

## Spring Gallery Guide: Lower East Side

By Roberta Smith

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An installation view of Aria Dean's exhibition, which includes vaguely human shapes cut from mirrored glass. Aria Dean and Chapter NY; Dario Lasagni

#### 4. Chapter NY, 'Aria Dean: (meta)models or how i got my groove back'

Aria Dean, who graduated from Oberlin College in 2015, is having her second show in New York. Her works weave the gallery space into a web of intersecting, sometimes contradictory languages and perspectives, as suggested by the show's title "(meta)models or how I got my groove back." (Not to mention the double remove of "meta" and "models.") A video monitor in the middle of the gallery shows a camera dancing around a pedestal made of mirrored, or two-way glass, familiar to viewers of police procedurals. This pedestal sits on a New York sidewalk, providing chaotic, fragmented views of houses, cars and pavement. It's a "non-site" — recalling Robert Smithson's 1970s use of mirrors in small, temporary earthworks — except urban, in danger of being broken, a pedestal awaiting an artwork. We hear what appear to be three young men, identified as D.J.'s (it's actually a single actor), move effortlessly between street talk and a kind of Beckettian theory-talk — riddling observations about a nothing that can be something but is ultimately a void, a form of invisibility. (The dialogue borrows from, among others, the writings of Heidegger, Robert Morris and Fred Moten.) Around the screen, on the floor or attached to the wall, four vaguely figurative shapes cut from the mirrored glass add to the disorientation. They are blank nothings but they also suggest leaping ghosts, Saturday morning cartoons (Casper) and the silhouettes of the bodies of murder victims, outlined in chalk on the street. **Through May 5 at 249 East Houston Street; 646-850-7486, [chapter-ny.com](http://chapter-ny.com).**