

OBSERVER

The Boys (and Girls) of Summer: ‘Context Message’ at Zach Feuer and ‘Side Show’ at Greene Naftali

A who’s who of young talent, plus how everyone knows everyone else

by Andrew Russeth
July 31, 2012

The critic Dave Hickey once cited his friend and fellow critic Peter Schjeldahl’s prescription for making it as an artist: “You move to a city. You hang out in bars. You form a gang, turn it into a scene, and turn that into a movement.” Movements may be a thing of the past, but social networks are very much a part of the present, and two current group exhibitions at Chelsea galleries, “Context Message” at Zach Feuer and “Side Show” at Greene Naftali, offer an opportunity to check in with some promising young artists who are in the midst of fomenting vital scenes.

Those interested in art by the show’s curators can consult the website of Soho’s Renwick Gallery, which hosted Mr. Dobson’s most recent exhibition, a collaboration with Megan Marrin that just closed and involved tiny birds’ nests, white paintings and lots of splattered eggs. Mr. Morgan-Cleveland’s latest, open through Aug. 5, is a two-part affair. On Fridays and Saturdays, he has work out on Fort Tilden Beach in Queens (disclosure: we have yet to visit), and on Sundays he’s at RFA, which he’s turned into a haunting, elegant camera obscura. A tiny hole in the blocked-out windows projects the action from the neighboring BQE upside down onto tall plastic walls in the pitch-black gallery—an epic, neverending video work drawn directly from life.