

ARTFORUM

New York

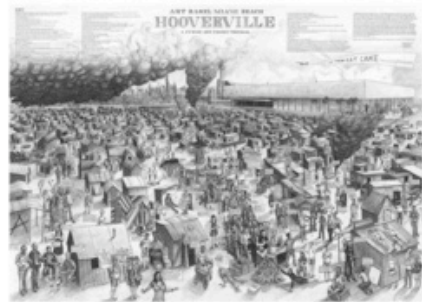
“I Like the Art World and the Art World Likes Me”

EFA PROJECT SPACE

The Elizabeth Foundation For The Arts, 323 West 39th Street, 2nd Floor

January 14–March 5

“Art about art” has spawned a subgenre, “art about the art world.” With an overwhelming focus on New York, this exhibition, curated by Eric Doeringer, an artist who sells his work (devotional-size paintings in the styles of superstars like Elizabeth Peyton and Julian Opie) on Chelsea streets, corrals twenty-one contributors disenchanting, in varying degrees, with the art-world establishment—meaning mostly high-powered museums and galleries but also the general production of art history. Ward Shelley’s painting *Matrilineage Ver. 1*, 2007, a time line that arranges previously overlooked women artists, and Jennifer Dalton’s *How Do Artists Live*, 2006, a slide-show of hand-drawn charts from a survey of artists’ incomes, dutifully emphasize lingering gender inequity. These works’ factual approach, though, lacks the visual intensity and in-depth research of Shelley’s *Carolee Schneemann Chart*, 2006, which establishes the feminist artist’s larger influence on postwar art, or the ironic humor of *Dead Write*, 2010, a painting by Loren Munk that segregates, over a Manhattan map, the names and addresses of artists who committed suicide or died of drug overdoses and those of (mostly living) critics. While Munk intentionally fails to establish connections, the idea that words matter reverberates throughout this text-heavy show.



William Powhida and Jade Townsend, *Art Basel Miami Beach Hooverville*, 2010, digital print, 32 x 48”.

Pablo Helguera fosters openness with a monthly Q&A newsletter, *The Esthetiscist*, 2010–2011, which demystifies art-world machinations, but Jade Townsend and William Powhida’s digital print *Art Basel Miami Beach Hooverville*, 2010, depicting a ravaged tent city of art-fair insiders and outsiders, feels clubby all around. Powhida’s critique of a narcissistic art world is sharper in a short video starring his eponymous train-wreck artist persona. Straightforward appropriation pieces—including Nancy Drew’s outlandish flock-and-glitter reworkings of Mondrian and Gorky paintings and Aneta Grzeszykowska’s six excellent color photographs from a series that restages every Cindy Sherman “Untitled Film Still”—stray from the exhibition’s theme. Conrad Bakker’s carved and painted wooden replicas of ten *Artforum* covers from September 1969 to June 1970, however, hit the mark as they recall a time when critics perceived themselves as actively writing art history—a position of power that the art market holds now.

— Christopher Howard