FORUM GALLERY

THE ART NEWSPAPER

Artists who defy categorisation take pride of place at Independent 20th Century

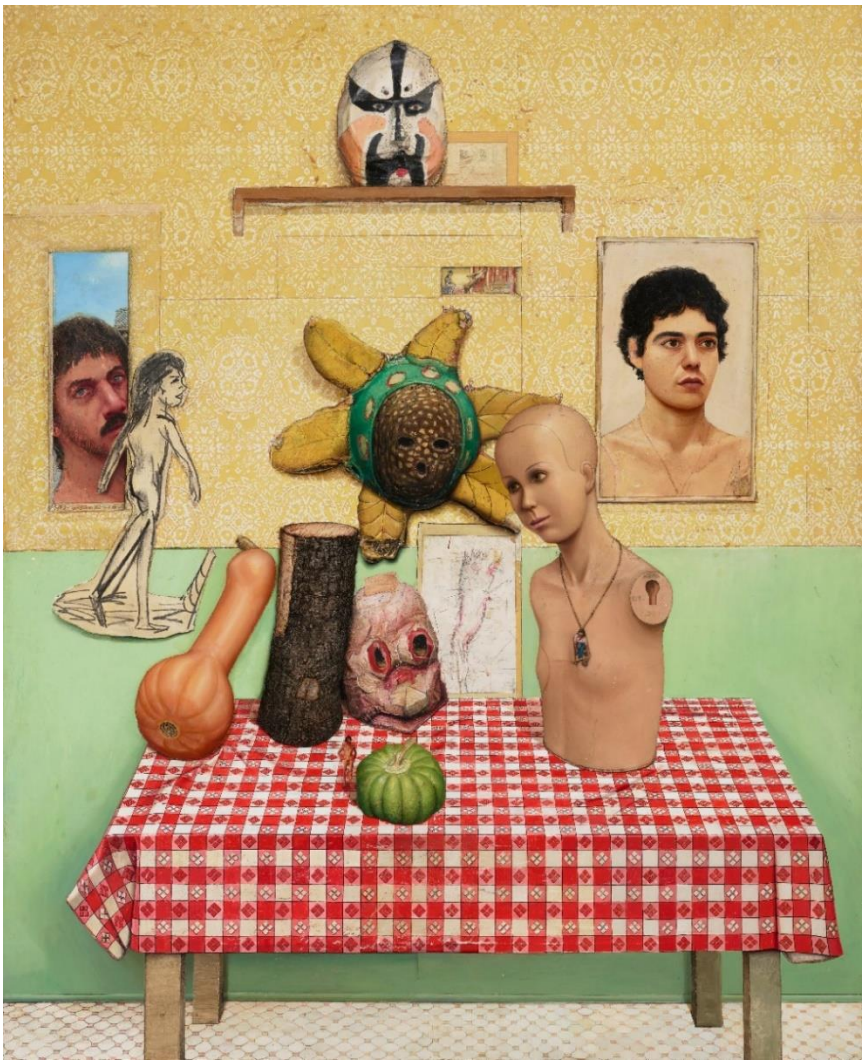
by Benjamin Sutton

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The Independent 20th Century fair opened to VIPs on Thursday (4 September), with participating dealers offering deep dives into canonical artists and showing jewel-box surveys of works by shape-shifting Modernists and Postmodernists. The latter group accounts for some of the fair's most memorable stands, giving visitors the opportunity to take a crash course in under-recognised mid-century abstractionists, singular Post-Minimalists and artists who pursued their own interests against the trends of their times...

...Another iconoclast deserving greater recognition is Gregory Gillespie (1936-2000), whose engrossing and surreal paintings from the late 1960s to the 90s are being shown by Forum Gallery (which first exhibited him in 1966). His dense, alluring and often grotesque compositions marry elements of Old Masters like Pieter Bruegel the Elder with collage and *trompe l'oeil* techniques that pull the viewer in to examine half-glimpsed details or understand exactly what they are seeing.

"He received a residency at the American Academy in Rome, living there from 1964 to 1970, and was heavily influenced by the city's iconography and textures," says gallery staffer Cheryl Fishko. "He often worked on wood panels, which allowed him to build up these layers of material to create the look and feel of the plaster walls of Roman apartment buildings."



Gregory Gillespie, *Studio: Still Life*, 1978,
oil, graphite, charcoal, alkyd and paper collage on board**,** 73 1/2 x 59 1/2 inches

Some of the works on the stand, which range in price from $40,000 to $165,000, will be featured in a larger presentation of Gillespie's work opening at Forum Gallery's space on Park Avenue next week (12 September-8 November). He is also the subject of a new documentary, *The Painted Life of Gregory Gillespie*, which has been shown at several film festivals this summer.

- *Independent 20th Century, until 7 September, Casa Cipriani at the Battery Maritime Building, 10 South Street, New York*

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