

are indebted to the popcorn-stitch knitting of a sweater remembered fondly from the artist's childhood. But a distinctly tactile kind of memory plays a big part throughout.

The Riverside Park Fund, steward of the park along the Hudson River, is celebrating 20 years of conservancy with a program of sited work called "Studio in the Park," on view through Sept. 16. Curated by Karin Bravin and produced by BravinLee Programs, it brings together 10 artists, many of whom are not known for public art, and not a few of whom are painters. Among the latter are Fabian Marcaccio, who has often brought his turbulent "paintaints" outdoors, and Alexis Rockman, ranking visual poet of the toxic sublime. Works span the considerable length of the park, from 70th Street to 151st; Elana Herzog has woven hers into a grated median that runs north from 84th Street, and Gary Simmons's digital print *Wishing Field* is mounted on the backstops at two baseball fields, at 107th and 148th Streets.

Just a little upriver, the gallery and grounds at Wave Hill (in Riverdale, the Bronx) are the site of "Garden Improvement" (June 11-Aug. 27), in which artists bring the spirit of domesticity to the great outdoors, and vice versa. Ceramic birdhouses, and a lawnmower and portable fountain that are both solar-powered, will be among the projects on the grounds (which also boast one of New York's finest, if smallest, public gardens); inside the gallery will be several works—a scenterium, a portable herbarium—that bring the outdoors in. Artists include Jimbo Blachly and Lytle Shaw, Joan Bankemper, Paula Hayes and Andy Yoder. Also at Wave Hill this summer is a project by Nina Katchadourian (June 11-Oct. 31) that involves human performances of birdcalls transliterated as English (e.g., the chestnut-sided warbler's song becomes the "Please, Please, Pleased to Meet/cha" of the project's title). The recordings will be played through solar-powered speakers installed in trees; visitors will be excused for moments of species-bending confusion.

At Socrates Sculpture Park on the Queens waterfront, Andrea Zittel's "High Desert Test Sites," which offer opportunities for artists to do experimental work, will have a temporary East Coast outpost. Those participating here, in an exhibition called "Interstate: The American Road Trip," include Katie Grinnan, the Los Angeles Urban Rangers (Sara Daleiden and Emily Scott) and Virginia Poundstone.

—Nancy Princenthal

fixtures and a printing press, as well as a radar recognition system for the U.S. Navy. He retired from industrial design in 1972 but continued teaching and today is professor emeritus. A complete list of exhibitions, which continue through June 26, is available at [www.viktorschreckengost.org](http://www.viktorschreckengost.org).

—Janet Koplos

## The Real (Art) World

After the plethora of reality television shows bombarding our screens in recent years, featuring everything from top fashion models who critique wannabes to cleaning ladies who scrutinize the level of cleanliness in your home, it was surely only a matter of time before the camera turned its focus on the art world. Dreamed up by New York-based curator James Fuentes and artist Christopher Sperandio and starring art dealer Jeffrey Deitch, "Artstar" is a documentary-style reality show about the New York art world and its perennial search for a new phenom.

Produced by Abby Terkuhle of Aboriginal Entertainment, who made his name with such MTV favorites as "Beavis and Butthead" and "Celebrity Deathmatch," "Artstar" premieres on June 1 at 9 PM EDT on Gallery HD, a visual arts channel available nationwide on Dish Network (channel 9472). The show follows eight artists who were selected from an open call. Filmed over eight episodes, the cast collaborates on a group exhibition at Deitch Projects, with the potential of a solo show for one "artstar."

One chilly morning in February 2005, a queue of more than 300 potential stars snaked through SoHo, each eagerly waiting to show five artworks to the judges: Fuentes; Deitch; Carlo McCormick, independent curator and senior editor of *Paper* magazine; critic David Rimanelli; Debra Singer, director of The Kitchen; and artist Ryan McGinness. The process was ruthless and the atmosphere tense, with each artist given only a few minutes to explain his or her work. During the second round, one nervous painter was nearly reduced to tears, causing Rimanelli to quip, "The art world will be your salvation." She did not make the cut. The final group of eight comprises interesting characters working in a diverse range of mediums, including a performance artist/doctor who promises to genetically engineer the next art-world darling, a sculptor from Brooklyn's Madagascar Institute who works with bicycles, a 63-year-old woodcarver, a transvestite photographer and a builder of card houses.

During filming, some particularly alert galleries began to court one of the



The cast of "Artstar," (left to right) Anney McKilligan, Virgil Wong, Bec Stupak, Gigi Chen, Sy Colen, Abigail DeVile, Jeffrey Deitch, Christian Dietkus, Zachary Drucker.

artists, Bec Stupak, so Deitch responded by giving her a solo show. Her wild, colorful videos, including a remake of Jack Smith's 1963 film *Flaming Creatures*, filled the gallery's space on Grand Street (Jan. 12-Feb. 25). There is some secrecy about the final outcome of the series, and according to producers at Gallery HD, Stupak is not necessarily the winner. "Artstar" may make good television, but one wonders if it will really turn artists into stars.

—Constance Wyndham

## What Rhymes With Dada?

Prada's downtown Manhattan store reopened Apr. 18, after a January fire in its SoHo building (also home to *Art in America's* still displaced offices), with an ambitious self-celebratory exhibition drawn from designer Miuccia Prada's skirt archive. The store's dramatic two-level space designed by Rem Koolhaas looked as sleek as ever, the upper level densely hung with giant cutouts of mannequins shown "Waist Down," as the show is titled. On the lower level, phalanxes of headless mannequins naked from the waist up seemed, in the context of the massive touring Dada exhibition currently preoccupying the art world, right in keeping with the generic, often headless females that have long haunted Dada and Surrealist installations. At the mobbed, festive, strobe-lit champagne party that launched the show, one visitor commented, "I don't know why they didn't call this 'Headless Body in Topless Bar.'"

A multitude of skirts—100 of them, from 1989 to 2006—were subjected to countless ingenious, witty display strategies. Some were hung against the walls, as mechanical devices inside them twitched their hips; another group was set spinning, inviting peeks from below which revealed, instead of nether anatomical parts, the animating machinery. The concentra-

tion on this one item of clothing highlighted a variety of formats, design approaches and materials: micro-mini, long; voluminous, confining; diaphanous/romantic, heavy/militaristic; pleated schoolgirl silhouettes alternating with constructions that resemble chastity belts. A few skirts were laden with attached objects (another Dada trope) ranging from chains and grommets to pieces of mirror or mother-of-pearl, some of the elements so fragile, sharp or entangling as to render the skirt wearable only at considerable risk.

Numerous circular skirts were treated in an abstract manner, plastered flat against the wall so that they resembled Minimalist tondos, targets or spin paintings. Cropping up as posters for the show on walls and construction sidings around the city and widely characterized as "flowers," many of the rumpled, flattened circles with their central hole more interestingly brought to mind used coffee filters—or Judy Chicago's flower/vagina images that figured in feminist debates of the 1970s.

Occupying what was once the SoHo Guggenheim's lobby space, the show, designed by Koolhaas's Office for Metropolitan Architecture (responsible for the changing wallpaper and other graphic elements since the store opened), this frankly commercial presentation stood its ground in the company of other instances of art and fashion's cohabitation, offering considerably more pizzazz than (for example) the uptown Guggenheim's late, unlamented Armani show. ["Waist Down" made earlier appearances in Tokyo and Shanghai; it remains in New York to May 31. Prices are \$4,000-\$30,000 for limited editions of selected skirts; commemorative T-shirts \$75; catalogue \$120.]

Opening night party for the exhibition "Waist Down" at Prada's SoHo store.

