



Ida Ekblad, *What Leaf? What Mushroom?*, 2009



Petra Cortright, *So Wet*, 2011



Hotel Palenque ft. Tobias Madison, 2011

ART BREAKERS

If you're suffering from art fair fatigue after Frieze or the white-cube-blues you may experience the following symptoms: anxiety-inducing piercing gallerina stares; confusion related to oblique press release mumbo jumbo; frustration from same-old-art-star programming and so on. Luckily, there's a cure for this affliction... the project space, available now in most major cities, should do well to reinvigorate the function art once celebrated: to bring together communities, foster criticality and, perhaps most importantly, have fun. From Cleopatra's to pyramidd.biz, this is our roundup of the DIY ART SPACES that should take over the world!

NEW JERSEY, BASEL

When asked what New Jersey's programming would be next season, gallery co-director Daniel Baumann replies, basically, "We can't really tell you what the next shows will be because we plan them not too far in advance! This is one of the great things about being an off-space: no need for long-time propaganda." Their intentional fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants approach accounts for one part of New Jersey's genius. Run by Daniel, an independent curator, and young artists Tobias Madison, Emanuel Rossetti and Dan Solbach, New Jersey's a dirty smudge on the face of a spic-and-span Swiss art scene. While the project comprises equal parts irreverence and humour - as evidenced by their inaugural project during Art Basel 2008, in which Swiss artist John Armleder and his students at the Braunschweig Academy of Art literally turned the space into a boxing ring - it's no *enfant terribles* art frat. Events have included a 'Voodoo Film Festival' featuring Philippe Parreno, a live painting performance by Ida Ekblad, an exhibition of Marta Riniker-Radich's colourful pencil drawings of acid-soaked interiors, and contemporary-baroque group show *Death Of Samantha/ Season Of Glass*.
newjerseyy.ch

PRETEEN, MEXICO CITY

On any given day, you can catch Preteen Gallery founder Gerardo Contreras's Twitter account overflowing with

such wistful statements as "BRO PUSSY COMBO" or "IF I WERE A TRANNY I'D BE A GODDESS BUNNY TYPE TRANNY" or, my new personal favourite, "EVERYTHING IN MY LIFE LATELY JUST MAKES ME TYPE THIS :(" Although Gerardo clearly derives a lot of pleasure from talking dirty on the internet, the Mexico City gallerist is also capable of real talk. When speaking with Pablo León de la Barra of Centre for the Aesthetic Revolution about his inclination for everything ass, Gerardo vacillates between the humorous, "I have an obsession for Mariah Carey I just can't explain. I think it's from smoking so much weed," and the more sober, "I don't think if any of these themes are taboo or not. All these ideas come to my mind and I just make them happen. Shows, writings, tweets, tumblrs. Making these kind of exhibitions constitutes a political act but only because that is inevitable - not because it is my intention or because that is in my mind when I'm making the shows." Preteen's stand-out exhibitions include internet-infamous artist Petra Cortright's *So Wet*, a series of Santa Barbara-inspired digital landscapes printed on fabric, and Angelo Plessas's *Every Website Is A Monument: Mexico City*, combining images of neo-classical architecture overlaid with animated digital drawings.
preteengallery.net

CLEOPATRA'S, GREENPOINT AND BERLIN

This roving, collaborative curatorial platform and exhibition space was initiated in 2008 by Bridget Donahue, Bridget K. Finn, Kate McNamara and Erin Somerville. Although Cleopatra's began with the signing of a ten-year lease in Greenpoint, Brooklyn - a predominately Polish neighbourhood with no semblance of an art district - events have included an off-site camping show in upstate New York, *Eye In The Sky*, featuring "grilling, swimming, exploring" as well as kite-making, noise bands and "the video ghost of Peter Coffin". Furthermore, Erin has recently spearheaded a second space in Berlin, on Kluckstraße. Recent performances include LA artist Tyler Coburn (in collaboration with filmmaker Jeffrey K. Miller) playing a recording of a fictional, and hilarious,

"interview" between himself and long-deceased British Vorticist painter and one-time Nazi-sympathiser Wyndham Lewis. Tyler filled Cleopatra's space with vision-impairing smoke and sat visitors on benches, face-to-face, whilst the two characters shot scathing, psychoanalysis-infused banter back and forth. With statements such as "Ernest Hemingway wrote of you [Wyndham] that he 'had not seen a nastier-looking man, and that your eyes had been those of an unsuccessful rapist,'" it was one of the most entertaining, intriguing and perplexing things I've ever seen.
cleopatrascleopatras.blogspot.com

PYRAMIDD.BIZ, LONDON

It was out of a lingering sense of frustration that artists Jonny "JJ" Winter and Jonny Aldous initiated their second exhibition space, pyramidd.biz - which opened this summer with *Hotel Palenque*, curated by Elise Lammer and featuring Tobias Madison's remakings of *Batman* comic covers. JJ says they decided to start all over again because, "There's an immense lack of fun in the London scene, and we wanted to explore this without appearing stupid. We also had a desire to challenge artists more - with our previous space [the two Jonnys] they could show up with their pre-made work and install it with their eyes closed, as it was identical to every other small gallery - to hopefully produce more radical output." To do so, the duo have fitted their new space with black floors; utilitarian raw MDF walls; a "Genius Bar" which will serve a new cocktail for each successive exhibition; and a "Worker's Kitchen" event series/ social space fostering IRL interaction. They also host the awesomely titled *WACKY BACKY*, an online residency of sorts that invites artists to create the background for <http://pyramidd.biz>. Jonny and Jonny's propensity to utilise and repackage internet vernacular for the exhibition space is refreshing - and a tendency one could augur will become the norm for future digital-native generations of artists and curators.
pyramidd.biz

TEXT KAREN ARCHEY