

## David Ebony's Top 10 New York Gallery Shows for April

David Ebony, Friday, April 8, 2016



Eugene Von Bruenchenhein, *Untitled (Concrete Heads)*, 1960s.  
Photo: Courtesy Andrew Edlin Gallery.

**5. Eugene Von Bruenchenhein at Andrew Edlin Gallery, through May 8.**

During his lifetime, Wisconsin-born artist Eugene Von Bruenchenhein (1910-1983) was never unsure of his genius. The problem was that he almost never showed his work to anyone aside from his wife, and sometime model, Marie. Soon after his death, however, his work was brought to the attention of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan; and the rest is history. Subsequently, Von Bruenchenhein's genius as an outsider artist has been widely recognized, and today, his renown transcends the self-taught genre. He filled his house with remarkable paintings featuring hallucinatory images of futuristic landscapes and sci-fi creatures. Over the course of his lifetime, he produced hundreds of painted chicken-bone sculptures, and made fanciful ceramic pieces fired in the kitchen oven.

He also created large painted-cement heads based on imaginative tribal motifs, which he placed outdoors surrounding his house, ostensibly to ward off evil spirits. Several fine examples of these—including an oversize, if not exactly monumental, pair of male and female heads—are among the many highlights of “Eugene Von Bruenchenhein: King of Lesser Lands,” a museum-quality survey of some 60 works, on view at Andrew Edlin Gallery's recently opened Bowery venue, across from the New Museum. On offer is a spectacular crash course in Von Bruenchenhein for those unfamiliar with his work; and for those of us already under Eugene's spell, there are some wonderful surprises. A number of the eroticized photo portraits of Marie have been rarely or never before shown; and numerous late paintings of imaginative skyscrapers, among other pieces, are making their New York debut.