



Contents

# ArtReview

## April

Front

- 10 Letters Our readers respond.
- 13 Editor's Letter This month's focus: sound art.
- 15 Calendar Art events for your diary.
- 17 In Store The art buys of the month.
- 19 News Top stories from the international art world.
- 21 Books A new column selecting the best art reads.

In view

- 25 Exhibitions Previews of shows opening this month in London, New York, Los Angeles and Frankfurt.

Columns

- 31 Market Dominic Lutyens has advice on investing in glass.
- 35 Market Focus Morgan Falconer weighs up Rebecca Horn.
- 38 Chicago Michelle Grabner takes in art in the Windy City.
- 41 Cologne Charles Darwin savours some chocolate art.
- 44 Architecture Jay Merrick on Frei Otto's flights of fancy.
- 47 Fashion Martin Parr's latest take on consumer culture is his very own fashion magazine. David Ganspary reports.
- 51 Photography Liz Jobey visits Berlin before the Wall came down via John Gossage's chronicle of a divided city.

In focus

- 54 The sound of space Anthony Huberman assesses the impact and legacy of the Sixties sound art pioneers.
- 60 All the right notes Laurie Anderson and Christian Marclay discuss clouds, critics and William Burroughs.
- 66 The lost voice Steven Viscido's World Trade Center tapes have earned a place in history, says Seth Kim-Cohen.
- 70 Wire tapped Michael Bracewell is granted an all-too-rare audience with the influential art band.
- 74 When does a sound become art? Fifteen experimental musicians and artists respond to an *ArtReview* survey.

Other features

- 78 COVER ART: Family affair Jessica Morgan explores the influence of Iceland on the life and work of Dieter Roth.
- 82 You don't live here any more Sue de Beer's video art taps into the teenage psyche. By Shamim Momin.
- 88 The natural Siddhes Sardhu talks to Iranian polymath Abbas Kiarostami about film, photography and poetry.
- 92 Rare breed Tim Nye's eccentric New York apartment reflects its owner's taste in art, discovers Daniel Kunitz.

Back

- 102 Reviews Shows in New York, London, Berlin and Paris.
- 112 Party Step out with Dabryd Jones and Patrick McMullan.
- 114 The Bear View Sarah Thornton asks art-world luminaries what they look for in a good critic.



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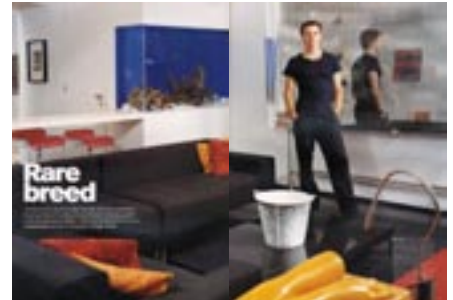
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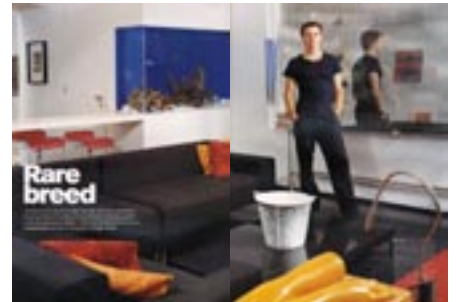


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'Collecting is like a drug. You start doing it casually and it sucks you in. It becomes part of your identity'

• when that aesthetic – how you could take a really small corner and continue to insert, even in the very narrow parameters that these artists laid out for themselves – was interesting to me.' Although Nye organised all the solo shows at Thread Winding Space, he hired curators to put together thematic or group shows. 'I consulted the curators, and that shaped the identity of the place.' Several years after it opened, he hired a professional fund-raiser and a chief curator. What had begun as an ad-hoc project in an old thread-winding factory took on a life of its own; it became an institution. By the 10th year, however, he'd stopped feeling aesthetically connected to the place. And, since they were losing their lease, he decided to shut it down and channel his energies into his various business projects. At Thread Winding Space I accumulated work but not in any intentional way. It was almost as if I forgot to collect – anything I ended up with was accidental.'

A few years ago, Nye decided to build a permanent public collection. So he established Foundation 20 21, which would acquire works by emerging artists. But, as he explains, all that time in business meant 'I was out of my visual world. And it wasn't like riding a bicycle, it was like re-learning my own taste. It was very much like I'd stopped eating food and had to re-learn what kind of food appealed to me.' He began looking and buying, using the space above his apartment casually, as a curatorial springboard with no formal programming. He also went to art fairs. 'I'm kind of an art fair junkie. Everyone criticises art fairs because you see one piece out of context. But you can also get a broad sense of what's going on in the art-making world and, if you're diligent about it, you can sit down with dealers and go through their programme in a more in-depth way. I can be in the worst depression, but if I'm able to see and get a great piece, it pulls me out of it. It's absolutely the most insane adrenaline rush.' Slowly, collecting became a full-blown obsession. 'It's like a drug,' Nye says. 'You start doing it in

Collector



a casual way and it sucks you in. It really becomes part of your identity.'

Work he buys for Foundation 20 21 will be exhibited thematically in the Nyehaus space. This summer he is planning a show that will bring together pieces by Tim Hawkinson, John Bock, Robert Truax, Josephine Meckseper, and Chris Hanson and Hendrika Sonnenberg.

Collecting led him to form Nyehaus as a commercial gallery, one modelled on Alfred Stieglitz's era-defining Gallery 291, an institution engaging in a critical dialogue with the international art scene. 'It just grew out of wanting to marry curatorial interests with more commercial interests,' he says. The first exhibition, devoted to Martin Kippenberger and called 'The Bermuda Triangle: Syros, Paris Bar, and Dawson City', opened in March. It included maquettes, architectural plans, portraits and 40 drawings from the 1990s. The mission of Nyehaus is two-fold. Approximately half of the shows will feature work by contemporary masters; Richard Tuttle, Franz West, Paul McCarthy and Robert Irwin are scheduled for the next two years. The other half of the programming will highlight work by young European artists such as Pauline Olabisi and Keith Fausch.

His various roles enable Nye to provide an uncommonly broad perspective on contemporary art, presenting both mid-career and emerging international artists. He brings a questioning, entrepreneurial spirit to his art-world pursuits, and his collection serves as fertile ground from which other projects spring. Too often art collections are viewed merely as accumulators. Nye is a creator.

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