



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Pope.L

The conceptual artist, who was recently awarded the Bucksbaum Prize for his piece in the Whitney Biennial, is best known for confrontationally absurdist public performances. But this show of early work highlights his gift for combining text, found imagery, and evocative materials. In some of his assemblages, smeared peanut butter, like impasto pigment, frames magazine clippings, such as one that reads “Now You Can Bring Black History Home” and features a photo of African-American schoolchildren reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. In the sardonic, Rauschenbergian “Crawling to Richard Pryor’s House,” from 1994, a froglike, brown stuffed animal, sandwiched by paint and wood glue on a board, also bears a fragmentary, appropriated image of a child. Pope.L has a knack for drawing out the scatological qualities of gestural painting, the abject potential of collage, and the rhetorical power of color to expose the psychosexual substrate of American racism.