

DIARY

Anthony Haden-Guest's NEW YORK



From prime-time TV to *Bed-Stuy*: Dana James has opened a gallery in Brooklyn's hippest spot

Williamsburg is over

The Brooklyn neighbourhood Bedford-Stuyvesant ("Bed-Stuy" to street-smart New Yorkers) is increasingly attracting art-world types for whom Williamsburg has got a bit too pricey. One recent arrival is Dana James, who opened the Elgin Gallery in a former hair-braiding salon to show established and Outsider artists as well as under-represented locals. James, who grew up in Tribeca and is the daughter of the artist Lizbeth Mitty, supported herself as a freelance make-up artist, working on magazines such as *Vanity Fair* and *Interview* and the TV programme *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*. The gallery's first show, which opened last September, included work by Mitty as well as James, plus – continuing the parental dynamic – pieces by the artist R.M. Fischer and his daughter Dena Paige Fischer. Coming up is a show of two Outsiders: John Drury, who works with found objects, and Ionel Talpazan, who arrived in New York from Romania in 1987. Talpazan believes he saw a UFO as a child, and has made flying saucers, often bisected like Damien Hirst's cow sculptures, throughout his career. An admission: I bought a piece by Talpazan in an East Village thrift store not long ago and have been popping into thrift stores to find more ever since.

East Village explosion

I'm not given to devoting space to my own doings, but I'm making an exception for the show of paintings by Peggy Cyphers and Ford Crull (until 17 March) at the Roger Smith Hotel on Lexington Avenue. It's no coincidence that both artists went into lift-off back in the days of the East Village, the last concentrated explosion of raw energy in the Manhattan art world before the big money rolled in. Cyphers showed at Stefan Eins's Fashion Moda in 1984 and Crull at Vox Populi. Colin de Land's first gallery, the following year. The

work of both artists still pulses with that energy, a sense of restless seeking that differentiates it from the huge derivative works that occupy so many galleries in the art world of the 1%, like fat yachts in safe harbours. I'm delighted to have played a part in putting the show together.

Milton's paradise retained

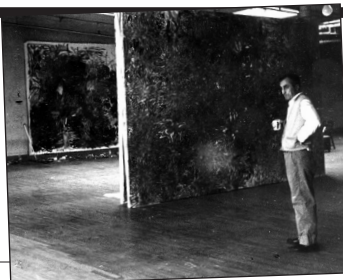
The story goes that someone was looking at one of Milton Resnick's thicker paintings and asked how much all the pigment cost. "A thousand dollars on the canvas," the late artist reportedly said. "And three thousand on the floor." Resnick was one of the original Abstract Expressionists and has an enduring reputation. The Milton Resnick and Pat Passlof Foundation, which is also named after his late wife, aims to build on it. "We have 25 paintings in what I guess you would call the core collection," says Geoffrey Dorfman, a trustee of the foundation, which is in the artist's former home and studio on Eldridge Street, on the Lower East Side. The foundation has funding – and big plans. "We have money to fix the building," says Dorfman, who was a student at Syracuse University when Resnick was a visiting artist there. "And we have money to get started. The fourth floor is going to have rotating exhibitions. We're going to have two shows a year of other people's work, and we'll have visiting curators." Dorfman is determined to boost the profile of painting in the city. "We want this to be a place that people who love painting come to," he says. "In New York, painting has taken a back seat. We want to present a long-range view: not just the past year or two, but people who have really invested their lives in this." And fans of Resnick's work can rest assured that those 25 key pieces aren't going anywhere. "We are not going to sell them unless it's to a place like the Tate," Dorfman says. "And we have a great many smaller works. He was a workhorse. He only came up for air to eat."



"Workhorse" Resnick, with dog (and wife) in tow



Pulsing with restless energy: Ford Crull's *Third Stone*, 2013



When asked how much the pigment in his paintings cost, Milton Resnick replied: "A thousand dollars on the canvas. And three thousand on the floor"

Louisa Buck's LONDON



Hamilton: king of calypso

Was there anything Richard Hamilton couldn't do? As a spate of exhibitions devoted to the polymath Pop-art pioneer opens across the capital, it emerges that the great man, in addition to being an all-round zeitgeist barometer, could also pen a mean calypso. His musical gift was revealed at the opening of the Institute of Contemporary Arts' re-creation of *An Exhibit*, 1957 (the hanging maze of Perspex sheets created by Hamilton with his fellow Independent Groupers Victor Pasmore and Lawrence Alloway), when guests were treated to a spirited rendition of "An Exhibit Calypso", performed by the veteran calypso singer Alexander D. Great nearly six decades after Hamilton composed the ditty to mark the unveiling of the work. There was much toe-tapping from Nick Serota, Pet Shop Boys god Neil Tennant and Hamilton's son Rod to such unforgettable lines as "the catalogue costs half a crown/Because it's printed upside down", not to mention entreaties to visitors to "come and test your reflexes/And find out what real Perspex is". Indeed, so catchy was the tune that Tate Modern supremo Chris Dercon couldn't resist quoting the lyrics at the dinner to celebrate his gallery's Hamilton retrospective (until 26 May). He refrained from singing, but did note that, while this year's catalogue is rather more expensive, at least it's printed the right way up.



Messrs Serota and Dercon were enchanted by Alexander D. Great

London is being treated to a George Condo double-whammy this month, with two exhibitions that also stand as chilling and highly personal memento mori. The dark and deeply disquieting ink drawings on show at Skarstedt Gallery (until 5 April) were created during the excessively hard-living period just before Condo's near-fatal brush with Legionnaires' disease last year, while the vividly coloured, gurning, fractured portrait heads over at Simon Lee's space (until 22 March) were created in its aftermath, and apparently owe their air of delirium to the memory of his hospital-bed hallucinations. After downing the abundant chilli cocktails at the shared after-party at hip hangout Nobu,



Paloma Faith and George Condo partied hard at Nobu: could she be the artist's new muse?

everyone present seemed to morph into one of Condo's shrieking fiends – and the fully recovered artist, partying with the best of them, was particularly happy to make the acquaintance of Paloma Faith, who rocked up with the music producer (and Condo collector) Nellee Hooper. An accomplished musician himself, Condo has already made his mark on the music biz with his notorious quintet of covers for Kanye West's "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy" album: who knows what fantasies he might have in mind for our soulful Stoke Newington chanteuse?

Stump up for sculpture

Megan Piper is not yet 30 years old but already has a reputation for showing work that's ripe for reassessment. The Piper Gallery in Fitzrovia championed older artists who had dipped under the radar, and her latest project also aims to bring hidden works to light. She describes the Line (www.the-line.org) as a "world-class sculpture walk" linking the Olympic Park in Stratford to the O2 in North Greenwich; the four-mile route will host up to 30 Modern and contemporary works, submitted by UK galleries, collectors and artists who have pieces stashed away. "The amount of art that is out of sight in artists' studios and gallery storage is quite astonishing," Piper says. Mark Wallinger, who will sit on the selection panel, describes the idea as "simple but brilliant"; other fans include the Oscar-winning director Danny Boyle and the athlete Christine Ohuruogu. But the project has no public funding and time is tight: the submissions deadline is 14 March and the route is scheduled to open in July. A £150,000 crowdfunding campaign has been launched for the first phase, but £3m is needed to cover the three-year scheme. So dig deep – in your crates and your pockets – so that art-loving Londoners can walk the line.



Piper dream: Megan is working with Mark Wallinger on a sculpture walk



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