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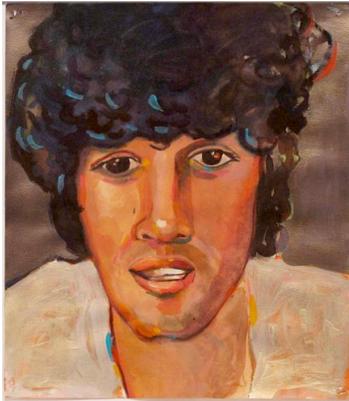
ART IN REVIEW

## ‘I Killed My Father, I Ate Human Flesh, I Quiver With Joy’: ‘An Obsession With Pier Paolo Pasolini’

By HOLLAND COTTER

Published: March 7, 2013

*Allegra LaViola Gallery  
179 East Broadway, at Canal Street, Lower East Side  
Through March 23*



It's been a good season for fans of [Pier Paolo Pasolini](#) (1922-1975). A Museum of Modern Art film [retrospective](#) in December coincided with an out-of-the-blue show of his little-seen portrait paintings at Location One in SoHo. Now, as a kicker, Allegra LaViola delivers a group tribute to this filmmaker, artist, poet and radical populist, whose work can be heavenly ([“The Gospel According to Matthew”](#)) or hellish ([“Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom”](#)), but is usually both.

Some of what's in the show — which has been organized by another Lower East Side gallery, Invisible-Exports — refers to Pasolini directly. Paolo Di Paolo's photographs catch him at work in the early 1960s. A collage by [Troels Carlsen](#) incorporates a vintage “Salò” poster. Film images turn up in Terence Hannum's boxed zines and in two very different videos, one by Doug Ischar, the other by Brian Kenny. Both are based on Pasolini's “Medea,” with Mr. Kenny's short piece, “Today You're 5 and I Want to Tell You the Truth,” a funhouse-mirror version of the myth of this murderous mother.

Pasolini wore his homosexuality like a badge. Carlton DeWoody's “Pasolini High School” varsity jacket, with its LGBT emblem, makes that point; photo-based pieces by Aaron Krach and Jeremy Kost back it up. Yeni Mao's rapid-fire video of exotic costume-drama clips is a reminder of Pasolini's sly exploitation of the genre. And although it's hard to convey a sense of the gross-out humor in his work, Leigha Mason's film “Spit Banquet,” in which diners feast on saliva, comes close.

Pasolini's death was grim: his mutilated body was found in the Roman suburb Ostia. Police said a hustler killed him; friends believed he was the victim of a political execution. Mark McCoy's exquisite ink drawing, “Eye Socket,” with its image of a world shattering, and Andy Coolquitt's nooselike sculpture, called “blue/night/brown/cloth/cut/rear/sew/tight/gut/seam/shut,” give a hint, but no more, of his violent end.

Then there's poetry. Any show with Karen Heagle's honest, full-hearted painting is interesting, and she has several examples here, including a likeness of Pasolini's lover Ninetto Davoli. Joey Frank's “Dove” book, lying open on the floor, is a sweet touch; so is a grit-spattered but ethereal abstraction called “Heart” by Duston Spear.

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Finally, Vaginal Davis's portrait of a lavender diva, painted with makeup, nail polish, hair spray and Afro Sheen conditioner, rounds things out, a little medley of humble beautifiers that a poet of the pure and perverse would have loved.

Photo: Courtesy of the Artist and Allegra LaViola Gallery

Karen Heagle's "Untitled (Ninetto)," from 2013, part of a group tribute show to the filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini.

A version of this review appeared in print on March 8, 2013, on page C27 of the New York edition with the headline: 'I Killed My Father, I Ate Human Flesh, I Quiver With Joy': 'An Obsession With Pier Paolo Pasolini'.