

The New York Times

Art & Design

6 Galleries to Visit Now in TriBeCa, SoHo and the West Village

By WILL HEINRICH APRIL 27, 2017

Ivan Karp's gallery OK Harris, which he opened in 1969, lasted on lower West Broadway until 2014, but by the end it was a stranger in a strange land, surrounded by fashion boutiques, watering holes and cigar stores. Pearl Paint, the beloved budget art supply depot, is gone, too.

But now, thanks to the unpredictable hyperactivity of New York real estate, these neighborhoods of beautiful cast-iron buildings and discreet foreign oligarchs are being quietly recolonized by the people who put them on the map. Alexander and Bonin, which spent nearly two decades in Chelsea, moved down to Walker Street last year, two blocks north of Postmasters, which moved in 2013.

New galleries are opening, too, like Lubov, a tiny second-floor space in an office building on Broadway.

There are also those places that, despite the boutiques and the tourists, never left, like the Dia Foundation, with its long-term installation of Walter De Maria's "Broken Kilometer," in SoHo since 1979, and Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, which has been holding down the bottom of Mercer Street for 35 years.

TriBeCa

APEXART Bob Snodgrass has been blowing glass since 1971, specializing in marijuana pipes, as he explains in a charming short documentary attached to "Outlaw Glass," an exhibition at this [gallery](#) organized by the marijuana writer David Bienenstock. He first sold the pipes outside Grateful Dead concerts. Several cases here of elaborate, brightly colored pipes made by Mr. Snodgrass's spiritual descendants, while fascinating, tend toward the showy or grotesque, like a jar of green pickle-shaped pipes by Elbo, or "Smokin Sasquatch," an intricate, smokable man-beast holding a joint of his own, by Coyle. (Artists of paraphernalia for what is still mostly an illegal product tend to go by nicknames.) While Mr. Snodgrass also does skulls and dragons, most of his pipes, made from clear, wavy glass and colored with mists of molten silver, look like delicate, lovely instruments borrowed from an elfin orchestra.

SoHo

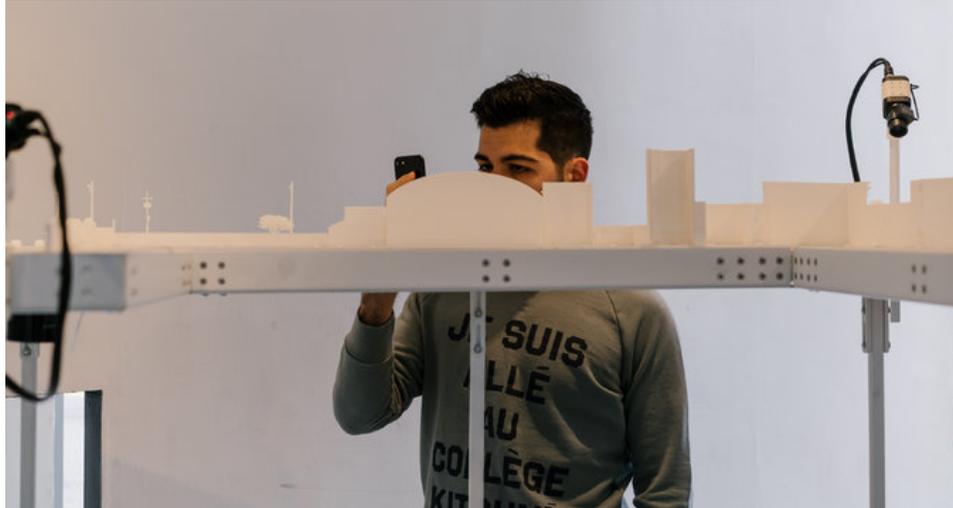
A detail from Mel Bochner's "Drool," part of his show "Voices," at Peter Freeman Inc. in SoHo. Credit Jake Naughton for The New York Times

PETER FREEMAN INC. The text paintings in Mel Bochner's latest show, "Voices," are big, colorful and, with the exception of a hand-lettered but breezy philosophical exegesis of what Cézanne meant by "truth in painting," made with stamps. Onomatopoeias abound in the works [here](#), as do exclamation points. "SQUAWK!," for example, is a nine-foot-high list of white-on-blue noises from the title on down through HISS!, HOOT! and HOLLER! to BELCH! More than one canvas includes terms this newspaper chooses not to print. But in these works the lettering's most important feature is its drips: Because Mr. Bochner's use of paint is exactly as messy and exuberant as his language, the paintings achieve the unusual feat of being conceptual but not too cerebral, readable in an instant but robust enough for sustained viewing.



“Green Parrot Fish,” center, by Isabel Cooper, in the show “Exploratory Works: Drawings From the Department of Tropical Research Field Expeditions,” at the Drawing Center. Credit Jake Naughton for The New York Times

THE DRAWING CENTER “Exploratory Works: Drawings From the Department of Tropical Research Field Expeditions” sets the scene with old magazine articles and comic books; imaginative field-station re-creations by Mark Dion; a few tagged animal corpses as neat and compact as folding umbrellas; and a palmetto fan taken undersea in his bathysphere by the celebrity scientist William Beebe (1877-1962), whose field work is the subject of [this exhibition](#). It’s all delightful but not strictly necessary, because the best of the illustrations have it all: the adventurous synthesis of scientific and aesthetic wonder, the precise observation and detail, and the slightly bitter aftertaste of cheerfully obtuse latter-day colonialism. That sense of wonder is especially vivid in the watercolors by Isabel Cooper and Helen Damrosch Tee-Van, which include, among others, a golden lizard with hundreds of tiny scales, a quail-like bird in the former British Guiana and a black marmoset sticking out its tongue.



A view of "Control Syntax Rio," at Storefront for Art and Architecture in SoHo. Credit Jake Naughton for The New York Times

STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE Half the fun of any exhibition at this nonprofit [gallery](#) is the space itself, a wedge-shaped street-level hallway entered through irregular folding panels. The other half, this time, is "Control Syntax Rio," a chilling presentation on the Centro de Operações Rio, or COR, a seven-year-old system of sensors and surveillance cameras blanketing the hilly Brazilian city famous for its inequality that hosted last summer's Olympic Games. On a shoulder-high series of square platforms filling the space almost entirely, 3-D-printed models of city blocks and streets are surveilled by actual (that is, ordinary size) cameras with red lights. Though the exhibition text presents the system as neutral — a futuristic boon to traffic management as much as a potential instrument of authoritarianism — the whole handsome but uncomfortable installation feels more like an urgent warning.



From left, “Mancha,” “Elision” and “Sonámbulo,” by Ernesto Burgos, from the exhibition “One Thing After Another,” at Kate Werble Gallery in SoHo. Credit Jake Naughton for The New York Times

KATE WERBLE GALLERY Ernesto Burgos’s sculptures in “One Thing After Another” — loops and whirls of cardboard treated with resin and sandwiched in fiberglass — look something like interesting accidents of crumpled paper writ large. Resting [here](#) on open pedestals made of raw plywood, they range from four feet tall to as high as six. The unconsidered drips and scrawls of paint with which this Chilean artist covers them might seem self-indulgent, but they give the surfaces a visual texture that subtly complicates their kitchen-sink topology while also making it easier to follow. In “Hiraeth,” for example, a yellow-green color gives tidal force to a broad, overhanging curve, while a steeply angled darker stroke swings across like a surfer before cutting back.

West Village

“Red Veils,” by Sarah Charlesworth, in the exhibition “Natural Magic,” at Maccarone. Credit Jake Naughton for The New York Times

MACCARONE [Sarah Charlesworth’s](#) impeccable series “[Natural Magic](#),” which dates to 1993 but hasn’t been shown in its entirety in the United States since, uses the handmade, willfully old-fashioned tricks of stage magic as metaphors for analog photography, and vice versa. Made up of 11 lusciously matte Cibachrome prints in lacquered oval frames, the photos show such isolated tropes as a levitating woman; playing cards falling through the air; and a spread of bent silver spoons and forks. All — except a candle whose seven flames were done with multiple exposures — Charlesworth constructed in the studio and photographed, as if for a high-end catalog of artistic effects, on black. Self-contained, open-ended and very serious about being funny, the photos are models of art’s power to illuminate the nature of language and perception with a narrow focus on its own analogous mechanisms.

A version of this review appears in print on April 28, 2017, on Page C20 of the New York edition with the headline: A Return to Downtown

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