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## Reviews

### “Popcentric”

★★★★★

Gering & López Gallery, through Sat 8

Anyone familiar with painter Michael Bevilacqua can tell that he had a hand in curating “Popcentric,” not only because he’s included himself, but also because the other works here reflect his own psychedelicious sensibility. The exhibit ransacks today’s cultural detritus to suggest that “pop” is an all-encompassing concept. The inclusion of Christian Lemmerz’s golden sculpture of Osama bin Laden, Dimitrios Antonitsis’s dazzling portraits of Leona Helmsley and Fischerspooner’s video homage to itself further supports the show’s contention that the mass market has the power to transform just about anything in the public sphere into a pop artifact.



Kaws, *Untitled 2*

Courtesy of the artist and Gering & López

This notion allows enough leeway to incorporate 13 international artists of various generations, styles and genres under the ubiquitous pop umbrella. The result is an affirmation that the supposed divide between high and low culture or good and bad taste—originally assaulted by ’60s Pop patriarchs like Johns, Warhol and Lichtenstein—is now nonexistent. As cases in point, “Popcentric” offers Liz Craft’s quirky bronze sculpture of a hairy hippie guy; Carl D’Alvia’s loving depiction of a calf, cast in resin; Bruce Richards’s painting of a bright pink skull with red, heart-shaped eyes; and Kaws’s fusion of street imagery and Disney animation into a signature underground style.

Unfortunately, rather than trying to complicate matters with viable models for contesting the status quo, the show simply glorifies it. In the process, Bevilacqua misses the chance to look past the seductive patina of materialism, and seriously reckon with its debilitating effects on culture.

— *Nuit Banai*