

French Fair Cutlog's NYC Debut Establishes an Edgy, Hip Frieze Week Addition



Photo © Chloe Wyma

by Chloe Wyma

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Cutlog, the edgy French import devoted to emerging artists, is a breath of fresh air on New York's fair circuit. Three floors of au courant, accessibly priced artwork from nearly 50 local and international galleries fill the gritty **Clemente Soto Véléz Center**, a former public school turned multipurpose cultural center sitting in the shadow of the Williamsburg Bridge on the Lower East Side.

"We have a tremendous respect for the bigger fairs," says architect and **Guy Reziciner**, who joins the fair's founder **Bruno Hadjadj** as the co-director of Cutlog's inaugural New York edition. "But I do think we are unique by being a discovery fair, by bringing many galleries that

have never shown in New York, and by offering a platform that lets artists connect with the public and collectors in a new way."

One work of international note at Cutlog is at New York mainstay **White Box**, a portrait of two policemen kissing by Russian art provocateurs the **Blue Noses Group**. The image made headlines when it was part of a show that was banned by Russian prime minister **Vladimir Putin's** government in 2007. Here, it is available for \$25,000. Another highlight from White Box is **Hans Breder's** haunting nude photograph of **Ana Mendieta** in her pre-**Carl Andre** days, priced at \$15,000, on reserve at \$10,000.

Another work bound to get people talking: controversial performance artist **Marni Kotek** peddles away on an elliptical exercise machine, recording her postpartum weight loss. Kotek notoriously gave birth last year in Brooklyn's **Microscope Gallery** as a work of art. Microscope also brought two interactive new media works by artist duo **DataSpaceTime**, priced in the \$3,000 range. Live parrots are on view at the booth of New York's **Fragmental Museum**, alongside artist **Jordan Doner's** collages of eviscerated fashion magazines, contemporary art catalogs, and old nudie rags.



Doner uses his pet birds like paper shredders, tearing up the magazines into confetti-like detritus. “They’re making nests for a mating that’s not going to happen,” he said. “Aspirational luxury is just like that, it’s for realities that don’t ever materialize.”

Many dealers have foregone the conventional booth format, opting to make use of the Clemente’s eccentric architecture. Dealer **Hélène Larcharmoise** of Paris’s **Galerie Dix9** transformed a black-box dressing room into a “cabinet of curiosities,” featuring **Catalin Petrisor**’s unnerving paintings of Soviet block architecture, **Marion Tampon-Lajariette**’s eerie infrared video and video stills, and a claw-foot bathtub installation by **Sophia Pompéry**. London’s **House of Noblemen Gallery** fills a classroom with a salon-style exhibition of works on paper by nearly 30 artists. Miami’s **Spinello Projects** dedicates space to a performance installation by **Naama Tsabar** featuring wailing amps and felt instruments. In another performance work titled “Visceral Transcendence,” **Phoebe Rathmell** arranged thousands of toothpicks to build an ephemeral floor sculpture, courtesy of New York’s **Garis & Hahn** gallery.

On opening night, the raucous festivities spilled into the parking lot, where Brooklyn-based performance art rabble-rousers the **Fantastic Nobodies** gave out free carwashes while dressed as the **Village People**. Nearby, London’s **The July 16 Gallery** presented Russian street artist **Timofei Radya**’s “Stability,” a colossal pyramid made from police anti-riot shields. With affordable artworks, a hefty performance program, and young, experimental energy, Cutlog is without a doubt the new cool kid on the block. It remains to be seen whether collectors will join the party.

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