

ARTS

Art Agenda: Friends With You, Samonie Toonoo and Ed Pien, Holly Farrell, William Eakin, and Kate Tarini

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There's some shocking thematic consistency in my roundup of what's been happening in galleries around the city. Although it wouldn't be wise to place any of the following shows in the same room together, there was still a charming degree of complimentary concerns, if incompatible takes, on certain themes that appear to be hovering in the air. While meandering through the humid and sporadically rainy streets this past weekend, I was forced to wonder things like: do dolls have feelings? Can monsters be charming? And what everything you forget about would look like if it ended up being a curated exhibition.

In this edition:

- Daydreamers by [Friends With You](#) at Narwhal Art Projects
- [Scream](#) with Samonie Toonoo and Ed Pien at Justina M. Barnicke Gallery
- [Holly Farrell](#) at The Katharine Mulherin Contemporary Arts Project
- [Fading Dreams](#) by William Eakin at The Stephen Bulger Gallery
- [Memory, History and Forgetting Part I](#) by Kate Tarini at Toronto Image Works

Scream: Ed Pien and Samonie Toonoo from June 10 - August 21, 2010



Slogging down the streets and north through the scents of Spadina, I found a radically different cast of creatures that still calls out to the world of children. If "Daydreamer" was a parent's fantasy about the good life for children, "Scream" could be the opposite. This exciting new show at the [Justina M. Barnicke Gallery](#) pairs drawing icon [Ed Pien](#) and soap stone sculptor [Samonie Toonoo](#). It displays an array of nightmarish creatures who were not relaxing in a haze but engaging in a series of grisly deeds.



Toonoo's sculptures depict motley skulls and malevolent priests and provide a unique prism to glance through at the images of Pien's which carefully grid the walls. Set up in interrelated batches, they seem to resemble different levels of Hell. His figures undergo various metamorphoses, their genitalia blurring and body parts shifting as they literally tear themselves apart, turn into puddles of meat and then re-emerge in new forms. It's not all barbaric of course. Pien actually has a distinctive talent for using delicate and twisting lines to convey the pull of these metaphysical battles. Similarly, Toonoo's work evinces a delicacy of craft and attention to nuance that makes stone look soft and raw by turns. Filled with detail, the exhibit is equally visceral and probing.

Writing by Matthew Purvis