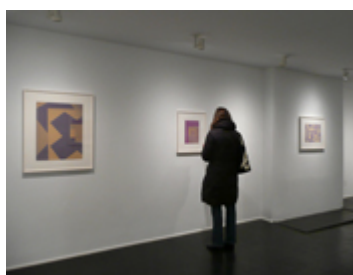




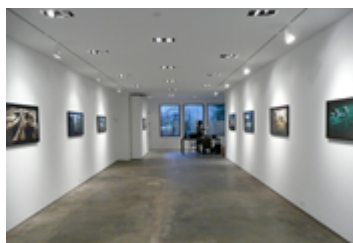
Print Article



Tracy Williams, Ltd., at 313 West 4th Street in New York



Ernst Caramelle, "Double Vision," at Tracy Williams, Ltd.



Colette Blanchard Gallery at 26 Clinton Street in Manhattan



James Graham & Sons at 32 East 67th Street in Manhattan

THE SOFT PARADE

by Charlie Finch

I was sitting in my usual spot for openings at the Tracy Williams Gallery townhouse on West 4th Street, on the second floor behind Ms. Williams' desk (she indulges me). The current show is pretty and understated, construction paper produced in the 1970s, cut in Ad Reinhardt forms, then left to dry and join together in the hot sun. The artist is the yummily monikered Ernst Caramelle.

Paul Judelson of I-20 Gallery sported a special Elizabeth Peyton-designed Barack Obama button. I asked him the edition. "500, Charlie, I got it through the New Museum." Lawrence Weiner winked at me in his ubiquitous red leather jacket, while Alice Aycock admired a large urban landscape photo from Mexico City behind Ms. Williams' desk. "There's a lot of you in that picture, Alice," I said with a grin.

Artist Adam Stennett remarked that his gallery, 31 Grand, which just moved from Williamsburg, might be closing: "I'm looking for a new one." "You should try Collette Blanchard Gallery on Clinton Street. She just opened, with two floors and a garden. Colette is dynamic and there's a brand new painting by Iona Rozeal Brown in the window.

Master of abstraction John Zinsler stopped by for a chat. "I really like James Graham's new East 67th Street space, where I'm showing. Remember Julian Preto?" We lapsed into a languid reminiscence of the late eccentric dealer, who, 20 years ago, had about seven or eight downtown spaces open at once. "Every time Julian walked by a storefront he liked, he would turn it into a gallery," John remarked. "He had one of the first cell phones, a tank which was tied to his hip. Julian would call me from Canal Street, shouting, 'John, can you hear me?'"

Anthony James, just off the plane from Los Angeles, mentioned that a commission he has in the Seagram Building has been delayed for six months: "Lehman Brothers is the excuse." Common sense for hard times is the rubric in the art world now, but the sensation is so new that we can't yet figure out what that is. Judgment guided by experience will soon let us know.

CHARLIE FINCH is co-author of *Most Art Sucks: Five Years of Coagula* (Smart Art Press).