspiration. Through March 24. (37 W. 57th St. 212-688-1585.)

ALEXEY TITARENKO

Born and based in St. Petersburg, Titarenko photographs his city as a ghost town, teeming with wraiths struggling to escape the pall of history. Long black-and-white exposures render people as little more than blurs or banks of fog on streets under pale winter light: a dim memory of human presence in a stolid landscape. Two black cats crouching at

the end of a snowy alleyway are more substantial than the crowds surging through many of the other images. Perhaps, Titarenko suggests, the true spirit of a city is ephemeral, and St. Petersburg is best captured in the steamy breath of past and present lives. Through April 1. (Nailya Alexander, 24 W. 57th St. 212-315-2211.)

Short List

PETER BEGLEY: Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 212-879-6606. Through April 29. **THIERRY DE CORDIER / PIERRE HUYGHE:** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 212-977-7160. Through April 8. **LOIS DODD:** Alexandre, 41 E. 57th St. 212-755-2828. Through April 1. **YVONNE JACQUETTE:** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. 212-247-2111. Through April 22. **FRANCIS PICABIA:** Michael Werner, 4 E. 77th St. 212-988-1623. Through April 15. **TOM WESSELMANN:** L & M, 45 E. 78th St. 212-861-0020. Through April 15. **FRED WILSON:** PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 212-421-3292. Through April 15.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

SIMEN JOHAN

In most of Johan's previous photographs, children's fanciful, terrifying inner lives were made disconcertingly real through digital manipulation of actual and imaginary people, places, and things. Animals—just as uncanny but mostly far more domesticated—are the subject of his excellent new photos and taxidermy-based sculptures. A pair of white owls perch together on a picnic table in the fog and two foxes sit side by side in the snow—contented couples at peace with nature. But two moose butt magnificent heads in a piece the size of a history painting (and the closest thing to a Walton Ford painting in the room), while chartreuse parakeets buzz them from all sides. Through April 1. (Milo, 525 W. 25th St. 212-414-0370.)

JENNIFER AND KEVIN MCCOY

The McCoys do nifty things with video cameras, mirrors, and miniature film sets, although at times their Laurie Simmons-meets-David Lynch formula seems to be wearing thin. In "Dream Sequence," tiny male and female doppelgängers for the artists sleep in their beds while a miniature set rotates behind them, captured by cameras and projected onto the wall, suggesting other, unconscious worlds. "Double Fantasy II" uses a similar setup, with tiny figures representing the artists. Here they're nine-year-olds "dreaming" via projected images about their adult lives. The references to film and media theory and psychoanalysis are, as always, impeccable, but the McCoys' techno-kitsch aesthetic comes with risks—mostly that it evokes a toy-railroad tableau commandeered by a precocious prepubescent tinkering in a suburban basement. Through April 8. (Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. 212-727-3323.)

KELLEY WALKER

Walker represents the second—possibly the third—generation of appropriation, in which artists have to dig a little deeper into image culture to make a statement but can also circle back to movements, like Abstract Expressionism, that their progenitors would have considered exhausted. Civil-rights-era photographs are printed on canvas and splattered with chocolate; fashion spreads and vintage advertisements are squirted with toothpaste and rephotographed; Michael Jackson's infamous arrest photo is enlarged and duplicated. Walker stakes much on the images chosen, from the racially charged to the culturally dissipated. He's also borrowed an old painting trick, turning many of the images on their sides, to see if, upended, their impact registers differently. Through March 25. (Cooper, 521 W. 21st St. 212-255-1105.)

Short List

SEBASTIAAN BREMER: Roebing Hall, 606 W. 26th St. 212-929-8180. Through March 25. **TOMORY DODGE:** CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-