



Ben Jones's *Shapes* runs April 1–May 30 at LOYAL gallery, Malmö. galerieloyal.com



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martin lilja

T R U E N O R T H

IN THE '60s, Malmö, Sweden, was in the business of salt. Ever since, merchant ships have been anchored to the quay. Little did the locals know that when Martin Lilja and Amy Giunta, the owners of LOYAL gallery, moved into a tumbledown warehouse here last summer, they would bring with them a vampire, a werewolf, and a platinum blonde wearing a candy-wrapper catsuit. The occasion? Malmö Festival. The oddballs? Whoop Dee Doo, a Kansas City art troupe famous for its vegetable-eating contests, that LOYAL sponsored to perform.

Lilja describes his aesthetic as "creative chaos." It's as good a description as any of the work he's curated since launching the magazine *LOYAL* in 2002 and the original LOYAL gallery, with Giunta and Kristian Bengtsson, in Stockholm in 2005. "The idea was to make a magazine that was as timeless as a book," says Giunta. Indeed, *LOYAL*, the publication, more closely resembles an exhibition catalog than a periodical: Its 200 pages feature work by artists who interview each other, posing anti-art-world questions like, "You remind me of a warlock from *New Mutants*, but what are your feelings on the *X-Force*?" Most of them have exhibited at the gallery, from Beautiful Losers Ed Templeton and Jo Jackson to Brooklyn painters Taylor McKimens and Eddie Martinez.

So why the move to Malmö? "We get restless," says Giunta, who adds that the new space is larger and in a less residential area than the original in Stockholm, thus better suited for loud video-art shows and louder opening-night parties. Today, it is inhabited by Ben Jones's neon mummies and Joe Grillo's mongrel mushrooms—the latter's work is being compiled into *Mutant Pop*, the gallery's second book proper. "LOYAL is what it is: loyal," professes Lilja. "We never intended to create a brand. We're Europeans, after all!"