

CLIFTON BENEVENTO

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KALEIDOSCOPE

VISIT
Miller Updegraff
at Clifton Benevento, New York



Miller Updegraff, Installation view at Clifton Benevento, 2014
Courtesy the artist; and Clifton Benevento, New York. Photo by: Andres Ramirez

George Grosz's provocative drawings and caustic caricatures depict a cosmopolitan yet eerie Berlin, with scenes of decadence, eroticism, violence and distress. Eschewing illusionistic depth in favor of expressionist detail, members of the bourgeoisie, prostitutes, war cripples and politicians share the picture plane. Inspired by Grosz's graphic oeuvre, Los Angeles-based artist Miller Updegraff offers a powerful reading of Grosz's work in a series of paintings and drawings on view at [Clifton Benevento, New York](#), until 22 February. For his second solo show at the gallery, Updegraff presents a new body of work including *Whisky frisky* (2013), where he uses disparate scenes extracted from Grosz's drawings to create a subtly complex white painting. It is Updegraff's subtractive gesture, scraping away the white gesso from the surface, that creates the image. The subsequent outlines on the raw canvas form a subdued yet intricate figurative composition. While bodies and faces overlap in a frenzy of pictorial information, each "line" is traced with the utmost care to enrich a feature or continue a figure's contour. Sourcing his materials from drawing, painting, sculpture and photography, Updegraff seems to hint at techniques dear to Grosz's practice, such as etching, photomontage and collage. The artist, who trained as an anthropologist, continues his subjective exploration of the historical content – in this case, Berlin between the First and Second World Wars – and its claimed objectivity. (Anja Isabel Schneider)

February 17, 2014