

Perrotin

A Gallery Opens Spewing Cash

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Indulgence, often bordering on cartoonish, marks the opening of the art world's latest temple.

By BOB MORRIS

In the basement of Galerie Perrotin, a powerhouse gallery from Paris that opened in New York on Tuesday night, a dollar bill shot out of a towering blue box and drifted onto a floor littered with bills and coins. A sign explained the work by Paola Pivi, an Italian artist: "Caution: Money is spit out everywhere."

It seemed appropriate given today's art market, not to mention the throngs of well-heeled collectors who came to inspect the city's newest mega-luxe gallery, which occupies a four-story landmark at the corner of East 73rd Street and Madison Avenue.

"The whole neighborhood is a money machine," said Ingrid Sischy, the Vanity Fair contributor.

Art world wheeler-dealers like Peter Brant, Simon de Pury, Jeffrey Deitch, Mike Ovitz, Beth Rudin DeWoody and Knight Landesman mingled on the first floor, under Ms. Pivi's life-size garishly colorful polar bear sculptures. They were joined by a notably younger crew, artists like KAWS, J.R. and Max Snow, as well as the fashion designers Olivier Theyskens, Carly Cushnie and Michelle Ochs.

"The art world is the new music world," said Swizz Beatz, the musician and artist, who wore sunglasses and a black T-shirt by YSL. He greeted Pharrell Williams, the writer of the summer's two biggest dance hits, "Get Lucky" by Daft Punk and "Blurred Lines" by Robin Thicke.



Clockwise from left, the floor of the basement, littered with dollar bills from an installation; Pharrell Williams, left, greeting Swizz Beatz; and two artists, J.R., wearing the red jacket, and KAWS.

"The art world is always super inspiring," said Mr. Williams, who also makes sculptures. "All these super creative kinds know how to take it to the next level."

For Emmanuel Perrotin, the young gallerist and circus master of the evening, the next level meant over the top. For the post-



Galerie Perrotin, from Paris, opened on a corner of the Upper East Side Tuesday night. At left, Knight Landesman, of Art Forum, and Emmanuel Perrotin, right; Below, the post-opening dinner and after-party took over the Russian Tea Room.



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opening dinner and after-party, he took over all four floors of the Russian Tea Room for a 1,000-person party that would make a New York power bar mitzvah look modest. Dinner (Lobster and caviar canapés, anyone?) was served on the first two floors, music and dancing on the third. And on the fourth? A carnival, with games and prizes that only art insiders could appreciate.

"Our collectors are in the center of the art world, and you always have to surprise them," said Mr. Perrotin, who wore a glittery Lanvin blazer, as he made sure the Ruinart Champagne kept flowing. "People need pleasure."

Clutching cartons of popcorn and jabbing with the sharp elbows of the entitled,

guests threw balls to win miniature sculptures by KAWS, tossed rings to win plaster facsimiles of gadgets by Daniel Arsham and used metal claws to grab plushy toys by Takashi Murakami.

With the greedy eyes of speculators at auctions, they screamed and cheered for artist-made tattoos, photos of themselves and a Damien Hirst spin-art booth.

Never mind that it was an event that seemed more appropriate for underprivileged children than overprivileged adults.

"If it's not fun in this town, why get out of bed?" said RoseLee Goldberg, the founder of Performa, the performance art organization.

Only for a deal, a buck or some swag, it would seem.