

Big Brash Borough

At a freshened-up Brooklyn Museum, a large, crowded, exhibition showed the borough's art scene growing in scale, diversity, and ambition.

BY GREGORY VOLK

Below, Patricia Cronin: Memorial to a Marraige, 2001-04, bronze, 17 by 53 by 27 inches. Photo Adam Husted, Courtesy Deitch Projects, New York.



Fresh Contexts

The recent exhibition "Open House: Working in Brooklyn," curated by Charlotta Kotik and Tumelo Mosaka at the Brooklyn Museum, heralded the recently renovated institution's exciting new incarnation (complete with a gleaming entranceway designed by Polshek Partnership Architects) as it shifts its orientation to an expanding local audience.

Situating a number of works in the permanent collections was a good idea. When things clicked, it made for a great exchange between past and present.

Three impressive works by women brought a real change to the museum's Rodin room. Nina Levy's dangling busts depict five Williamsburg artists and arts professionals- Burghers of Brooklyn, in a sense. Patricia Cronin's two sensually nestling figures seemed to merge seamlessly with the surrounding Rodins, until you realized her bronze is of two women, a version of a marble grave monument intended for Cronin and her partner, the artist Deborah Kass (who showed a painting elsewhere). Overhead, E.V. Day's polyurethaned thongs suspended on thin, monofilament strands, which resemble a V-shaped flock of birds headed toward the horizon (*G-Force over Brooklyn, 2001-04*), are feminine undergarments with their own euphoric agenda. Their migration transpired above the oblivious heads of Rodin's burghers, as well as those of viewers who failed to look up.