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## Photography

### What's NEW in NYC Photo?

By Carl Gunhouse

Wednesday, March 26, 2008

#### Hasted Hunt

529 W 20th St. 3rd Fl. Btw. 10th & 11th Aves.

**Paolo Ventura**, *Winter Stories*

I never fully grasped the photographing of dioramas with miniature figurines. Strike that, I do enjoy both **Sarah Anne Johnson** and **David Levinthal**'s photographs, but they both create an illusion that acknowledges that the viewer is looking at objects that have been photographed.

Ventura, on the other hand, creates a world so meticulous that the images become stand-ins for an animated film that never existed, stand-ins that do little to capture the narrative content of the non-existent film. The photographs are no more than finely crafted set pieces.

Through Apr. 12th

[Hasted Hunt](#)

Elizabeth Dee Gallery

545 W 20th St. 10th & 11th Aves.

**Adrian Piper**, *'Everything'*

A.K.A., Everything will be taken away, which is written on everything in the show. It's at times like this I have a hard time not quoting seminal, late eighties hardcore punk rock gods Judge, from the Storm II and I quote, "...There will be quiet, after the storm...(insert menacing hardcore music here)...No more black, No more white, No more traps, No more barriers...(insert more menacing hardcore music)...There will be quiet..."

Yup, that about sums up Everything. Oh, and there is a video in the back of the gallery that reduces identity art to an extended game of Asteroids. Humorous yes, intentional no.

Through Apr. 19th

[Elizabeth Dee Gallery](#)

Taxter & Spengemann

504 W 22nd St. Btw. 10th & 11th Aves.

**Lutz Bacher**

Not sure what to make of Lutz Bacher's show, but I think I like it. The first floor is made up of what appears to be vintage photographs from Vietnam of American soldiers and other things you might find in a show of vernacular pictures from Vietnam: a guy in a helicopter, Vietnamese couple with an AK-47, and an angry guy in a beret talking on the phone.

Each comes with a hand-written note describing the significance of the picture. Upstairs is a selection of prints made from cropping an image of a reclining sailor reclining with a swastika sunburned onto his chest, surrounded by other shirtless sailors. There is also a video of contemporary 30-something guys goofing off in the hull of a boat.

A little puzzled? Well, so am I.

Are these real vernacular pictures? If so they certainly lack the quality often found at the haven of vernacular works **Steven Kasher** Gallery. Are the notes real? If so, they are a tad hard to read and are rather banal. Is the sunburned swastika real? And if so, why an entire room of differently cropped verisons? And what does any of this have to with the video, outside of a vague nautical theme?

You got me. All that Bacher offers up as an explanation is what could be my favorite press release ever, a piece of paper with the title of the show and in blue cursive hand writing, what I think is "I Love You... Saltee." I am at a complete loss to explain my fascination, but Bacher has me engaged, so my hat's off to him and for finally presenting a press release as interesting as the work itself.

Through Mar. 29th

Taxter and Spengemann

Yancey Richardson Gallery

535 W 22nd St. Btw. 10th & 11th Aves.

**Pello Irazu**, *Home*

**Kenneth Josephson**, *Postcard Visits*

Photographs of sculptures of red and brown boxes on stools? Then more boxes of red and tan painted onto the photographs. Yeah, Pello Irazu! The art going public can always use one more scultographer.

Luckily, the Project Room is a selection of the ever-underappreciated Kenneth Josephson with a selection of familiar (to some) pictures of his hand holding up postcards of a place in that place. A slight, but amusing gesture underlining the fallacy of truth in images, especially those that are peddled to tourists. All taken in a time when conceptualism in photography was new and its intelligence wasn't always so dour.

Through Mar. 29th

Yancey Richardson

Peter Hay Halpert Gallery  
511 W 25th St. Suite 306 Btw. 10th & 11th Aves.  
**Martine Fougeron**, *Tete-a-Tete*

At first glance, *Tete-a-Tete* is another slick, glossy show in a never-ending string of slick, glossy shows at Peter Hay Halpert involving attractive, partially nude young people. Pictures of pristine examples of young teen boys doing what young teen boys do... shirtless; frolic, lounge, toss their floppy hair, all the while floating in a highly controlled and commercially lit setting.

It seems pretty par for the course at Peter Hay Halpert and/or an Abercrombie & Fitch catalogue. But on closer inspection of the press release, you learn these are Fougeron's sons and their friends, making the work either worse or better depending on your point of view of things.

Through Apr. 12th  
[PHP Fine Art](#)

Clamp Art  
521-531 W 25th St. Btw. 10th & 11th Aves.  
**Brian Finke**, *Flight Attendants*

Wow, this is the second time I've found myself in a Brian Finke show completely impressed yet oblivious of who Brian Finke is. His first big body of work was of cheerleaders, not terribly impressive, documentary pictures with a tendency to wallow in an over-saturated color palate.

The second show was straightforward pictures of body builders, with a selection of images that were more precise. The body builders were presented as people, but people who had done something entirely unnatural to themselves and existed in a world of complete darkness, lush curtains, and shiny trophies. Finke's palate relied on spray tans and a strong flash to create saturation.

Well, he is back with an odder yet more familiar world, that of the airplane flight attendant. His best picture is of a relaxed, but focused flight attendant battling an impressive plume of gray smoke with a slightly pinkish red base that comes billowing out of an overhead compartment. If you find the vacant smiles and tightly bunned hairdos of flight attendants unnerving, it is downright bizarre watching them in training, battling fake dangers, yet bizarre in a very pleasant, thank-you-for-flying-with-us kind of way.

Finke's pictures are by nature traditional and familiar, but his vision of the world or the way he, as John Szarkowski once wrote, "tells us something we didn't already know," (we are/or I am, weirded out by flight attendants) is totally original.

Show Ended Mar. 22nd  
[Clamp Art](#)

Yossi Milo Gallery  
525 W 25th St. Btw. 10th & 11th Aves.  
**Muzi Quawson**, *Pull Back The Shade*

Photographs that are the visual equivalent of watching **Justine Kurland** listen to *Animal Collective* at McCarron Pool. Which isn't to say the show is necessarily bad, it just caters to a certain taste, namely one that is on Insound's mailing list and even then it might be too unbearably hip.

The show creates a vague narrative of the life of a young mother with a passing resemblance to Chan Marshall. She spends lots of time wondering around New York in a malaise of shallow depth of field and sensual light, occasionally cavorting with her young daughters, one of whom appears jarringly naked except for a neck brace.

Oh, and there is a guy with a neck tattoo. As appealing as many of these pictures are, it is hard not to feel like you're stuck on the outside of a world you'd have no interest in being part of in the first place.

Through Mar. 29th  
**Yossi Milo**