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Interview

MIAMI VICE



Clay Deutsch and Diego Caro de Briature

Miami's Terri and Donna is probably the only gallery to feature on its blog naked photographs of its "artists." It's also probably the only gallery to put the words artist, when referring to people whose work it exhibits, in quotation marks. That said, when in Miami, do as the Miamians do, and make a statement.

Terri and Donna is actually Diego Caro de Briature, who's showed solo at Snitzer in Miami, Tomio Koyama in Tokyo and Frieze, and Clay Deutsch, a recent Columbia MFA graduate—both of them are artists/curators. Working in the great tradition of Castelli, Gagosian, Zwirner, Marian Goodman, they named their first gallery for "really awesomely terrible girl's names, the worst we could think of." Further, the first show was called "Craig, Greg, and Gladys: Back to Crazy." While the "back to crazy" portion might be less easily explained, the names themselves are based on miscommunications, and misunderstandings—slippages that intend to open the way you think about an artist or their work to mistakes. At a loud party, Clay has been introduced to people and been variously mistaken as Craig or Greg. And a personal touch: It was Diego who first misconstrued "Clay" as Gladys.



Part of the challenge of opening a gallery in a second city like is to filling in gaps in other gallery's rosters while maintaining local specificity. While the curators clearly have a soft spot for Miami's reputed kitsch, Deutsch indicates that what's glitters is gold: "Everyone thinks that Miami is only about Art Basel, but there is a lot of stuff going on, and some really good galleries and museums." In 2009, Terri and Donna is scheduled to show local artists Gean Moreno and Patricio Cuello. But he complains of a "Brooklynization" that generally occurs when developers set their sights on a local neighborhood and try to make it into what they think an "artsy" neighborhood should be like—something resembling "Brooklyn lofts." He's observed that people respond to Miami's aggressive development by adopting a sort of trans-psedudo-bohemianism, "You see a lot of themes of enchanted children or enchanted nature. Totally superstitious." Needless to say, they've set up shop outside of the gallery district, Wynwood.

The first show featured two artists from Columbia's graduate program—Davis Rhodes, a painter and sculptor with a solo show at **Team Gallery** in September, and Georgia Sagri, a performance artist whose show at **On Stellar Rays** opens on Sunday, and Nic Xedro, a Brooklyn-based performer. The first press release was a satirical theoretical conversation in which 'Merleau-Ponty' was spelled incorrectly. Deutsch explains, "Spell check doesn't catch French proper nouns." The second show is about blueberries, and includes 200 pints of them. Clearly, the curators are thinking about their level of education and training, because, Deutsch says, "That's where my education put me." Deutsch insisting on working to make new forms, and making it fun. And with room to develop, as it were Miami is a place take on, "the bigger, harder question—the question of how do you start something new."