

VENUS

MANHATTAN

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Auto Didact

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Left: "Pistonhead" bunnies. (Photo: Ana Cecilia Alvarez Ortiz) Right: Artist Damien Hirst and musician Pharrell Williams. (Photo: Mireya Acierto)

ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, the *Miami Herald* reported that Paul Walker was *not* in a relationship with local woman Genesis Rodriguez. I read it at the nail salon. Paul Walker is dead in his Porsche. The manicurist says the Miamiest shade of nail polish is Essie's "Penny Talk," which looks like sunset on a silver, ridiculous car.

Imagine your name were Genesis Rodriguez. Would you live anywhere but Miami? I adore this place: It's so fictional that nothing here seems strange. Nowhere else have I

seen money float free of class and this close to the sun, and in no other city I know—certainly not in New York—can you say “only in [blank]” and have it be accurate.

Still, not all are so in love with the mirage. On Tuesday, November 29, 2011, for example, the collector-writer-dealer Adam Lindemann went on strike. “Let’s agree to boycott the whole thing,” he wrote in his column for the *New York Observer*. “Let’s simply not go.... If we succeed in stopping them now, we can then enforce some new rules in this game. First and foremost, art fairs should be for collectors only; if you’re not coming to buy art, get the hell out. Second, gallery dinners only, preferably with a few artists and curators sprinkled in to keep it kosher. That means no parties to sell private jets, no jewelry company Champagne cocktails, not even a Ferrari schmoozer and boozier.”



Left: CEO of Ferrari North America Marco Mattiacci and dealer Adam Lindemann. Right: Artist Virginia Overton. (Photos: Billy Farrell)

A compelling polemic—and one that played well in my head as I ascended to the second floor of a famous parking garage for the champagne-soaked VIP opening of “Pistonhead: Artists Engage the Automobile,” put on by Adam Lindemann’s gallery, Venus Over Manhattan, and sponsored by Ferrari. If I sound uncharitable, I don’t mean it. The car is America’s most perfect machine. You cannot imagine a popular yet also critically acclaimed motion picture starring Ryan Gosling that is titled *Sew*, or even *Thresh*. French people think so too: *Pistonhead* is probably a riff on Museum Tinguely’s “Car Fetish,” which showed at Basel proper the same year Adam Lindemann “didn’t go” to Miami. But there is always room for more autos, especially on the wide and gleaming streets of South Beach, and even when traffic here moves like a rich guy entering the kingdom of heaven. Plus, look at the artists: Ron Arad, Bruce High Quality Foundation, Dan Colen

and Nate Lowman, Keith Haring, Damien Hirst, Richard Phillips, Richard Prince, Tom Sachs... I mean, it's about time for a male group show up in this beach! (Virginia Overton must've snuck in wearing overalls, her blonde, tumbling mane tucked under a tough red helmet.)

To celebrate this straight-acting affair, two Playboy bunnies (or Craigslist recruits in Playboy bunny costumes) posed in front of a black car while man after man lined up to have his picture taken. "I'm putting this on my Facebook page," said one. Another didn't know how to hold his camera, and a bunny kindly showed him: horizontally. Ten feet away, a woman from Art Production Fund described in detail the specs of a new red Ferrari selling for \$1.5 mil. When I asked the name of an artist who had inked, on a massive floor-laid cloth, the flattened parts of a car, she could not remember. "I do know it's only \$10,000," she said, "which is a bargain, comparatively." (Yees, but what is the mileage like?)



Left: Best Buddies International founder and chairman Anthony Shriver with collector Peter Brant. Right: Dealers Gavin Brown, Michelle Maccarone, and Corinna Durland. (Photos: Dimitrios Kambouris)

At the *Interview* x Porsche Design party, ten blocks away at Temple House, a mother and her daughters posed in front of a white wall hung with many identical handbags. Zoë Kravitz wandered in looking dazed after closing time (8 PM). Then she took the stage. Her voice was dusty in the blacklight; she belongs on something more like a motorcycle. Outside, two blonde Russians climbed into an idling Porsche. "We're going to the Ferrari party," said one.

Up the beach and to the left, the Brant Foundation held its Best Buddies Art + Friendship Auction at the home of real estate developer Ugo Colombo. Several members of the Brit aristocracy attended. Three men showed up dressed like midcentury gangsters on a hobby boat, and one of them was Leo DiCaprio. Seven or eight cars—a Peugeot, a Lamborghini, a Bugatti maybe—were the first works I saw outside the house, but they were not for sale, and later I learned that Colombo bought “the Collection” after the government seized it from his ex-racing partner, Armando “Mandy” Fernandez, who was busted I guess for drugs. Now the market is just as criminal, but also legal. A Dan Colen went for \$175,000.



Left: Artist Matthu Placek with his mother. Right: *Visionaire*'s Cecilia Dean. (Photos: Sam Roeck)

Did you know that Marina Abramović used to live in a car with Ulay and that they drove in circles for a year when they had no clothes or food and drank from her vagina for sustenance three times annually, but she never once got pregnant? So you can mock The Abramović Method all you like, but it sure beats the pill. Further convincing: Her naked body is still a masterpiece. I know because I saw it—in 3-D—by waiting for an hour to watch Matthu Placek's five-minute “film installation” *A Portrait of Marina Abramović*, produced by *Visionaire* and shown at the National YoungArts Foundation (behind the Audi dealership). During it, she opens her eyes slowly. I used to love Marina's art, and then I hated it, and now I love it again because I never have to wonder what it's about.

Nearing midnight, when the million-dollar cars turn into cabs, there was a pileup of egos

at the door of the Soho House, where White Cube and Lehmann Maupin feted Tracey Emin's show at MoCA North Miami by turning on all the pink lights. The many Baselites not on the list yet claiming a *need* to get into the party because a) they know someone who knows Tracey Emin, or b) they are interviewing Tracey Emin for a magazine, or c) Tracey Emin is their favorite artist will be gratified to know that Tracey Emin was nowhere to be found. Her old pal Damien Hirst, however, was outside taking a selfie with his twenty-three-year-old date. Hirst making relevant art again? Yes, but only in Miami.

— *Sarah Nicole Prickett*



Left: Artist Tracey Emin. Right: Emin's afterparty at the Soho Beach House. (Photos: Mireya Acierto)