



Daniel Firman, *Nasutamanus*, 2012, fiberglass and polymer, 7'1" x 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Galerie Perrotin.

FLORIAN KLEINEFENN



Berenice Abbott, *Park Avenue and 39th Street*, New York City, October 8, 1936, gelatin silver print, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Jeu de Paume.

## Jeremy Deller

Hayward  
London

Jeremy Deller is a master of one-off, ephemeral events in the public square that are designed to stimulate conversation, which the artist then conceives as part of the work. For *It Is What It Is* (2009), he attached a bombed-out car from Baghdad to the back of a camper

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Jeremy Deller, *Valerie's Snack Bar*, 2009, mixed media, dimensions variable, installation view. Hayward.

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TATE LONDON/FONDAZIONE PALAZZO ALBIZZINI, COLLEZIONE BURRI, CITTÀ DI CASTELLO, 2012

and took it across America with an Iraqi émigré and a veteran, engaging people in chats about the war. That crushed, rusted shell appeared in this exhibition, along with videos of the frank, sometimes cringe-inducing conversations.

The wrecked car is an arresting, crudely beautiful object, but, like much of the work in Deller's midcareer survey, titled "Joy in People," the assemblage as a whole tended to sink under the weight of its own earnestness. The problem is not that Deller tries to impose a particular point of view—on the contrary, the Iraq project is carefully fair-minded—but that he fails to bring much mystery or subtlety into his grand constructions in the way that, for example, Francesc Torres or Francis Alÿs achieve with comparable approaches. He tends to overexplain things and this gives his work an air of the pedantic.

Born in 1966, the London artist often focuses on northern England and its recent history. His reenactment of a 1984 battle between the police and striking coal miners, represented here in his film *The Battle of Orgreave (An Injury to One is an Injury to All)*, 2001, looks like a second round of the original conflagration. It involved hundreds of volunteers replaying roles in a Yorkshire village and engaged the public with gusto. In *Valerie's Snack Bar* (2009), a wall panel invited viewers to sit in a mock-up of an actual Manchester café "and we will offer you a cup of tea" while a video played a Deller-organized street procession of the city's eccentrics. As with much of this artist's work, the idea has a quirky charm but, in the execution, came across as surprisingly banal.

—Roger Atwood



Alberto Burri, *Sacking and Red*, 1954, acrylic and hessian collage on canvas, 34" x 39½".  
Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art.



Tatjana Valsang, *Felder*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, 7½' x 5'.  
Konrad Fischer Galerie.