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**Minnie Evans**  
*Untitled (Faces at Median)*  
ca. 1960  
Luise Ross Gallery, New York



**Minnie Evans**  
*Untitled (Landscape with angels)*  
1967  
Luise Ross Gallery, New York



## New Art MY NIGHT IN CHELSEA by N.F. Karlins

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I think half of New York was making the rounds on Sept. 8, 2011, as hundreds -- or maybe it just seemed like hundreds -- of Chelsea galleries burst open for the start of the fall season. We could do without the humidity and the crowded, pokey elevators, but in the end it's all worth the trouble.

Especially exuberant is "Minnie Evans, Paintings and Drawings, 1938-1980," a survey of some of the best works by the self-taught master, on view at Luise Ross Gallery on West 25th Street. A black woman who only got to sixth grade before being forced to go to work, **Minnie Eva Jones Evans** (1892-1987) produced colored crayon drawings, such as *Untitled (Faces at Median)*, ca. 1960, with a richness of color and a complex spirituality and moodiness that has been linked to that of the Surrealists.

Minnie Evans even had a show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1975. I keep hoping that the museum's current curators will give some attention to contemporary self-taught artists, who are now mostly ignored -- and since the American Folk Art Museum has sold its building, we need a lot more exhibition space for them.

In the wide-ranging show at Luise Ross, you can see works from early in her career, like a small, delicate colored-pencil abstract drawing filled with faces, flowers, and dot patterning all merged into an intriguing design from early in her career (priced at a bargain \$5,500) and later work like *Untitled (Landscape with Angels)* from 1967 with





**Nick Cave**  
*Drive-by* (film still)  
2011  
Jack Shainman Gallery, New York

Nearby are still more Soundsuits, these covered with white buttons. But the most colorful and effervescent work at Shainman Gallery is Cave's new 16-minute film *Drive-By*, in which dancers wearing rainbow-colored fur Soundsuits move and interact against a white background.

Cave's retrospective, "Meet Me at the Center of the Earth," opened at the Seattle Art Museum in June, 2011, and also appeared in San Francisco -- but it has not come to New York. In addition to the show at Shainman, around the block at [Mary Boone Gallery](#) on West 24th Street is a companion exhibition of a few dozen more Soundsuits, which boasts an even greater range of this outstanding artist's work.



**Lee Bae**: *The Conceptual Formalist*, installation view, 2011, Nicholas Robinson Gallery, New York

Down the block from Shainman, at the [Nicholas Robinson Gallery](#), a completely different experience awaits. "Lee Bae: The Conceptual Formalist" is the gallery's first show by this Korean-born, Paris-based Conceptualist. His teacher is [Lee Ufan](#), whose exhibition of paintings and sculpture is still up at the Guggenheim Museum and whose exhibition of ceramics at [RH Gallery](#) I have already covered.



**Lee Bae**  
*Landscape*  
2000  
Nicholas Robinson Gallery, New York

A proponent of something called the "Monochrome Movement" in Korea, [Lee Bae](#) has used charcoal as his primary medium for two decades, but I prefer his sculptures to his black-on-white paintings. In them, huge chunks of charcoal are bound in elastic string. Free-standing, they seem almost primordial, yet they are obviously man-made. A compelling balance between nature and man is achieved in these works, though the measure of each is modulated by the angle from which each sculpture is viewed.

I was also struck by Lee Bae's shimmering two-dimensional pieces, created by assembling small, irregularly-shaped slices of charcoal and then attaching them to canvases hung on the wall.

Not a bad night after all.



**Lee Bae**  
*Untitled*  
2000  
Nicholas Robinson Gallery, New York

"Minnie Evans, Paintings and Drawings," Sept. 8-Oct. 29, 2011, at Luise Ross Gallery, 511 West 25th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.

"Nick Cave: Ever After," Sept. 8-Oct. 8, 2011, Jack Shainman Gallery, 513 West 20th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.

"Lee Bae: The Conceptual Formalist," Sept. 8-Oct. 22, 2011, Nicholas Robinson Gallery, 535 West 20th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.

**NANCY KARLINS** is a New York critic and art historian.

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