

MARTOS GALLERY

The New York Times

Art in Review; The Name of This Show Is Not: Gay Art Now

By **Roberta Smith**

July 7, 2006

Consistent with the provocative title of the beautiful, cannily installed show he has organized, the artist Jack Pierson announces in the gallery's news release that "the notion of Gay Art" strikes him as "somewhat passé." His show, he writes, "is an ode to its passing."

Containing artists living and dead, known and obscure, gay, straight and unspecified, the show begins with David Dupuis's haunting portrait of himself as an old man and ends three rooms later with works by Louise Fishman, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Bill Rice and Matthew Barney. In between you'll find Marsden Hartley painting flowers, Deborah Kass remaking Andy Warhol's portrait of Liza Minnelli, Caroline Thompson evoking (stylistically) the great Florine Stettheimer, Kathleen White conjuring up small bubbly abstractions, and a veritable mountain of Mardi Gras garb by Andrea Fraser.

Paul Lee brings new life to the assemblage with grisaille soda cans, and Kembra Pfahler, Hugo Guinness, Daniel McDonald, Jared Buckhiester and Antony of Antony and the Johnsons provide other surprises. Rob Pruitt contributes a painting of a silver and gold spider web, Gilbert & George an image that initially resembles a human brain but isn't.

Being a little bit pregnant may be impossible, but it seems likely that most people are a little bit gay, if they are lucky, regardless of their sexual orientations. That's because being gay, like being black or female, can foster the sense of heightened awareness that is essential to creativity, regardless of lifestyle, art style or identity.