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Pace Gallery Starts the Season with Three Shows on West 25th Street

By Michael H. Miller 12:49pm



David Byrne's *Tight Spot*. Photo by Danny Kim

You could hear David Byrne's installation *Tight Spot*—which opened yesterday beneath the High Line next door to The Pace Gallery's 25th Street branch—long before you saw it. The piece is a large inflatable globe, crammed beneath the old re-appropriated train track in a small enclave off the street. The artist and former Talking Head recorded his voice and processed it so that, played through speakers, it rumbled and echoed, sounding like bombs hitting or

Pace had three openings last night and took over most of the block for the occasion. Appropriately, the "Social Media" exhibition was bustling with people, all talking over one another. The show was a collection of art about our over-sharing Internet age. Penelope Umbrico compiled photos illustrating trends on the web—*Sunset Portraits from 9,623,557 Flickr sunset pictures on 8/22/11* doesn't need much explanation; *Sideways TVs* was a collage of photographs from Craigslist of, you guessed it, pictures of the sides of televisions that people were attempting to sell. Elsewhere, Mr. Byrne showcased canvases of imaginary iPhone apps with names like "Weaselface"—"adds snark and satire to any written text—including the bible!" and "Buzclip," which claims to "use the vibration function on your phone to remove body hair" (Customer comments: "I can't hear my calls anymore! The earpiece is full of hair! Useless!"). People snapped photos of the fake iPhone screens with their iPhones.

At Pace's second location on 25th street was the comparably tame exhibition of Agnes Martin's Grey Paintings. One visitor walked into the gallery and called the difference between this impressively understated show and "Social Media" "a comic contrast." There was a lot more room to breathe. The canvases are all the same size, with a level of minimalist texture and pattern that renders the work almost non-existent. They are dramatically subtle. The grey blocks of paint and horizontal lines nearly blend in with the concrete floor.

Mr. Byrne's bright white tuft of hair stood out, then, as he walked into the room. It felt especially quiet because everything else in the evening had been so loud.

In a low voice, *The Observer* said, "I liked *Tight Spot*. It's much louder than I expected."

"Thanks," he said softly. "We cranked up the volume a bit."