



"Beyond the Pale"
Moti Hasson Gallery
535 West 25th Street
Through February 17

Into the Fray

Chelsea morning:
A gallery makes its mark

For a little more than two years, Moti Hasson Gallery has operated out of a boxy second-floor space in a nondescript building at the fringes of the Chelsea art world, on West 38th Street. Despite mounting good shows, the gallery stayed under the art world's radar. Now, like other galleries that have had to come to terms with the primacy of the New York art world's herd instinct, the gallery has moved into a slick ground-floor space in the belly

of the Chelsea beast on West 25th Street. If "Beyond the Pale," the gallery's inaugural exhibition here, is any gauge, the fringe's loss is Chelsea's gain.

This better-than-average group show of eight young artists, several of whom are still in graduate school, was curated by the gallery's two directors, Candice Madey and Tairone Bastien. The exhibition identifies artists who, to one degree or another, either deploy systems of material dispersion or create art that is structured and ordered without being overtly systematic.

Tommy Hartung's visually rich video depicts tracking shots and close-ups of scrap metal, concrete blocks, circuitry, orange peels, and other detritus. It turns into a fascinating microscopic journey of what feels like another world or the Terminator's mainframe. Xylor Jane, one of the better under-known artists out there, makes grid paintings that are Yayoi Kusama and Alfred Jensen crossed with a prisoner marking time on a jail cell wall. These works are filled with daubs, glitches,

and flashes of weird consciousness.

Kerstin Brätsch's intriguing New York debut at Derek Eller Gallery a couple of summers ago consisted of a series of prismatic paintings of faces or spirit guides. Here, she installs a large diamond configuration of black-and-white Xeroxes of nothing. Over these she has mounted her painted faces, making this work oscillate between the coolly conceptual and a talismanic object.

In addition to good works by Shinique Smith, who makes sculptures out of old clothes, and Clifford Owens, who has re-created performance pieces by Benjamin Patterson, "the only African-American member of the Fluxus group," there's the poignant video by Uri Aran. A combination of the local news, a Caravaggio painting, and a cry for help, this video depicts New York construction workers at night in the freezing cold. A man stands in front of them pretending to be a newscaster while a voiceover has Aran reading a love letter. The effect, like the show itself, is fairly intense. JERRY SALTZ