

# THE NEW YORKER

ART GALLERIES - DOWNTOWN

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“Deadeye Dick: Richard Bellamy and His Circle”

The storied gallerist Richard Bellamy—who died in 1998 and was the first to show Dan Flavin and Claes Oldenburg, among many others—is the subject of this impeccable show, organized by his biographer, Judith Stein, with works by more than forty artists. Most are from the nineteen-sixties, including an early Dan Flavin fluorescent sculpture, a long golden canvas speckled with turquoise spots by Larry Poons, and a large oil painting by Alfred Leslie, an impastoed marvel in pink, white, and yellow squares. Best of all are the portraits. A pencil sketch of Bellamy by the art critic Sidney Tillim catches him from behind, with a phone to his ear; two clay statues by Daisy Youngblood incorporate the art dealer’s hair; and in a red-and-green pastel by the sculptor George Segal, Bellamy is creeping off the edge of the page. Bellamy, best known as the founder of the avant-gardist Green gallery, on Fifty-seventh Street, was a behind-the-scenes type; in a picture by Alex Katz, from 1960 (on loan from the Whitney), he looks as if he wanted to recede into the warm gray background. Art history has other ideas.