

# Our picks from the Independent fair

## **Gavin Brown's explosive installation by Karl Holmqvist, textural text works by Pope.L at Mitchell Innes and Nash, and more must-see stands**

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### **Gavin Brown's Enterprise (6th Floor, #4)**

The Swedish-born, Berlin-based Karl Holmqvist's sprawling installation with Gavin Brown may have stolen the show at Independent. The text-based works climb up the wall surrounded by similar wallpaper, a collaboration with the New York-based Japanese artist Ei Arakawa. Fluorescents from the sculptures make the whole thing feel like a philosophical construction site and, being predominantly black and white, the stand finds a symbiosis with the same stark colour scheme of the fair's venue, Spring Studios. Haven't We Sent Enough Clothes To Africa? one repeating sign asks over and over. Clothes similarly litter the floor, an homage to Luc Boltanski. Booth almost feels like the wrong word to use: it's Gavin Brown's Explosion. — *Dan Duray*

### **Paintings by Peter Saul, from the estate of the Chicago dealer Allan Frumkin Venus (5th Floor, #17)**

There is no question that the 1960s are having a moment, from fashion to music to a revival of studies on the psychiatric uses of hallucinogens. But that is not what makes Venus' booth at Independent so trenchant. The works by Peter Saul, from the estate of the Chicago dealer Allan Frumkin, feature the Day-Glo sick-making colours of the era but combine chaos and dysmorphia with the same compositional control that makes Philip Guston so enduring. The humour tackles big ideas in fake-dumb ways, like Human Concern Personal Torment (1969), where a person labelled with the first half of the title wraps his arm around a cross and bleeds the words that comprise the second. It looks too good not to take it seriously. The biggest work is an untitled painting from 1973 that offers a disgusting vision of the nice house, nice car, beautiful people fantasy. All of this could be seen as a bit ironic considering the gallery is owned by the billionaire Adam Lindemann, but you can't fault him for nailing the current social climate. Ronald Reagan with Money in Mouth (1984) delivers on what it promises, but the Gipper's skin is in virulent hues of magenta and orange. If the decision to include it wasn't inspired by Donald Trump, I'll eat my hat. — *Dan Duray*

### **Mitchell Innes and Nash (6th Floor, #10)**

Mitchell Innes and Nash offers an array of works by the multidisciplinary artist Pope.L. The stand's centrepiece is a sculpture, Coffin (Flag Box) (2008), an L-for-Liberty-shaped rough wooden box that generates the uncomfortable sound of a flag flapping. These are accompanied by a number of newer wall works, the most interesting of which are shoe-box-sized—and just as textural as they are textual—often with gesso or acrylic smeared over the words. The words on the other hand are equal part signifiers and signifying. Sad Cop Small Dog (2015) evokes just what it needs to, and feels pretty groovy with its colourful bubbly script—but, wait, why is it pinned to wood with push-pins? And is that blood up on top? Tight works, to be sure. — *Dan Duray*

### **Delmes & Zander (5th Floor, #4)**

The German gallery Delmes & Zander's stand at Independent in New York is the first of a two-part show that will continue next month when the fair opens its inaugural edition in Brussels. One/other is a display of self-portraits, many by anonymous artists (the gallery specialises in Outsider and Art Brut), that makes visible their creator's inner demons and secret fantasies. The science-fiction-tinged paintings from the 1930s, for example, by Michail Paule, a Russian artist who was a patient in a psychiatric hospital, were kept by a Hamburg doctor as visual aids about the experience of depression, or what was then called melancholia. The works cover more than a century of obsessive artistic production, from a series of violent early photo-collages from the 1870s, in which the unknown photographer envisions himself as a sabre-wielding executioner, to erotic pencil drawings from the 1990s by a man named William Crawford made on prison letterhead. Prices range from €550 for black-and-white snapshots taken by the anonymous Man on Rooftop proudly modelling women's bikinis to €18,000 for the historic photo-collages. — *Helen Stoilas*



*Borna Sammak, Not Yet Titled (2016)*

### **JTT (5th Floor, #12)**

Anyone who has been to Miami Beach will recognise the materials in Borna Sammak's splashy collaged canvases, on view with Lower East Side gallery JTT: t-shirt appliques and vinyl panels normally used in sign-making. The Philadelphia-born, Brooklyn-based artist has his own heat-press in the studio to create the built-up layers of cut-outs. He sources the vinyl pieces online from suppliers that usually cater to tourist tat shops and so Sammak fittingly calls the series "beach crap". The works, priced between \$25,000-\$30,000, come out of a project at the Nada fair in Miami a few years ago, and keen-eyed viewers might catch a glimpse of the Alvin's Island logo from the Lincoln Road store in a mesmerising 30-second looped video. — *Helen Stoilas*

### **Mendes Wood DM (6th Floor, #13)**

The São Paulo-based gallery Mendes Wood DM has brought a series of racially charged installations to Independent by the conceptual artist Paulo Nazareth. One piece, titled CA giraffe (2014) and priced at \$8,000, shows a rubber toy giraffe

with a broken leg, wearing a tiny wooden crutch. Although beguilingly adorable, the installation "uses the image of a safari animal to deal with African diasporas and the supposed function of certain animals and certain humans in the world", a spokesman for the gallery says, adding that the poetic gesture "repurposes and supports an animal that would otherwise no longer have a purpose for this world". — *Gabriella Angeleti*