

ART SPRINGS ETERNAL



◆ Pint-sized Brooklynite Paloma Kirk in front of “Big New Fountain” at 214 Dean Street in Boerum Hill.

Not all art hangs in museums. You’ll find great public sculptures in Prospect Park and Grand Army Plaza of course; then there’s the revolving installation in the front yard at 214 Dean Street in **Boerum Hill**. Home to an artist’s collective comprised of Nick Fracaro, Gabriele Schafer, Russell Busch, Paul Benney, and Katie Merz, among others, the brownstone currently fronts a sculpture called “Big New Fountain,” just one of a series of portable fountains by artist Charles Goldman. Passers-by on the bucolic, tree-lined stretch of Dean Street are awed by the large, tiered fountain constructed of 39 five-gallon buckets, complete with running water.

According to Goldman, the sculpture “celebrates our society’s transference of materials, both on a global level, as well as the individual workers who keep this vast mechanism functioning.” He sees the fountains as “urban stand-ins for nature.” One passer-by summed it up quite succinctly, calling it “delightful,” and Goldman said reaction from those around the neighborhood has been “100 percent enthusiastic.”

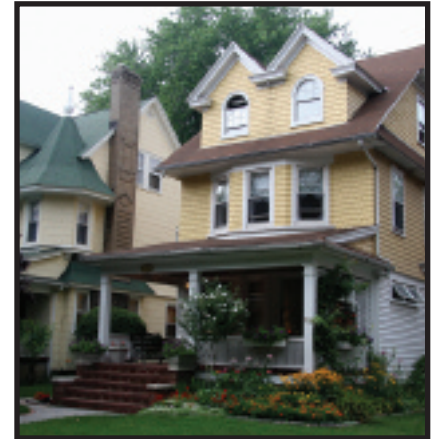
Fracaro and the members of the collective, which they’ve dubbed “Avant Yarde,” host exhibits, discussions and potlucks—much like the artist salons of London and Paris in the earlier part of last century—and an age-old solution to the more regulated exchange that takes place in the commercial art world. Sculpture on the property is changed intermittently. There was much ado about the previous installation: a life-sized wooden sailboat created by artist Jason Gandy that mysteriously “docked” in the front yard one day. Hey, who needs Duchamp and Paris when you’ve got Avant Yarde and Brooklyn?

Check out what Avant Yarde is up to at 214 Dean Street (between Bond and Nevins) or visit www.intculturelab.org.

BROOKLYN IS IN THE (VICTORIAN) HOUSE

It’s official—Brooklyn is the best place to find your home-sweet-home. According to the magazine *This Old House*, “**Victorian Flatbush**”—neighborhoods such as **Prospect Park South, Beverly Square East** and **West, Fiske Terrace, West Midwood, Midwood Park, South Midwood, Ditmas Park, and Ditmas Park West**—is the best place to buy a home for city-lovers.

The detached houses are ideal destinations for growing families. The homes aren’t cheap—most go for at least \$1 million—but compared to the cost of brownstones, they’re a steal.



◆ ‘Burbs in Brooklyn: Victorian Flatbush.

“These were the original suburbs of the city,” says Mary Kay Gallagher, a real estate broker who has lived in the area since 1959. “Developers built the houses for the well-to-do. Some were even sold to people who wanted a place that was on the way to the beach.”

Cortelyou Rd. has undergone a “renaissance,” Gallagher says. Much like Smith Street or 5th Avenue, Cortelyou mixes old standbys and trendy new arrivals. Vox Pop bookstore, the Farm on Adderley restaurant, the Flatbush Food Coop and Connecticut Muffin are just some of Cortelyou’s business attractions.

For people who think Brooklyn ends at Prospect Park, Victorian Flatbush can seem like a world away. But that is precisely its charm, Gallagher points out. “So many people say to me, ‘I didn’t know Brooklyn looked like this.’ These are family-oriented neighborhoods. You can park here. You can breathe here.”

Flatbush Development Corporation, 718-859-3800; www.fdconline.org.