



January 11, 2012

This Week: Must-See Arts in the City

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By Carolina A. Miranda

A daring lensman from the 1930s, trippy light and space from the '60s, sculptural optical illusions and a round-up of painters who are very contemporary (in both Chelsea and Bushwick). New York has got it going on this week. Here's what we've got in the hopper:

Weegee: Naked City, at Steven Kasher Gallery There was no subject too harsh for the photographer known as Weegee (born Arthur Felig), a figure who turned ambulance-chasing into high art. Working primarily in the 1930s and '40s in downtown Manhattan, Weegee chronicled a bonanza of death, accidents, thievery, poverty, Bowery entertainers as well as the occasional society party. His work covered the gamut of city life. The exhibit will too. Opens Thursday at 6 p.m. in Chelsea.

Doug Wheeler, Recent Work, at Zwirner Gallery It is always a thrill when an artist does so much with so little — and in Wheeler's case that "little" is the ephemeral, untouchable thing we call light. A pioneer of the California light and space movement of the 1960s and '70s, Wheeler is known for creating room-sized environments that employ just a few neon tubes to magisterial effect, hiding them behind recesses in walls to create giant frames and glowing squares. At Zwirner, he is creating a site-specific install that should do some crazy things to your sense of perception. Opens Saturday in Chelsea.

Joyce Pensato, Batman Returns, at Friedrich Petzel Gallery Expressionistic cartoon characters grin and leer off of splatter-y canvases in the latest outing by Pensato, a long-time Brooklyn painter. The new series is strong on Batman-esque figures, some of which are in color — a new mode of working for someone who has long focused on black and white. Opens Thursday at 6 p.m.

Michael Zelehoski, Secondary Structures, at Dodge Gallery **Zelehoski disassembles the common wood pallet and turns it into a tool for mind-bendy optical illusions. From a distance, one of his wall pieces might look like a standard-issue rectangular prism — but move in closer and you'll discover that the geometry is all an illusion, the result of some very well-placed lines. There are drawings and paintings, too — all of which show a keen interest in the humblest of industrial materials. Opens Thursday at 6 p.m. on the Lower East Side.**



At Dodge Gallery on the Lower East Side, another artist who likes to trick the eye: Michael Zelehoski. Seen here: 'Crate,' from 2011.

Courtesy of the artist and DODGEgallery

Rick Briggs and Adam Simon, at Valentine A couple of artists will be on view at this small, new space that opened on the border of Ridgewood/Bushwick last year. Expect bright canvases by Briggs, a painter who often riffs on the act of painting itself, as well as Adam Simon, an artist obsessed with the human silhouette. Opens Friday at 6 p.m. in Ridgewood/Bushwick.

A screening of **Foreign Parts** at Exit Art A documentary by Véréna Paravel and J. P. Sniadecki that chronicles Willets Points, in Queens — a zone stuffed with auto body repair shops — and a community that might soon cease to be. Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$10.

Plus: With Oscars season upon us, don't miss the Museum of Modern Art's **The Contenders** screening series in which the museum's film department presents some of the most influential and innovative films of the past year, starting with the Finnish comedy **Le Havre**. Kicks off Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. in Midtown.