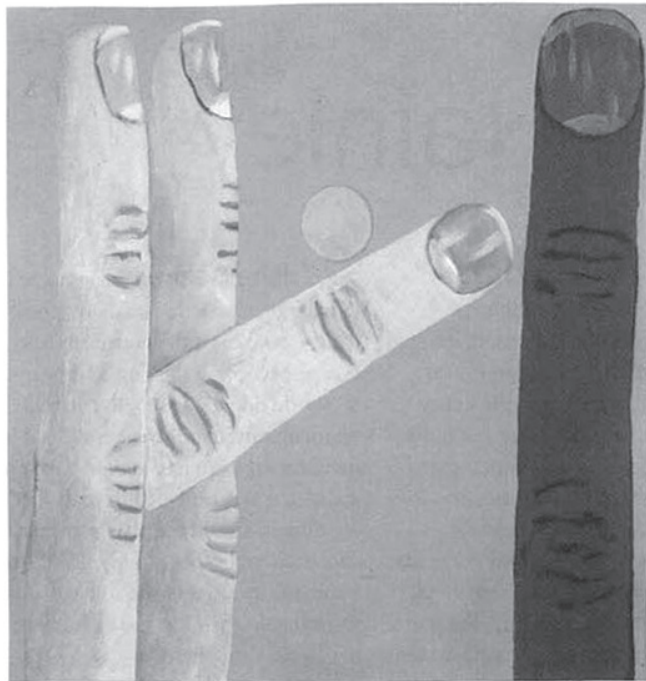


# ARTFORUM

## BEST OF 2004

### 8 and 9 **Brian Calvin and Mathew Cerletty**

(Anton Kern Gallery, New York/Rivington Arms, New York) You know when you say, "It's good for what it is"? For me, Vincent Fecteau and Nancy Shaver are "good for for what they are" (both are runners-up here for modest but remarkable shows at Feature, Inc.). And what about Richard Tuttle? But now I'm getting confused . . . aren't these artists just plain good? Calvin, often called the slacker Alex Katz (also good for what he is), makes paintings that are formally inventive, subtly observed, and gorgeously painted, too, in a low-key kind of way. In "Alter Ego," his second New York solo, Cerletty looked as strong as he did in his 2003 debut. This time we found him doting on a single model until the doctor/dandy's likeness virtually vibrates with craft—and libido. In one painting the willowy physician's lips are impastoed pink in a jarring departure from the rest of the facture. It's as if the artist just wanted to see what would happen to his muse (and his painting) if he dared it. The art of Calvin and Cerletty is "good for what it is," and I bet it's a good deal better than that.



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