

HYPERALLERGIC

Sensitive to Art & its Discontents



A view of Independent Projects, with a felt banner by Mike Kelley on the right and David Zwirner's booth of Raymond Pettibon in the center back (all photos by the author for Hyperallergic)



Work by John Tweddle, at Kayne Griffin Corcoran

An Alternative to the Art Fair Marathon

By Jillian Steinhauer

I didn't expect to say this, but Independent Projects is a lovely fair. Started by the creators of the Independent, Armory Week's alterna-fair, and taking place in the same location, the former Dia Art Foundation building on West 22nd Street in Chelsea, Independent Projects simultaneously builds on and slims down its sister fair's model. As with the Independent, the space remains quite open — galleries are given actual walls and differently sized, mostly angular areas to suit their needs, rather than the usual boxy art fair booths. And there are fewer galleries at Independent Projects (39 to the Independent's 56), which means everyone gets a little extra space.

A large part of the reason the show feels so relaxed and open, though, is that each gallery has brought only one artist, and in some cases only one artwork. Though this model wouldn't work for every fair, it does, as you'd expect, do wonders for the viewer experience; it allows you to spend quality time with the work.

And there is quite a bit of work worthy of that time at Independent Projects. Some of my favorite showings included glistening porno rocks by Aura Rosenberg at Martos Gallery, sculpted cat planters by June Hamper (the mother of Billy Childish) at White Columns, **trippy and cheeky paintings and drawings by John Tweddle at Kayne Griffin Corcoran**, obsessive woven paintings by Mark Barrow and Sarah Parke at Elizabeth Dee, beguiling work in a range of media by Gianfranco Baruchello at Massimo De Carlo, roughly tactile and sculptural paintings by Rosy Keyser at Maccarone, and Duane Hanson's mind-bending "Flea Market Lady" (1990) at Karma. To name a few.

In a further attempt to subvert the traditional art fair model, Independent Projects will remain for a week, changing from a marketplace to an exhibition after this weekend. Guides will be on hand to lead visitors through the show and explain the work, while the dealers go home, leaving just the art behind.