

# Time Out New York

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## Reviews

**"Future Noir"**  
Gorney Bravin + Lee,  
through Mar 6 (see Chelsea).

Talk of utopia is thick in the art world, what with the recent Venice Biennale devoting much of its programming to the topic. Implicit but unacknowledged in such invocations of a better society, however, is the dark possibility of ever-worsening social conditions. The provocative group show "Future Noir" addresses the unsavory specifics of how the future may turn out to be far more dystopian than utopian.

Rampant misuse of technology is the main culprit, according to the show's curatorial logic. A painting by Alexis Rockman represents the pet store of the future as a terrifying cabinet of curiosities and genetic mutants, with candy-colored saber-tooth tiger pups next to freakishly bejeweled iguanas and playful robot dogs. The homage here, as in many of the works in the show, is to Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, which portrayed the ecological exhaustion of the planet through the trope of exotic and expensive mechanical animals.

Jon Kessler's kinetic assemblage, *Noriko*, likewise pays tribute to Dick's story via Ridley Scott's filmic adaptation, *Blade Runner*, which is set in a pan-Asian L.A. saturated by affectless, geisha-girl advertising. Kessler's poster-size image of a smiling woman is preternaturally inert and her face is illuminated by a neon apparatus that renders it even more plastic and unreal.

Martha Rosler's series "In the Place of the Public" exposes the hollow core of claims to technological advancement. Depicting the cocooning tendency of transportation systems intended to placate travelers, one of Rosler's photos portrays a *Wall Street Journal* ad in an airport terminal proclaiming MAYBE THERE IS A SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE. "Future Noir" cautions that any such substitutes do in fact generate a perverse experience of their own.—*Eva Diaz*

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Jon Kessler, *Noriko*, 1994