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MOMENTS AND MOODS: HOPE GANGLOFF

I first learned of Hope Gangloff from a small drawing she made of Anna Wintour, which sat against a wall at the top of my uncle's staircase. Whenever I visited I found myself looking forward to the slow dawning of Wintour's pallid face as I ascended the stairs. When my uncle, an art dealer, mentioned the name of the artist, it sounded like the scientific designation of a neuron or perhaps some part of the kidney. And that was all I heard of Hope Gangloff.



Until recently, Gangloff's new show at Susan Inglett in New York is mostly of portraits. This time around the subjects are Gangloff's own friends instead of celebrities—and writ much larger than the petite Wintour of memory. These are paintings, not drawings, and the canvases cover huge swathes of white gallery wall. They're bigger and better than the Wintour drawing, and just as enigmatic.

Gangloff uses colour sparingly but sumptuously, and she likes her reds and blues. She paints pale city-dwellers reclining on their beds with a beer can or a book in hand, their expressions frozen in a not-quite-readable zone. Under her bruskin becomes multifaceted; a knee may have 12 surfaces and a toe might appear chiseled from stone. There are seven paintings in the show and it is just enough. Five women, one man, and a pile of trash—each one just as pretty as the last.

Hope Gangloff at Susan Inglett Gallery, New York, through November 25th

~ MOLLY YOUNG

Picture credit: "Salomé" (2009) by Hope Gangloff