

Fake Loft, Real Art

In a recent episode of *Gossip Girl*, the CW network's hit teenage dramedy, an art consultant walks the character Lily van der Woodsen through her newly renovated Upper East Side loft. "**Kiki Smith** greeting you in the foyer," the consultant says. "Elm & Drag pulling you into the main room. And making a statement on the stairwell: **Richard Phillips**."

"Oh, it's stunning!" Lily exclaims, eyeing her new art collection. The consultant responds: "Any museum would be proud."

Now in its second season, *Gossip Girl* can draw more than 3 million viewers each week. The show, which follows the lives of wealthy students at a fictitious New York City prep school, tells tales of infidelity, deception, robbery, drug abuse, and college applications—not to mention living in (gasp!) Brooklyn. Always eager to add a hint of authenticity to the trials and tribulations of these overprivileged New Yorkers, the *Gossip Girl* production team has put real art in Lily's fake loft.

Gossip Girl set designers collaborated with the Art Production Fund to create an ultrachic residence for Lily (**Kelly Rutherford**)—mother of Serena (**Blake Lively**), the show's resident blond bombshell. In addition to pieces by Phillips, Smith, and **Elmgreen & Dragset**, the loft is adorned with works by such contemporary artists as **Ryan McGinley**, **Patrick McMullan**, **Jessica Craig-Martin**, **Karen Kilimnik**, **Marilyn Minter**, **Laurie Simmons**, **Agathe Snow**, **Amy Gartrell**, **Hanna Liden**, and **Aaron**

Young. It's a fitting set for Lily, a former photographer, groupie, and—as was recently revealed—nude model for **Robert Mapplethorpe**.

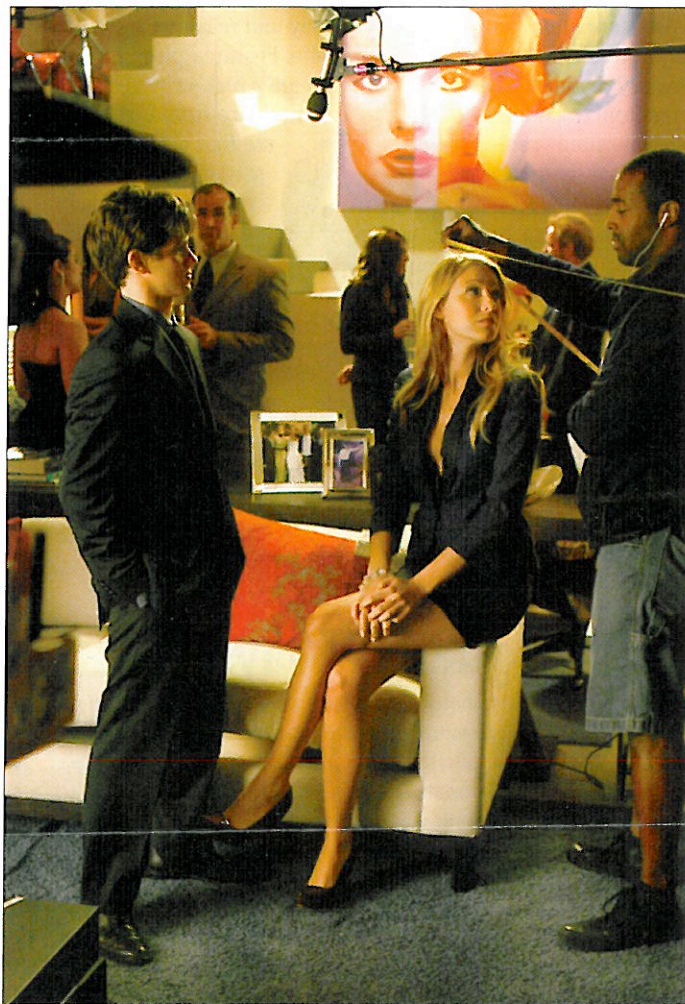
The Art Production Fund, a New York-based nonprofit arts organization, has leased to *Gossip Girl*'s Queens set a collection of 25 works (3 of which are original pieces, the rest high-quality reproductions made with the artists' cooperation). They will hang in Lily's loft through the end of the season in April, with an option to renew the loan for the third season. A virtual tour of the collection—with artist bios—is available at cwtv.com/thecw/art-production-fund.

Gossip Girl production designer **Loren Weeks**, set decorator **Christina Tonkin**, and executive producer and cocreator **Stephanie Savage** worked closely with the Art Production Fund to match the art with the characters. "We were looking for work that engages pop culture," says Art Production Fund cofounder **Doreen Remen**, who, along with Phillips and the organization's director **Casey Fremont**, made a cameo appearance on the show at a party celebrating the collection. "Some of the artwork deals directly with fashion and consumerism. Lily's in that world, but she still has an outsider edge, a cynicism."

A PG version of Phillips's seductive 1999 painting *Scout* (cropped to hide exposed breasts) looks over the bed of

Lily's womanizing stepson, Chuck (**Ed Westwick**). Minter's photorealist *Frostbite* (2006), a painted close-up of an eye embellished with smudged and glittery make-up, hangs in Serena's bed-

discount the possibility of a portrait of Blair (**Leighton Meester**) or Lily turning up in his March solo show at Gagosian Gallery in New York. "It's really fascinating to me how life imitates art in



Richard Phillips's *Spectrum*, 1998, on the *Gossip Girl* set with actors Connor Paolo (left) and Blake Lively.

room. So many viewers have called about Phillips's portrait *Spectrum* (1998), prominently displayed in Lily's loft, that Remen and her crew are making high-quality reproductions of the piece available for purchase.

Phillips, meanwhile, doesn't

their case," he says of the *Gossip Girl* cast. "They're seen kissing in Times Square, or Ed Westwick gets caught making out with **Drew Barrymore**, and it's on every single blog the next morning. It gets hard to know what is the show and what isn't." —*Rachel Wolff*