

Derosia

John Belknap, Frieze, June 23, 2022

FRIEZE

Sam Lipp's Tasteful Titellations

At Derosia, the artist presents a body of work that stirs both our commercial and corporeal desires.

by John Belknap



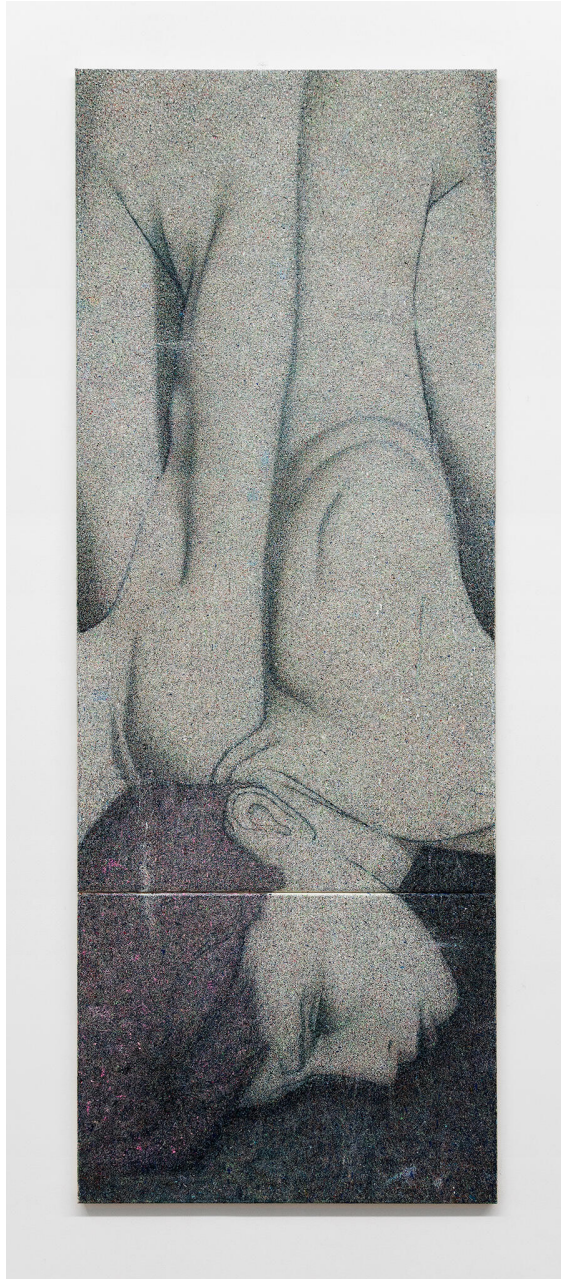
Sam Lipp, *Pollution twink*, 2022, oil on steel and screws, 48 × 58 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Derosia Gallery, New York

The adorable youth in Sam Lipp's self-portrait *Pornocracy* (2021) titillates, tastefully. Better, maybe: he fascinates by plumbing the aesthetics of pornography. Sam's lips spread open. A few teeth peek out from his misty mouth, and to the left glows the underside of his white button nose. Above these, a single shut eye: a lone black crack in the smooth surface of his face, which resembles a ball of brioche dough. It folds limply into his armpit where his left tricep meets his ribcage. Further down, towards his waist, you'll soon discover his awesome arse slope. The fleshy arch appears at the canvas's centre, disappearing again off its right-hand edge.

Lately, Lipp has taken to regularly depicting dough-faced rent boys. For his solo show at Derosia, 'Leaving the Factory', Lipp hunts and gathers images of youthful male hustlers from print magazines and websites. Once niche, the assortment of gay imagery he culls from is now instantly accessible to us, thanks to the way pornography governs our parasocial, post-internet lives. Anyone with a camera can transform into a pornstar. Perhaps this is what is meant by the title of Lipp's two self-portraits, *Pornocracy* and *Pornocracy 2* (2022). Both paintings are characterized by a humourless intent to turn the self into a porn star in order to stimulate something erotic. Both self-portraits capture Lipp arse up, split open off-frame, begging to be (ful)filled.

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Sam Lipp, *Pornocracy 2*, 2022, oil on steel 168 × 61 × 2 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Derosia Gallery, New York

The rent boys Lipp has painted and drawn for works in this exhibition include reproductions from all sorts of archives. The artist's sources range from vintage Eastern European smut (*Pollution twink*, 2022), personal ads from RentMen.com (*Sortie de l'Usine*, 2020), and the artist's own in-person encounters, as evinced by works such as *Patrick's Chest* (2022). The latter is a pencil-on-steel drawing that depicts a twink's towering concave torso. *Patrick's Chest* is sculpted by thousands of shiny crosshatches and shows off Lipp's assiduous eye for detail. On *Patrick's chest* are two misaligned nipples, a belly button and the tip of an elastic waistband. There is no logo on this underwear, so here the man's body becomes the brand – it's not his undergarments but his exposed body that stirs both our commercial and corporeal desires.

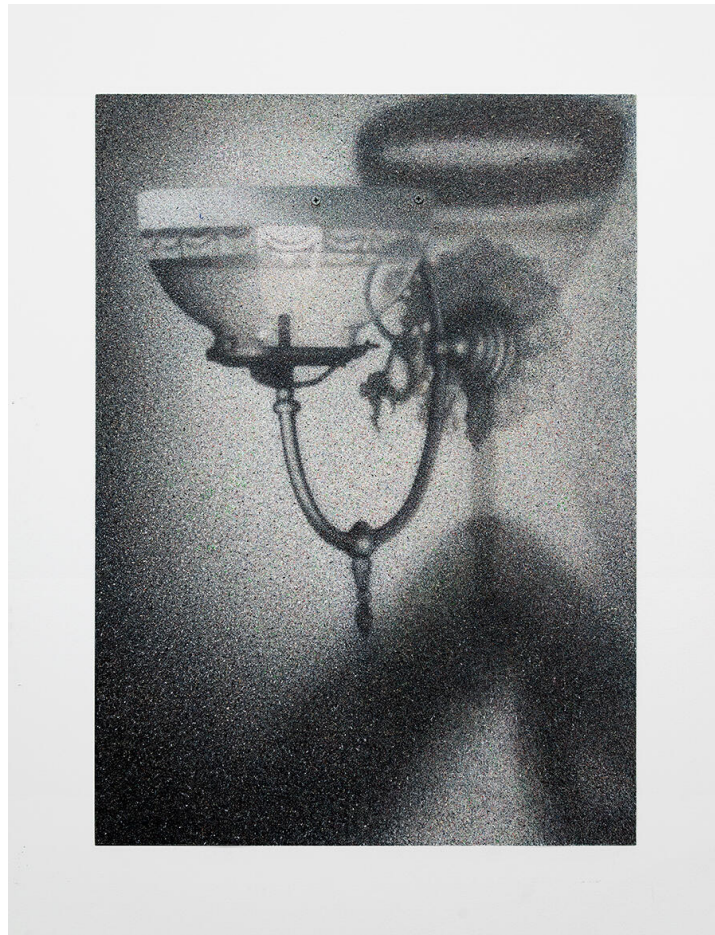
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Alongside the images of men are paintings of a lamp (*Gaslight*, 2021–22), and a series of works that reference the form of road signs. The signs hang from screws drilled directly into the gallery wall; most come as up-pointing triangles painted in speckled neon pink and silver. While driving, it's common to pull up and slowdown in response to a down-pointing triangular sign that signals 'YIELD'. Conversely, an up-pointing triangle road sign screams '!', meaning a danger point approaches. One can only wonder whether the reverse of a YIELD sign, like Lipp's pink-triangle painting (which shares its title with that of the exhibition), might be one that says 'COME!'

The signs, like several of their counterpart pieces depicting rent boys, are painted in layers on steel sheets. These layers are applied via flicks of a steel-wool paintbrush, giving the images a digital, bitmap/retro pointillist feel. Several of Lipp's blissed-out boys you've probably seen around before. They are the boys who can give you that same old blood rush with just a new kind of touch. As a matter of fact, give a rent boy a few hundred bucks and they'll serve you anything you want, from the most surreal fantasies to the ultimate boyfriend experience. Pornocracy promises so much.

Sam Lipp's 'Leaving the Factory' is on view at Derosia, New York, until 25 June.



Sam Lipp, *Gaslight*, 2021–2022, oil and prismatic film on steel and screws, 74 × 53 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Derosia Gallery, New York

Contemporary Art Writing Daily

Monday, June 27, 2022

Sam Lipp at Derosia, New York



The inherent eroticism of painting was somehow lost along the way. To reconstruct a person by wiping their visage with oiled sable, a recreation of them. Painting someone's portrait: totally cool; building a doll of them: yikes dawg. But Rembrandt's auto-erotica is bonkersly weird. Just because you were trained to masturbate really well doesn't mean 8 hours of masturbation is normal. Getting paid for it at least makes it a job. To really see someone's every inch. That's why you pay for it. But then Painting got big and abstract and screechingly seminal to repress the fay quiet of portraitists and Morandi. And then finally, Richter who embalmed it. But the point being Lipp attempts returning some of the erotics with a labor intensive painting process - a becoming-xerox-machine through sweat, and which these things do, sweat. An erotics similar to early Matthew Barney bdsm drawing restraints, drawing hindered with a jockstrap homoerotic hefting. The hindering provides the sweat to dew on the surface, the lip of Richter's corpse.

SPIKE

PARIS

Sam Lipp
"Incest"

Bonny Poon
28 March–5 April 2019

Bonny Poon gallery is perched on the 26th floor of the Tour Rubis, which is one of the many residential towers in Paris' 13th arrondissement that embody the Manhattanist schizophrenia that the city experienced under the presidency of Georges Pompidou in the early 70s. Elevated superhighways and high-rise condominiums were to reify the economical apex of the Glorious Thirty after World War II, that is, until this pharaonic project, which aimed at transforming Paris into Epcot, was

brutally stopped by Pompidou's successor Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and his architectural favorite Ricardo Bofill. The tower is the stillborn child of French modernity whose architectural icons are the monotonous Monoprix, well described by Michel Houellebecq, that hosts Paris's most Kool-Aid artistic program. Founded in 2017, Bonny Poon proposes a unique assemblage of synthetic-pop hermeticism with an anti-radical chic attitude. Sam Lipp's exhibition, "Incest", the last occurring in this location, is a stringent manifestation of the gallery's appetite for *Fantasia* and Greer Lankton-esque figures.

Installed with the straightforwardness of a bullet's path in a dealer's

head, *2746782FH008_jacko_po* (2019) is an oil reproduction of Michael Jackson's mugshot taken on November 20, 2003, after the police arrested the singer on child-molestation charges. It is the only work in the gallery's living room and it challenges the viewer with his gaze, which seems to be loaded with an irreconcilable mixture of innocence, guilt, and vertiginous despair. A recurring motif in Lipp's work, the emaciated traits and the over-dilated pupils of the forever-child of American pop, but this one is owned by Getty Images – or at least, it is what its watermark wants us to believe. The company is known for watermarking and selling pictures belonging to the public domain such as



Photos: Romain Darmaud

View of Sam Lipp, "Incest",
Bonny Poone, Paris, 2019
Left: *2746782FH008_jacko_po*, 2019
Oil on steel, 46 x 34 cm

SPIKE

PARIS

footage from the Holocaust. This image, as well as the other pictures taken from Jackson's judiciary odyssey, are now subjected to an Olympic volatility: one can purchase waterproof stickers, wall art, beach towels, and wallets with Jackson's mugshot. But if Lipp's gesture could be akin to a Warholian pop martyrology, it is in the transformation of Michael Jackson into one of the most powerful modern-day taboos, as the title of the show seems to suggest. Considered as an artwork in itself, the exhibition scrutinises desire and the production of taboos as an ultimate and universal principle of social organisation. Indeed, incest and to a lesser extent, pedophilia are the supreme alterity against which human

organisation structures itself. Biological or social? Epigenetic or moralistic? No one is able to source the mother of all interdictions, a sulfurous luxury that can only be enjoyed at a certain height by the Hellenistic gods. In that regard, *Coffin (After Jade)* (2019) suspends any resolution and lets us muse in front of a bathtub whose water is about to overflow. It is encircled by a bottle of Dr. Hauschka water essence and a fading portrait of Charlize Theron posing in a J'adore Dior perfume ad, which were not originally part of the installation but left intentionally in place. Alluding to the artist Jade Kuriki Olivo's transition from male to female, this work nods at the symbolism of the cleansing process

as an equivocal site of purification that often conceals the social obligation of making oneself legible to the collective gaze. A gaze that can also convert intimacy into a valuable social currency as *IMG_0818 (January 3, 2017)* (2019) suggests. This bottom-view selfie of Lipp was used as the main communication material for the show on social media along with a clip from Taylor Swift's ethereal video *Delicate (Vertical Version)* (2018).

"Ash is our purest form" as the late Lil Peep taught us. "Incest" seems to critically indulge this maxim in linking the idea of immaculate perfection to an eschatological horizon.

Charles Teyssou



Sam Lipp, *Coffin (After Jade)*, 2019

Bathtub, sink, water, dimensions variable



Civic Duty

Cell Project Space London 6 June to 21 July

'Civic Duty' brings together the work of four excellent artists from different generations: Adrian Piper (b1948), Donald Rodney (1961-1998), Carolyn Lazard (b1987) and Sam Lipp (b1989). In and of itself, the selection is worth making the trip to Cell Project Space. Although this is not foregrounded in the display, these artists all experienced some form of marginalisation in their lives, because of their sexuality, skin colour or health status (or all three combined). Much of their output can be placed at that delicate juncture where the individual collides with the institution and opts to push back with a mixture of wit and carefully controlled rage. In fact, if the exhibition had to be summed up in a word, 'control' would be it.

The first thing one sees on entering the gallery is an old motorised chair circling around the room as if it was being piloted remotely. There is something comical about its motions, even though its empty seat and yellowed cushion conjure associations with death and decay. The chair used to belong to Rodney, the highly politicised artist who in 1982 started the BLK Art Group with Eddie Chambers, Keith Piper and Marlene Smith. Rodney lived with sickle-

hospitals) function as disciplinary environments. For this commission, Lipp produced three exquisite oils based on digital close-ups of US pedestrian crossing signs. The series is titled 'Walk' because each painting juxtaposes the unlit sign of the stop hand with a glowing silhouette prompting us to 'walk' across the room. So often welcomed in our daily lives, this invitation takes on a singularly coercive meaning next to Rodney's mobility chair.

In the adjacent room Adrian Piper is paired with Lazard to create an environment that feels in equal measure sterile and oppressive. Piper is best known for her performative interventions, particularly the series 'Mythic Being', 1972-75, for which she disguised herself as an androgynous and racially indeterminate New Yorker. Photographic documentation of the performance fed into several works on paper, initiating her lifelong love affair with Conceptual Art. The works shown here are recent examples in this vein.

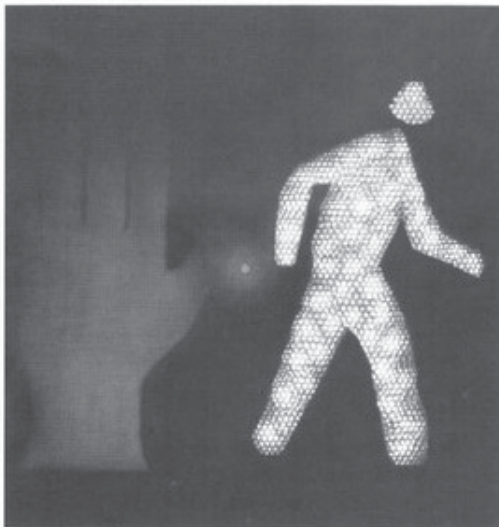
Vanishing Point #4 and *#5*, 2009, were made using official Application for Employment forms (federal documents designed to enforce fair recruitment practice across the US). Piper sabotaged the ostensibly inclusive language of these questionnaires by writing down the wrong answers (to the question 'what kind of work are you applying for?' she replied, elusively, 'vanishing point'). She also erased the original script using graphite and sandpaper.

In keeping with the rest of Piper's oeuvre, the works in the 'Vanishing Point' series convey a desire to transcend a reality that is fundamentally structured around the principle of surveillance. This idea resonates with Lazard's adjacent piece, *A Conspiracy*. Originally created in 2017 for Essex Street Gallery in New York, the installation is designed to cover the entire ceiling with evenly spaced white-noise machines. Although the muffled vibration they emit is supposed to be soothing, they acquire an ominous quality through sheer repetition. I have always hated the sound, so it doesn't take me long to decide I feel claustrophobic, yet these machines are regularly used in hospitals to control all manner of physical and psychological ailments.

Lazard lives with Crohn's disease and is painfully familiar with the clinical world. Their writings on chronic illness and the limitations of western biomedicine are the most engaging texts I have recently come across on the topic. Their visual works are no less compelling (one of my personal favourites is *Get Well Soon*, a short film from 2015, available on the artist's website), yet this is only the second time that Lazard has shown in the UK, following a screening at LUX in 2018. I would love to see more of their work in this country. As a matter of fact, I left Cell feeling that the display as a whole had the potential to grow into a much larger exhibition. Who will rise to the challenge? ■

Giulia Smith is an art historian based in London.

Sam Lipp
Walk 2019



cell anaemia (a condition that he often referred to as BLK BLOOD DISEASE) until his death in 1998, at the age of 36.

Rodney's illness meant that in 1997 he was unable to attend the private view of his own solo show at the South London Gallery (Obituary *AM*215). As a replacement and a marker of his absence, the artist submitted his motorised chair, now envisaged as a cybernetic sculpture titled *Psalms*. The piece is equipped with a computer program designed to map the room and self-pilot around any obstacles. It makes for a stark commentary on Rodney's struggle to retain a level of control in the face of debilitating illness and pervasive ableism in the art world.

A different form of control plays out in Lipp's paintings. Lipp is based in New York, where he runs a gallery called 'Queer Thoughts'. In the past, he has made photorealist paintings that comment on how civic spaces (including



A Conversation with Sam Lipp

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INTERVIEW BY DREW ZEIBA



Sleep, Acrylic on foamcore, mounted on aluminum. Images Courtesy of Bodega

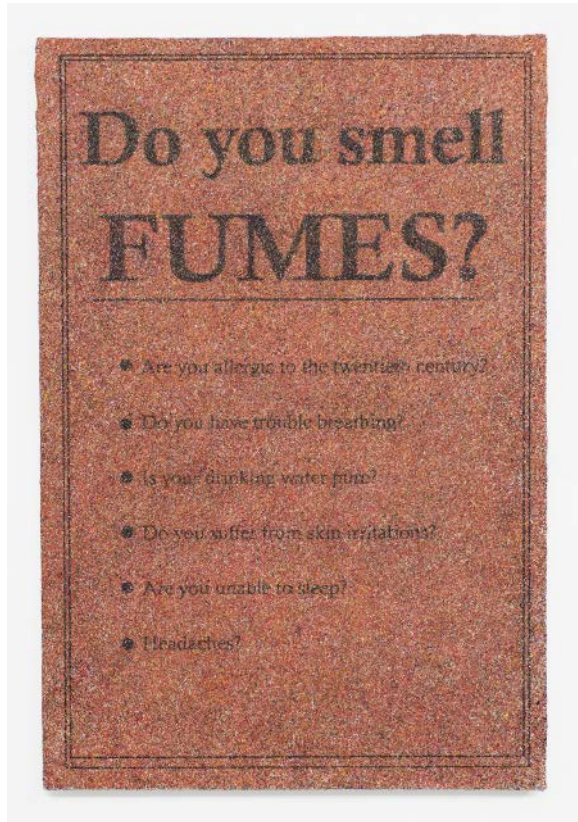
Artist, curator, and gallerist, Sam Lipp's work floats. Despite his paintings' use of seemingly clear language and representational images, the exact meanings behind them remain unnervingly difficult to pin down, unendingly unfixd. His paintings are suffuse and textural. They alternate between almost comic hand-scrawled text, crass images with heavy lines, neat print and quiet, even delicate, renderings of bodies. Like the layers of colors that comprise the images—a singular wash from a distance and a riot of shades up close— careful examination only further confuses. The paintings revel in this work of mystification. Seriality, repetition, appropriation, and reproduction abound. Apart from or perhaps more accurately, growing out of his painting practice, Lipp is also co-director of Queer Thoughts, the gallery that he founded in 2012 with fellow artist Luis Miguel Bendaña in a closet in Chicago. The gallery has since grown up (and come out of the closet), and is now located in New York City.

DZ: Many of your paintings are on simple foamcore, similar to what you would find at a craft store.

SL: The foamcore's probably the most personal aspect of the work because it reminds of the experience of being creative as a kid. It's the stuff of school projects. My dad would present my work when I was a kid, even just drawings that I would make. He would take them and have them mounted on foamcore and then they would make gifts for my grandparents. We have some of them in our garage still.

With the texture and flimsiness of the foamcore compared to more "typical" painting materials, it seems like decay is intrinsic to it.

Exactly. Everything about it is not precious. A lot of the paintings have been kind of wonky. Sometimes the corners warp. Part of the reason I chose to do the pieces on foamcore was to make this crappy, synthetic object that can degrade. But also, using the foamcore is thinking about what material is accessible and what material is not necessarily loaded with art historical weight as a mode of communication, but relates to how people are actually using flat media as a way to communicate in a direct, literal way.



Carol, Acrylic and inkjet on canvas, 12w x 18h in.



A Cobblestone, Acrylic and inkjet on foamcore

What about the actual painting, do you use traditional brushes?

No, I use steel wool as a paintbrush. It's like sponge painting, like a stamp almost. It always creates different brush stroke and sprays these tiny particles of paint all over. It builds up layers and layers and layers and every layer is a different color. So, the goal visually is that a color could appear as a single color and then when you investigate it further, you realize that it is every color.

Where do the images and words you work with come from?

The text on Do You Smell Fumes?, 2016 and Carol, 2016 (partially repeated on other works) is from a flyer that is a prop in the Todd Haynes movie Safe with Julianne Moore. Moore's character lives in the Valley in the late 80s and starts having these chemical sensitivity attacks and she doesn't know what is happening. A lot of doctors have different opinions but then they keep testing her and they can't find anything wrong with her. It becomes this growing thing where she has to leave society and live in a commune compound in the desert in this ceramic cell, and there is kind of this undercurrent theme of AIDS and immunodeficiencies that's happening. The movie was made in 1995, but it takes place in maybe 1988 or 89.

This interest, and even just the idea of smelling fumes, calls upon ideas of purity and impurity, and the attendant political meanings. How are you thinking about this kind of purity or contamination in your work?

I feel the idea of purity is an unattainable goal or ideal and that functions on this false inside/outside dichotomy. I was interested in purity as a political motivator and how even an idea of purity can sort of negatively motivate us. It can make us self-immolate. Purity can serve something against yourself.

There's also, especially for a viewer who's never seen the film, a real difficulty to make a singular, clear meaning out of what at first appears to be very clear and straightforward text.

I think strategic indeterminacy of meaning can be a political gesture and a way to reroute agency. Just as identity is always shifting and never static.

Your paintings often feature images of gay intimacy, such as Sleep, 2016 and Villa, 2015. Where do these images come from?

For me, intimacy is not really a concern, it's more shame and transgression. The image in Villa, 2015 comes from this zine that I found at a thrift store in my hometown when I was 13. I frequented this church mouse thrift store called Community Projects nearly every single day after school. One day, the older women who worked there put out like a display of poetry books that was supposed to be this nice display of "high culture" or something. There was this one book called Dark Roses centered right there and I opened it and it was made by this bizarre gay poet from the 80s and early 90s in San Francisco, Michael Thomas Kelley, and there were all these bizarre, disturbing images of him. Like in his artist's portrait he's masturbating. It's just really dark. This drawing was actually made by another artist, Peter Gonzalez, but Kelley was citing it in this collection of poetry because it had been the supposed cause for banning a Canadian publication, Queer Poets Lives, poems 1973-1978, edited by David Emerson Smith, 11 years before. My mother confiscated the book from me, but then I somehow found it and got it back. I guess I just thought it was funny at that time but it was also this weird thing I was hiding. Then I rediscovered the book when I was in college. This image by Gonzalez really had a resonance for me so I wanted to revisit it. If there's intimacy here it's not intimacy in the image, it's intimacy of and with imagery. Like with the text from Safe, I was transfixed.

You were being transfixed?

Yes. Yes. The text and images kept appearing for me in real life and also in my mind.

It seems with the materials you choose and the images you appropriate, you are often returning to your youth.

These images are like the foamcore, which is in many ways the most personal aspect of my work. My own adolescence is something that I've been mining as content because it just holds this resonance for me as this time of keeping things secret and being weirdly very creative and expressive and at the same time secretive and really embarrassed—expressive but totally mortified of the expression.



Villa, Acrylic and inkjet on canvas, 12w x 18h in.

Would you say your work is confessional?

Yes.

Of course, apart from your own paintings, your other project is as co-owner of the gallery Queer Thoughts. Is there a relation between your work as an artist and your work as a gallerist?

I can't really separate it. Certainly the gallery takes up a lot more of my time these days, putting on shows and working with other artists is just an expanded form of my painting practice, which I always feel itself is a very holistic practice. The work is always just continuing, the content is just always spilling on right to the next thing. I never really was trying to just be a painter. I think the reason I came to the paintings was this sort of seriality, having an image and then moving to the next image.

And besides the stuff that you are working with as source material, what are you watching, what are you listening to, what are you reading when you're working?

I don't know. Probably Miley Cyrus or something.

ARTFORUM

Sam Lipp

BODEGA

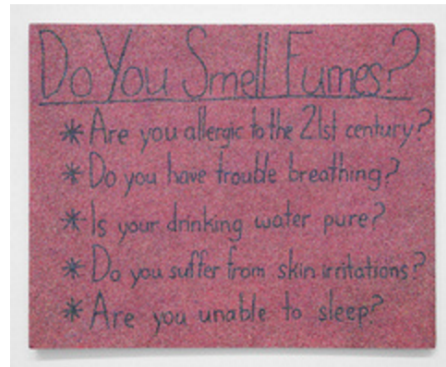
167 Rivington Street, Lower Level East

September 10–October 16

At Yany's Beauty Salon on Rivington Street, a handful of mostly Hispanic workers can be seen spraying hair products and administering heating regimens over casual chatter, while a distinct trace of aerosol and burnt keratin wafts outside. Next door, beside Yany's magenta street signage, a work by Sam Lipp, *Do You Smell Fumes?* (all works 2016), displays its inquisitive title in electric green neon. Inside the gallery, the same thought becomes an aesthetic motif, interrogating notions of purity as they extend to common understandings of wellness, security, and normalized social relations. But, in doing so, the project seems to gloss over another important consideration: How are these ideas socially positioned?

Most of the other works on view, foamcore surfaces painted many times over in acrylic with brushes and steel wool, resemble, in equal parts, bokeh and pixelated grain. One composition echoes its probing question along with some scrawled text reading, "Are you allergic to the 21st century? Do you have trouble breathing?" These lines nod to Todd Haynes's 1995 drama *Safe*, in which the life of an affluent San Fernando Valley housewife, played by Julianne Moore, unravels as she develops MCS—multiple chemical sensitivity—a debilitating psychosomatic aversion to many everyday chemicals distributed through global capitalism.

In another acrylic work, *Paris Is Paris*, a male with his torso, cock, and balls exposed rests in bed next to another body—a moment of serene, banal affection. While Lipp importantly investigates the tenuousness of social binaries and their regulatory functions, the project would benefit from acknowledging how these forces serve class relations. An external menace, the cry of fumes, and the formation of conventional partnerships all conjure up ruling-class attitudes toward the working class—after all, doesn't hegemony's very conception suggest power is always under threat?

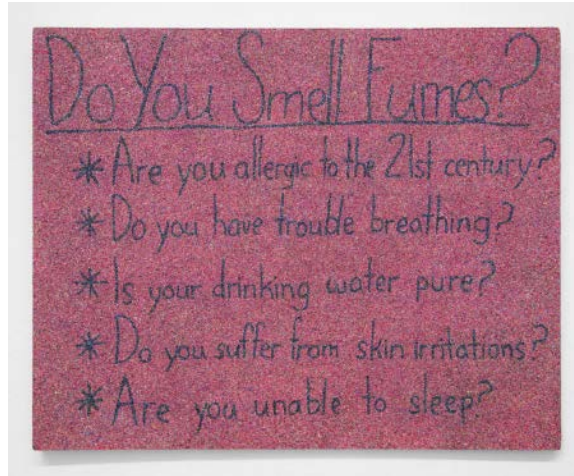


Sam Lipp, *Do You Smell Fumes?*, 2016, acrylic on foamcore, 20 x 16".

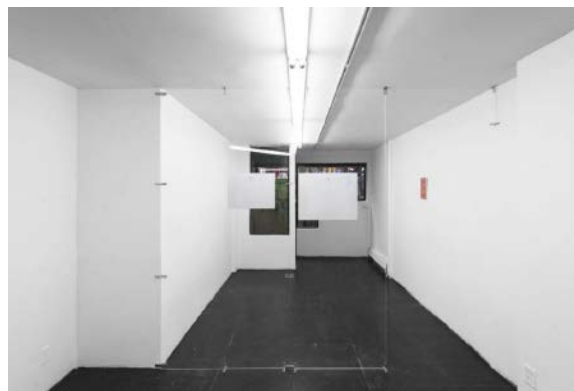
— Nicolas Linnert



Sam Lipp



Sam Lipp, a NY-based artist and co-founder of Queer Thoughts, isn't necessarily interested in pursuing grand statements or lecturing the audience whatever up-to-date morale. Instead, his work seems to be a genuine quest for mindful questions (not their answers) that concern the self within the larger sense of society. While many of his conceptual challenges seem to divert back to the origins of existentialism, there's a vulnerable interest in identity that moves beyond the peripheries of gender and class. Actually, beyond civilization itself. What does it mean to belong here, rightfully, is there such a thing as pureness, will bodies and their consequences ever become outmoded? When spending time with Lipp's pieces, somehow there's always the bodily left in the end, a physical reaction extruding softly from the work itself as much as from its audience. Suddenly we're much more aware of our innate contact with smell and touch. At times sound seems to become part of it, too. It's hard—at this very moment, perhaps impossible—to interpret openly the multitudinous meanings within Lipp's work. Emanating from the artist himself, there's a continuous resistance to being identified, and therefore categorized. Perhaps Lipp is onto something big here, an artistic process in its becoming that does not enter art's traditional narcissism of vocalizing an inside that's everyone's outside, but an outside that's everyone's inside. The content of the work prepositions change while referencing a post-apocalypse. And I am not exactly sure why. Perhaps because I suddenly found myself somewhere else. Somewhere everything new and old still needed to be invented.



Where's your head these days?

I recently had a show in LA at MAK Center that Alessandro Bava organized, called Apologia. I made these rainbow flags out of glittery spandex, so I'm still thinking about what that was. I used to sew as a tween, so I enjoyed returning to that. I'm always interested in the forms I made/participated in when I was a child and adolescent.

Returning to this child-self, does it have anything to do with contemplating a former self that perhaps felt less restrained in its nature?

Part of it is wanting to use materials and techniques that were taught or given to me, materials that are

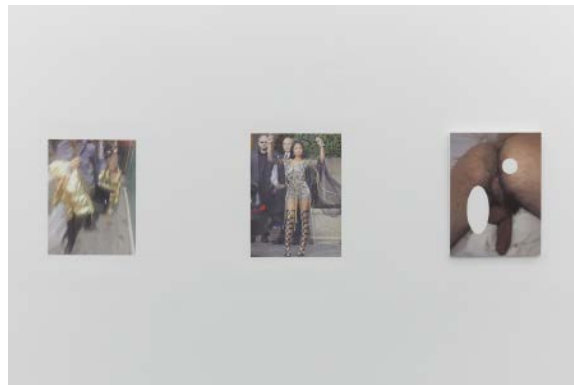
Lara Konrad, Coeval Magazine, August 17, 2017

coded as 'art' or 'craft,' but aren't necessarily considered good or suitable for "higher" discourses. The other part is that childhood and adolescence were for me extremely uninhibited creative times, but full of a lot of shame and hiding. So all of the aesthetic impulses I relate to that time sit in this very potent nexus of regulation and transgression.



It's interesting how the roles may reverse. Queer children, the likely possibility of spending their childhood in hiding due to being confined by society's fixed set of rules. Whereas heteronormative children might outlive their true(r) selves, up until adulthood is introduced, suddenly becoming aware of limitations and their implications. I think this links directly to gender, especially girlhood.

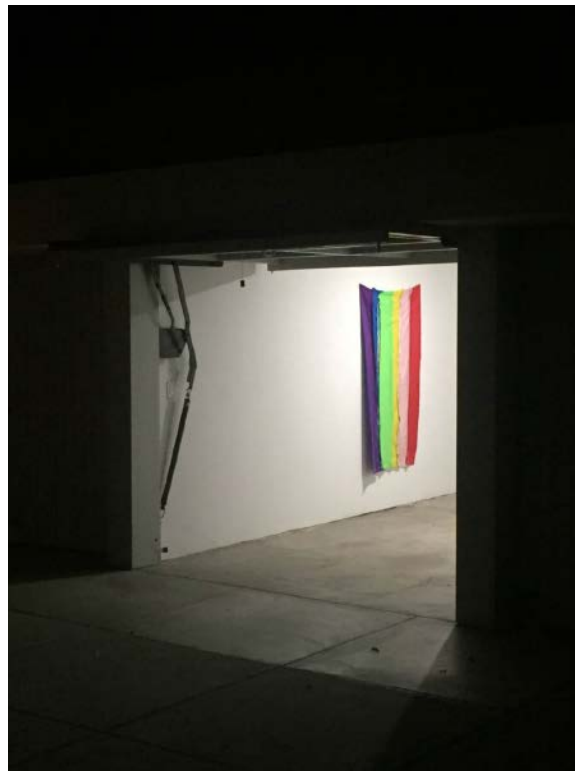
Yeah, I think the correlation to girlhood is very important, and the aesthetic implications of that experience are often underexamined or appreciated. Those concerns are particularly present in the work of Chicago-based sculptor Mindy Rose Schwartz, who has been a very influential artist to my practice and art education. She has a similar relationship to materials where she investigates and recontextualizes the techniques and processes that she learned growing up. Queer Thoughts will be presenting her first New York solo exhibition this September, and then we are also organizing a solo exhibition of her work at Balice Hertling in Paris this October.



In your most recent exhibition *Do you smell Fumes?* at Bodega (NY), you explore the subject of purity, and how it relates to an American-esque type of happiness. I often have trouble conceiving the idea of purity, wondering if it actually exists after we've been introduced into the world. I find it interesting how especially straight men seem to hold on to purity as a form of female ideal, a state of female fragility. The state of pureness seems largely gendered. That exhibition didn't actually have a title, although the phrase "Do you smell fumes?" was repeated multiple times in the various works. So it functioned that way for many people. The original idea was to contrast "Do you smell fumes?" (which appears on a flyer in a scene in the 1995 Todd Haynes film *Safe*) with the word incest. I was obsessed for a while with the word incest and the conception (or rather construction) of incest as the ultimate taboo and precipice for human communities becoming a 'civilization.'

As I put the show together I felt like the word incest was so heavy that it burdened the actual work. So I had to examine what was behind the motivation to play with this extreme taboo and what the act of a prohibition entails. Purity then became a stand-in for any situation where an ideal requires the exclusion of something, where something has to be cast out. So I guess having a conversation about purity wasn't my original intention in making that work, but it became the avenue through which I could connect this other content.

I'd say purity certainly is a gendered concept. Part of my motivation to use the *Safe* reference was for that very reason. Obviously Todd Hayne's and Julianne Moore are part of a gay/femme cosmology, and then there's the AIDS subtext of the film. But I never particularly wanted to make work specifically about referencing a film, or where you have to see the film to understand the work. However, I became transfixed by this particular, rather incidental text-image "Do You Smell Fumes?" and it kept returning to me and coloring certain experiences I had. I feel like having a fixation on something that you see on a screen has a sort of 'for the girls and the gays' connotation. Like being transfixed on an image is more passive than gazing at the real thing. Also for me personally, I have a strong sense of smell and am very sensitive in many ways, which I feel are both feminine qualities, so the phrase "Do you smell fumes?" is like a dog whistle for "Are you sensitive? Are you picking up on the subtext? Are you a faggot?"



Was it because the overall concept of incest became too burdensome for the work itself—which, in many ways, I merely read as a mode of distraction—or was there also the public burdening of yourself when tackling with such a loaded and delicate topic like incest. I think still today, it's somewhat impossible to freely explore hypersensitive subjects as we tend to immediately withdraw within judgement, the comfortable arms of Ignorance. It's a shame really, many interesting things stay untouched because we are too afraid of what people might conclude about us.

I agree with you, and I hope that at one point I can resume that project. I did contemplate how an audience

Lara Konrad, Coeval Magazine, August 17, 2017

would react to that title, but ultimately it was the works themselves that moved away from the word. There was already too much other content that would have never been accessible with such a domineering title, which is why the ideas about purity became my workaround.

It's also interesting how the lack of pureness necessarily refers to impureness. So either we are pure or we are impure, there's no in-between. Purity exists as an ideal. We're pure only when we don't exist.

Alongside Luis Miguel Bendaña, you manage Queer Thoughts , how and (most importantly) why did this art space come into existence?

It started because Miguel had a large, weird walk-in closet in his apartment in Chicago, so we thought it could be a gallery. I guess we had something to say, or rather a point of view to express, so we needed a venue for that. It was 5 years ago this June that we had the first show (with the artist who would later be known as Puppies Puppies). The project has largely followed an emotional intuitive trajectory.

What specific landscape/set of themes does this emotional intuitive trajectory usually pertain to?

The gallery has always operated within a very intimate space (literally and figuratively). And the artists we work with are almost always people we like. Which makes things much more interesting, and complicated! The real work that the gallery does is creating a public access point to these very personal relationships.

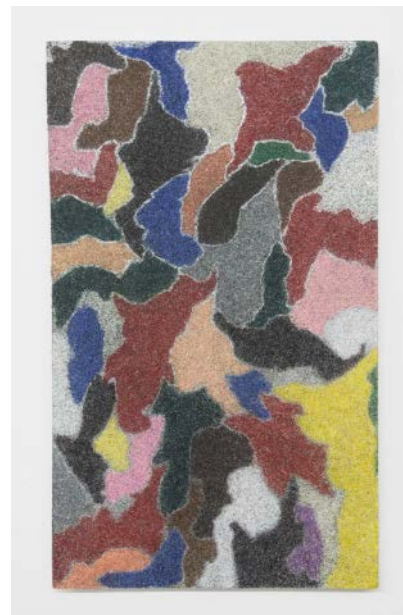
In the press release of in hopes of not being considered —a group show at Kate Werble you're currently part of—I especially noticed your work's general intentionality in this sentiment: "They present messages that can't be easily decoded, and images that do not wish to be identified."

I think that's a core issue. I hate being identified. But I also named my gallery Queer Thoughts . There is rage against what is prescribed, but that is also not a desire for opacity, or to withdraw from creating meaning.

This dualism was also particularly present in the Bodega show. In a way the works were incredibly straightforward, they literally spelled out their message, "Do you smell Fumes? ... Are you allergic to the 21st century?" But then that directness was undermined by everything else in the treatment, every other sign cast a shadow of uncertainty.

Your work often seems to move in between ideologies of identity, with that also the binary fold of gender. Recently I have thought again a lot about identity, wondering if it's actually this quest of finding out who we are, or if we are unfixed beings, constantly changing. Maybe, in some ways, we'd be better off without this fixed notion of 'identity.' Perhaps identity can become something much more fluid too, much like gender. If identity could be dissolved, I think there would be an anti-identity to take its place. I'm less interested in disintegrating a category than in creating agency and opportunities for play.

interview LARA KONRAD



Pablo Lopez, "Aunt Nancy at Night Gallery," *Contemporary Art Review LA*, June 16, 2016.

carla

Aunt Nancy at Night Gallery

By Pablo Lopez | June 16, 2016



Aunt Nancy at Night Gallery (2016). Installation view. From left: Andy Robert, *Sunflowers* (2016); Alexandra Noel, *Where is this supposed to be* (2016), Anna Rosen, *Time Table* (2016), Sam Lipp, *Untitled* (2015). Image courtesy of Night Gallery. Photo: Jeff Mclane.

Video artist and cult figure, Nelson Sullivan, left behind thousands of hours of footage documenting the drug-addled, debauched, and happily dissolute denizens of the '80s NYC downtown scene. Night Gallery's current show, *Aunt Nancy*, is a speculative return to Sullivan's work and life. Less concerned with Sullivan's downtown exploits, focus is placed on his somewhat depressive domestic origins and habits.

In homage to Sullivan, and in an effort to reimagine and recontextualize his life and practice, the show consists of works by six contemporary artists (including four videos by Sullivan). Sculptures are juxtaposed with paintings of varying scale and scope in an effort to personify the complex incongruities of Sullivan's life, split between his drab South Carolina roots and downtown NYC. The works are

idiosyncratic and intentionally banal (apropos of Sullivan's documentary style), and most allude to American domesticity as they plumb the internal machinations of personality and memory.

A darkly whimsical tone is struck in Sam Lipp's inkjet-printed portrait of Michael Jackson (*Abuse of Weakness*, 2016), that commands attention throughout the gallery as it intersects with numerous sightlines. Full of lighthearted gravitas, Chloe Seibert's untreated plaster sculpture (*Big Fist*, 2016) adds yet another wrinkle as it hunkers down in space. A consistent kitsch-infused aesthetic and general attitude of irreverence prevails.

Expressionistic and blurry-eyed, an unfamiliar composition of Sullivan's interior life emerges to the delight of those already fascinated with Sullivan's work. For those less interested in the artist's life, *Aunt Nancy* may appear tangential and disjointed, despite its smartly finessed curatorial approach.



Anna Rosen, *Time Table* (2016). Image courtesy of the artist and Night Gallery. Photo by Jeff Mclane.

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The Artist as Curator

Sam Lipp “I’m An American Citizen, I Know My Rights” and Jessica Sanders “Soft Poached” at Neochrome, Turin

April 23~2015

Sam Lipp “I’m An American Citizen, I Know My Rights”



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Recollections of Exotic Birds

With Sam Lipp’s exhibition “I’m An American Citizen, I Know My Rights,” I have been given to recollections of exotic birds. These birds, owned by my family over the last 20 years, periodically dart into my thoughts; birds, that impoverished metaphor for empty signifiers.

SL’s exhibition and the three bird stories I tell below don’t present a moral. Too often people feel entitled to resolution, and I would like neither to confine these memories, nor SL’s work to such convictions. After all, that would be missing the joke of I’m An American Citizen...: SL performs the dandy abroad, reflecting language’s paranoid power to exoticize in the dark humor of his American impetuosity. So, rather than a parable of the cage, we have decorum: there are paintings in the shape of car windows (scratchy pixelated pictures of Chicago’s martial South Side [1]); there might be a toilet-paper-mache sculpture 1 of Olaf [2] (a puerile symbol of cartoon queerness); and, taped to the floor, there are inkjet prints of screen captures from Rio 2 [3].

The dandy is a figure, who, like birds, absorbs bourgeois culture and affects its meaninglessness as a perversion of instinct. This inheritance, through SL’s work, also suggests a hostile attitude, an ironic air of ineffectual labors. As might be found in my recollections, when a bird is free, it’s free to cover everything in shit; and in I’m An American Citizen... an artist’s freedom of movement is a decorous reminder of how morose our bourgeois habits are—hygiene, travel, consumption, self-identification, and indeed art among them. Abject attitudes are but reminders, topographies of unnourishing habitats. That we are ever so crude, we shit and become shit when we believe in our confinement. A last note: almost all of the bird’s in these stories died prematurely.

Chirpy

For the better part of my life, I lived in one half of a duplex that my parents owned. We depended on the rent from the other half and the four of us shared our portion of the building with our pets. My parents' incomes wavered, but for a few years in my early adolescence, we were comfortable. It was around this time that the number of dogs increased from one to two; my sister was convinced by a bunny; and to my surprise, my parents returned from an errand with a parakeet. It was also at this time that my parents hired a cleaning woman. She came twice a month, spoke to whomever was in the room (I suspect just to avoid the loneliness of job), and the house smelled clean and looked well kempt until her next visit. Animals are antagonistic to a hygienic home and requisite to their increased membership in our household was a cleaning woman. I suppose comfort can sometimes lead to confidence; my parents tread in the exotic aisle of the pet store.

Certainly, if a bird's cage is not cleaned appropriately, the air changes; but Chirpy also suggested levity, effortlessness, and vulnerability. A cage was necessary to contain and protect these qualities. Remember, Clinton was in office; there was a national surplus. Hopes appeared secure, investments well tended, fear and anticipation abated by a much wider, cleaner, better stocked buffer in the shape of a house. Cliches of the middle class are not written by these things, rather, they state them as fact. But birds make light of our symbols; they're graceful when they shit on our shoulders.

Our cleaning woman was generally thorough, but unless we told her, she did not open the windows. One day, the air in our house was stifled with the inescapable ammoniac scent of PineSol. The cleaning woman was only responsible for pet waste in the areas we shared. It's not difficult to see, then, why it was personally dismaying when we discovered Chirpy's cage covered in shit and a dead bird. It could've been that Clinton was on trial at this time – I don't remember. If some level of guilt or blame lingered, the cleaning woman still continued to come. How birds help make captivity seem willful. So, we immediately buried Chirpy in the yard and bought another parakeet.

Cookie

Two parakeets later, there was Cookie. It was a miserable green bird with a black head. It only liked my mom, but chewed all the buttons from her shirt. It drew blood with her bites and pierced my sister's ear and my dad's nose. Cookie detested its cage, preferring to cause chaos in the house. It was a Conure, whatever that is, and it flew away. What is sad about Cookie is not sad about the bird itself. It was an animal that never learned to like the indoors. Interiors are about trust and surfaces. Solid walls are a supposition. Do birds pretend? My mom trusted Cookie to stay on her shoulder when she went outside.

Those are the main details about Cookie. To protect it from the dogs—who would snip at the bird when she was within range my mom chose not to clip its wings. Captivity and dogs, these were not the only things that harried this creature. Even a bird like Cookie, who was supposed to be able to imitate human speech, only let out a relentless, rebellious squawk. I didn't blame it for flying away. I was seventeen and with the ruthlessness of a teenager, I was more sympathetic to the bird. Even if from a mistaken trust, my mom gave Cookie its freedom.

Dusty

Of all my family's birds, there was one I loved. I'd prefer to keep this recollection brief. It was subject to the same fate as all my family's birds; and it causes me pain to think that memories become such cheap metaphors set against the banalities of their history and context. Dusty was in my life briefly, but during a torrent of depression and panic. The bird distracted my attention by carving tunnels through the blankets that covered me in my state of physical and emotional inertia. It'd fly out one end of its chamber, surprise me, and seem to take joy in doing so. Dusty exuded a completely unself-conscious charm, an animal characteristic that, despite whatever type of bird it was, made one want to read kindness and intelligence in her behavior.

But, as I said above, memories, like hand-feeding a bird into happy captivity, are manipulated by language. Hence, if her ironic fate leaves me cold (a pun I won't share), it is an equally valid symbol. As any of these near-moralistic reflections show, it's not the bird, but the odd, hapless, and availing humors with which one keeps them. I suppose it has at least been nice to recollect my family's birds.

Sam Korman

[1] Chicago's South Side is one of the most notorious urban areas in the United States. Despite a borderline police state, it has one of the country's highest murder rates. SL is also a recent Chicago resident.

[2] Olaf is a character in the Disney film, "Frozen" released in 2013. The movie uses climate change as a backdrop for a fairytale romance. Olaf, the snowman, along with other parts of the film, were heavily debated for representing a gay subplot, with Olaf occupying the stereotypical position of gay best friend for the princess.

[3] "Rio 2," released in 2014, is a digitally animated children's movie. The film follows a family of parrots' trip to the Brazilian Amazon, as they struggle to reconcile their life in America with their origins in the tropical rainforest. As with "Frozen," this film uses highly contested issues such as climate change and immigration as the backdrop for a fantasy about self-discovery and-realization. The film casts Latino actors in the roles of exotic animals and white actors in the role of the American birds. The title of this exhibition is a line delivered by the film's parrot protagonist.

MONOPOL



SAM LIPP „Pollution Twink“, 2022

New York, NEW YORK

Ist eine Kunstmesse mit internationalem Anspruch und nur gut 60 teilnehmenden Galerien machbar? Die Frieze New York scheint dafür zu sprechen. 2021 verlegte der Frieze-Konzern seinen New Yorker Ableger von den ungeliebten Zelten auf Randall's Island in die schicke neue Veranstaltungshalle The Shed, wo allerdings der Raum extrem begrenzt ist. Die großen Player Gagosian, Zwirner, Hauser & Wirth finden natürlich trotzdem Platz, dazu weitere wichtige Galerien aus New York, wie 303 Gallery, Michael Werner oder Tanya Bonakdar. New York, so bekräftigte Messechefin Christine Messineo, sei weiterhin unbestritten das Zentrum des internationalen Kunstmarkts, und dem wolle die Messe Rechnung tragen. Ergänzt wird das starke New Yorker Angebot durch weitere Anbieter aus 27 Ländern, wie White Cube aus London, Perrotin aus Paris oder als Neuzugang die Frankfurter Galerie Neue Alte Brücke. Klein, aber ausgesucht ist die „Focus“. Sektion für Emerging Artists. Dort gibt es einige Entdeckungen zu machen: zum Beispiel bei Derosia, einer der spannendsten jungen Galerien in Manhattan. Zu sehen ist der 1989 geborene Maler Sam Lipp, der in technisch aufwendigen Bildern die Kunst der (homo-)erotischen Porträtmalerei wiederbelebt.

Is an art fair with international standards and only 60 participating galleries feasible? Frieze New York seems to say so. In 2021, the Frieze group moved its New York from the unloved tent on Randall's Island to the chic new event hall The Shed, where space is extremely limited. The big players Gagosian, Zwirner, Hauser & Wirth still find space, of course, as well as other important New York galleries, such as 303 Gallery, Michael Werner or Tanya Bonakdar. "New York," said Christine Messineo, head of the fair, "continues to be the undisputed center of the international art market, and the fair wants to take this into account." The strong offerings from New York offer are supplemented by galleries from 27 more countries, such as White Cube from London, Perrotin from Paris or, as a newcomer, Galerie Neue Alte Brücke. "Focus" is small but well-chosen section for Emerging Artists. There are some discoveries to be made there: for example at Derosia, one of the most exciting young galleries in Manhattan. On view is the painter Sam Lipp, born in 1989, who revives the art of (homo-) erotic portrait painting in technically complex pictures.