

word of mouth


EATING ON THE CEILING AT ALLEGRA LAVIOLA GALLERY

By Alexis Swerdloff

On a recent slushy winter's eve, we had a very other-worldly experience at [Allegra LaViola Gallery](#). We were there for *Imeday Imeday Ollarday Icklenay*, a performance piece/dinner party inspired by Rembrandt's "Belshazzar's Feast" and straight from the art-damaged brains of artists **Jennifer Catron** and **Paul Outlaw**, responsible for last year's super-popular [Fish Fry Truck](#). Upon entering the East Broadway space, we were met by a fellow in a goat costume who ushered us inside, made us sign a piece of paper (presumably signing our life away) and led us to a big, elaborately-decorated banquet table. As a cast of half-naked Jabberwockian characters (whose likenesses graced the paisley-wallpapered walls) writhed around us, we had very little idea of what to expect next. And to be sure, the very unexpected happened. Our table rose to the ceiling. As our legs dangled down, gallery-goers looked up at us from below, several gregarious performers stood on ladders and poked their heads through holes in the table and we chatted with fellow baffled diners, occasional PAPERMAG.com contributor/art publicist **Bettina Prentice**, the Art Production Fund's **Casey Fremont**, **Claiborne Swanson** (who is having a show of her photos at the gallery in April), designer **James Coviello**, gallerist **Allegra La Viola** and other various and sundry characters who decided to spend their evening eating dinner on the ceiling. Throughout the epic, several-course meal -- which included pork loin, a quail egg, a delicious beef soup and French toast for dessert, prepared by Chef Yuri Hart -- we were lowered to the ground and then hoisted back up, with a short break to watch a live chicken "hatch" from a papier-mâché egg and proceed to run around the gallery. Though the last of the dinners took place last night, please keep your eyes peeled for more projects courtesy of Catron and Outlaw. They told us that they plan to re-open the Fish Fry Truck this summer, and do more collaborations with lovely Allegra and her lovely gallery.

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