

Art in Review

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DAN FISCHER

Unique Forms of Continuity in Space

Derek Eller Gallery

615 West 27th Street,

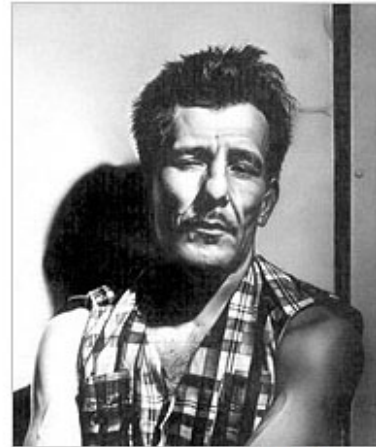
Chelsea

Through Dec. 19



Derek Eller Gallery

A graphite drawing of Marcel Duchamp in Dan Fischer's show "Unique Forms of Continuity in Space" at the Derek Eller Gallery.



Derek Eller Gallery

Dan Fischer's graphite drawing of Franz Kline at the Derek Eller Gallery.

Dan Fischer's art could be called retro-appropriation. Instead of rephotographing photographs like a card-carrying postmodernist, he painstakingly converts them into graphite drawings. The compressed velvetiness and devotional air of these small works go against the grain of most postmodernism, yet except for the small patches of grid that indicate the artist's handiwork, they can almost be mistaken for photographs.

The images Mr. Fischer copies are well-known photographs of famous 20th-century artists and artworks that play off one another. Postmodern irony is represented by shots of [Marcel Duchamp](#), Francis Picabia and Richard Prince. Impassioned sincerity has its advocates in [Piet Mondrian](#), [Marsden Hartley](#), [Alfred Stieglitz](#) and [Louise Bourgeois](#). Somehow the twain meet in a drawing based on an unusual photograph of Franz Kline in a sleeveless shirt that makes his head seem collaged onto an oddly feminine body.

The artworks whose images Mr. Fischer converts to drawings include Umberto Boccioni's large bronze 1913 sculpture of a striding man; its title, "Unique Forms of Continuity in Space," is also the show's title. Mr. Fischer establishes continuities by transforming related photographs into "unique forms." Duchamp's original urinal, with a Hartley painting behind it, is the subject of one drawing; Elaine Sturtevant's reiteration of the Duchamp appears in another. A shot of [Constantin Brancusi](#) in his studio includes a "Bird in Flight"; Ms. Bourgeois appears a second time with a marble sculpture that resembles a flock of Brancusi birds. A self-portrait that Duchamp created when he was 58 and made up to look 85 resonates with a photograph of Mr. Prince in a suit and makeup, looking androgynous.

The show's most beautiful image is a form of continuity unto itself: a wall of Mondrian's New York studio, where paintings, shelves and tacked-up squares of color form an irregular grid of grays so subtly modulated they might as well be colored. **ROBERTA SMITH**