



OPENING CEREMONY  
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## OPENING CEREMONY NEW NEWS

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Nan Goldin, *Bea in our Bathroom*, 1972



Left, Natalie Frank's *Headdress 1*, 2013;; Right, Nan Goldin's *Kim in her dressing room at Le Carousel, P*

Tue, July 23, 2013

### **Rauch & Revelry: Nightlife at Friedman Benda Gallery**

by [OPE OMOJOLA](#)

*Please note: this post includes NSFW content that may not be appropriate for younger readers.*

More than a few philosophers and art historians have argued that the best way to look at art is in a white-walled room— serene, elevated, quiet, and separate from the concerns and aesthetics of our daily lives. But at **Friedman Benda** last week, common wisdom was unceremoniously pushed out of a broken window. The gallery's summer group exhibition, *And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music*, was a raucous collection of artworks preoccupied with "the collective party experience." What better way to view party artwork than in a gallery transformed into a club space, where revelers chat and giggle in dim corners, and a DJ churns out danceable beats under the spinning light of a disco ball?

Omojola, Ope. "Rauch & Revelry: Nightlife at Friedman Benda Gallery," *Opening Ceremony New News*. July 23, 2013.

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Wolfgang Tillmans' *Spitting on Dick*, 1997

After showing my ID to the bouncer (this was an 18-and-over opening) I walked into a Studio 54-ish atmosphere, replete with shimmering gold and black walls, spotlights on the artwork, and drag performers in various states of undress strutting around the space. Along one wall, a series of photographs peered out from behind punched-through walls. The images ranged from contrasty black-and-whites by Nan Goldin, to *Spitting on Dick*, a Wolfgang Tillmans portrait of a young man having a solo party of his own. Not far, a group of young ladies lounged on beanbag chairs watching *Stardust*, a video by Nicolas Provost. Behind them, a mixed media installation by Agathe Snow hung from the ceiling, and atop it, miniature disco balls cast glittering squares of light over the crowd.

The show presented all facets of our nocturnal lives: from literal depictions of partygoers to more abstract images of psychedelic visions and symbols. Despite the leisurely atmosphere, the show was a thorough investigation on what it means to have fun, and pursued a much different aesthetic from the typical "summer" themed shows that feature seascapes, animals, and pastel-toned abstracts. You may have missed the party, but you can still stop by and have a good time.

*Through August 17, 2013*

# **FRIEDMAN BENDA**

515 West 26th St,  
New York, NY 10001

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Bill Beckley's *The Bathroom*, 1977



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The curator, Thorsten Albertz, in front of the show's title mural

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