

# Time Out

LONDON



## LONDON SAKE WEEK Feb. 22 – Mar. 3

JFOODO



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## Art

Edited by Eddy Frankel  
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SHOW OF THE WEEK

### Diane Arbus: 'In the Beginning'

★★★★☆

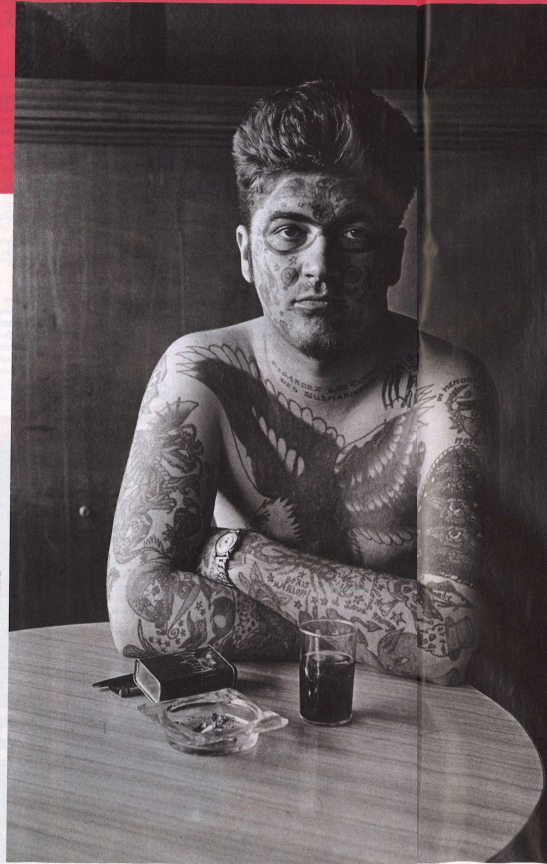
**DIANE ARBUS WAS** the original people-watcher. Some lads larking around by the coast, a glamorous receptionist at her desk, two women shooting evils at the universe: nothing escaped her.

The Hayward Gallery's exhibition of photographs from the first seven years of her career (1956–1962) is sleekly arranged with each small print attached to one side of a tall white rectangle. The effect is like walking through a graveyard, a towering Arlington Cemetery dedicated to the memory of Arbus's native New York.

Or at least it would be if the faces she captured weren't so instantly almost creepily, alive (excluding, obviously, the photograph of a post-autopsy corpse). Arbus's talent was for pinpointing the weirdness of facial expressions. She looked at how other people looked at the world around them.

Famously, Arbus chronicled the existence of people on the edges of NYC society, including the circus and cabaret performers considered 'freaks' by their paying audiences. And perhaps our ongoing fascination with this aspect of the photographer's career contains something (more than we'd like to admit) of that original circus sideshow gawping.

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70

## THREE OF THE BEST

### Free art shows to see this week



▲ **Tracey Emin: 'A Fortnight of Tears'**  
Love her or hate her, this show proves that Emin is one of our greatest living artists. Overwrought, over-intense and over the top, but powerfully emotional stuff.

→ White Cube Bermondsey. © London Bridge. Until Apr 7.



▲ **Liu Xiaodong: 'Weight of Insomnia'**  
Throw out your Constables and Turners, because Liu Xiaodong has created a robot that can probably outpaint them all. Come watch it depict Trafalgar Square in real time.

→ Lisson Gallery. © Edgware Rd. Until Mar 2.



▲ **Nicole Farhi: 'Folds'**  
The fashion designer turns her hand to sculpture with this show of casts of women's bodies. They're full of references to antiquity, have a positive message and are gorgeous to boot.

→ Beau Arts. © Green Park. Until Mar 2.

**WHAT IS IT...**  
A powerfully affecting look at one of the most iconic photographers who ever lived.

**WHY GO**  
Freaks, geeks and everything in between: Arbus had a seriously brilliant eye.

→ Hayward Gallery, © Waterloo. Until May 6. £14, £11 concs.

© COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

West still, to an extent, get off on looking at a pair of conjoined twins floating in formaldehyde or nosily poking around the kitchen of an elderly woman with dwarfism. Especially now that we can look back to that era of travelling freakshows while feeling smugly superior.

Those images are here, the ones of a 'human pin cushion', an entirely tattooed Jack Dracula (left), contortionists and strippers. A good dose of the macabre is also present – to accompany that corpse, there's a dead pig and an embalmed saint.

But the exhibition also shows a different side of Arbus's practice, one that's less sensationalist and more tender. The side people forget. If there's a recurring theme to this selection of early works, it's children. They pop up everywhere, as a tiny baby on the subway, a schoolgirl carting books home or, brilliantly, in a snugly hood pointing a toy gun at the camera.

This constant awareness of blinking baby blues shouldn't come as a surprise. Arbus had a kid's-eye view of life: unjudgemental, obsessive and infinitely curious. ■

**By Rosemary Waugh**  
Who will ever give me as many tattoos as this guy.



71

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