

PRESS CLIPPING
THE NEW YORK TIMES
[Ken Johnson, The New York
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The New York Times

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Olaf Breuning
'Hello Darkness'
Swiss Institute
495 Broadway, near Spring Street
SoHo
Through Aug. 3

Though it's considerably racier, the tableau that Olaf Breuning has produced here resembles what you see in the front yards of creative suburbanites on Halloween. First you have to pass through the gallery's library, which appears to have been wrecked by some supernatural fiend. There is a hole broken through one wall, and it's hard to tell whether that force of chaos escaped from the darkness on the other side, wreaking havoc on the rational order of the library on its way out, or broke through going the other way, from reason to madness.

In any event, you step through the hole into a vast dark space animated by ominous music and a slowly spinning wheel of blue light. At the far end, illuminated by colored lights that go on and off, a skeleton sits in a pile of dirt near a large, deluxe coffin in which lounges an extraordinarily realistic, life-size sex doll. An axe loosely held in one of her hands suggests that she was the one who ruined the library.

A dialogue between death and the maiden sounds like a loopy conversation between Darth Vader and Linda Blair in "The Exorcist": "Tell me, death, what do you know about death?" she asks, and he replies, "You are somewhere else; I cannot tell you exactly, but it is strange." Like Mr. Breuning's ape-world extravaganza at Metro Pictures last year, this all makes for amusingly over-the-top and, for a moment at least, gripping theater.



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