

ARIs from around the world

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Paris ARIs

Historically, Paris has been ‘home’ to many important artists and intellectuals. So, during a recent studio residency, at the Cité internationale des arts, I was expecting to discover the new generation making work and discussing ideas within the confines of an established artist run scene. But, beneath the over-the-top opulence and grandeur that is uniquely Paris I found little to suggest a heaving emerging art scene. Perhaps these emerging artist, curators and writers have been driven out by the expense of the city and the correlative lack of space to make and present work?

The closest I came to the scene I expected to find was a small cluster of galleries located beyond the center of the city in Belleville, a neighbourhood which is spread across the 10th, 11th, 19th & 20th arrondissements. Here, galleries represent emerging artist’s work, exhibitions occur in small galleries with rough walls and, disappointingly, the work itself is rough and poorly articulated. Perhaps I was unlucky in my search and didn’t get to see the kind of work I was seeking but what I saw lacked the quality that might be found in other international ARI scenes, Australia included. It is worth a look regardless and hopefully you’ll find something more interesting than I did along Rue Ramponeau, Rue Julien and Rue Jouye-Rouve. On a more recent

visit I discovered castillo/corrales on rue Julien Lacroix a space which normally functions as an office and collectively run gallery. During April the space gave way to planned and spontaneous readings, concerts, exhibitions and parties at their newly initiated MACHU PICCHU bar. Think small local bar meets artist run space and you have a good impression of the intimate and lively vibe that castillo/corrales successfully created; unfortunately in Paris it was also extremely rare.

But, perhaps my general dismay came from a (not unusual) misaligned perspective to that of the French. This shift in perspective I discovered when visiting the exhibition *WYSIWYG: What You(ngs) See Is What You Get* at the Rosenblum Collection & Friends gallery. On show was young artists from the collection and young in this case was defined as between 30-40 years old, not the 25-35 years that commonly forms the definition of ‘emerging’ and thus youthful art practices in Australia. In this collection the work, which included artists such as Wade Guyton, Sterling Ruby and Amanda Ross-Ho, was housed in a slick, smart and super fashionable architecturally designed space. Their work was indicative of the refined and defined practices that sit well with the many large and outstanding commercial, public or privately funded institutions and galleries that can be found in Paris.



Berlin ARIs

Attracted by relatively cheap rents and its central location to much of Europe, artists have been moving to Berlin since reunification. Today, Berlin maintains a ‘live and let live’ attitude that is conducive to ongoing experimentation and continued commitment to creating an interesting and vibrant art scene.

Two relatively new spaces that are part of the overwhelmingly large ARI and emerging art community are Node Centre for Curatorial Study and REH Kunst.

Node, located in Kreuzberg is a small but perfectly formed space which offers courses in curatorial studies while providing a broader engagement and support for emerging creative activity in curatorial and contemporary art practices. They regularly host interesting events, workshops and studio visits by their curators in residence. At Node I made it to the launch screening of ‘Burn Hollywood Burn’, a new feature length video by Australian artists Soda_Jerk with Sam Smith. Their work screened to a large and highly supportive group of locals who demonstratively appreciated the artist’s piratical and humorous disregard for corporate copyright laws.

REH Kunst in Presnzlauer Berg is a gallery housed in a relocated Raumerweiterungshalle, a GDR mid-sixties shop which is made up of segments that can be retracted or telescoped to modify the space into varying lengths. It is the broader theoretical nature of the telescope and its relationship to space and perception that Australian Curator Lauren Reid connected with while working with the gallery for the exhibition ‘Out of the black’ which featuring the work of Regina de Miguel, Sam Smith and Kim Westerström.

The unique nature of the space demands that each artist work with it, as it is impossible to ignore. I made it to Australian artist Carly Fischer’s exhibition *I want to love you but I’m getting blown away* which featured 1:1 scale replicas of found discarded items such as cigarette butts, coke cans or Lidl shopping bags (a german chain store of supermarkets). Fischer’s objects, unlike Andy Warhol’s soup cans, are clearly in a state of post consumption. Fischer’s efforts to meticulously reconstruct these objects and carefully position them on the gallery floor revealed otherwise unobserved beauty in what is normally used and forgotten.

Facing page: Installation view, Carly Fischer. *I want to love you but I’m getting blown away*, REH Kunst, 2012. Photo: Bernhard Volkwein.
Above: *Out of the black* (Sam Smith, install view) 2012 REH Kunst, Berlin